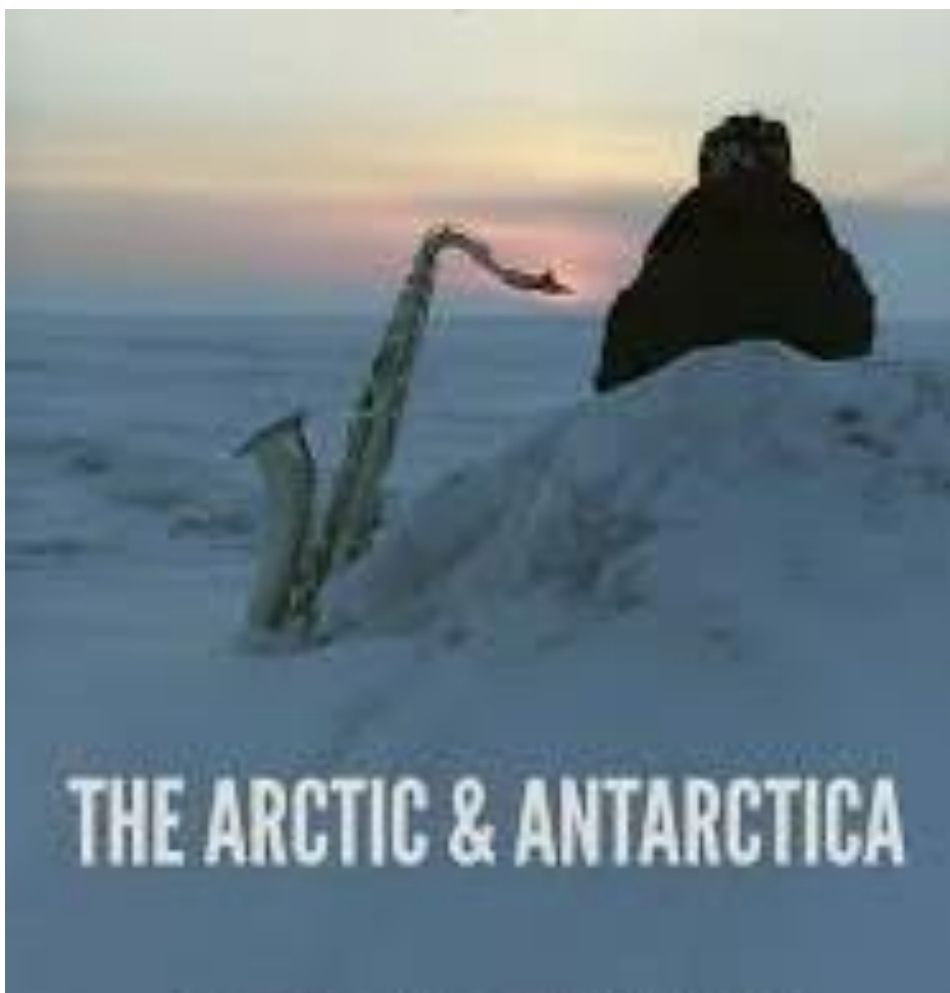


# ENVIROKIDS WORKSHOPS



## THE ARCTIC & ANTARCTICA



The Arctic & Antarctica - The Arctic is a vast frozen ocean around the North Pole, surrounded by North America, Greenland, Northern Europe and Russia. The Arctic is the northmost part of the planet, centered on the North Pole and characterized by distinctly polar conditions of climate, plant and animal life, and other physical features. The term is derived from the Greek *arktos* ("bear"), referring to the northern constellation of the Bear. It has sometimes been used to designate the area within the Arctic Circle. The Arctic is mostly ocean surrounded by land, while Antarctica is mostly land surrounded by ocean. So while significant portions of both are covered in sheets of ice, the water underneath the Arctic ice cap (which sits only about a foot above the water) can trap heat and help warm the surrounding air. The Antarctic, often described as a continent of superlatives, is the world's southernmost continent. It is also the world's highest, driest, windiest, coldest, and iciest continent. Antarctica is about 5.5 million square miles (14.2 million square km) in size, and thick ice covers about 98 percent of the land. The continent is divided into East Antarctica (which is largely composed of a high ice-covered plateau) and West Antarctica (which is largely an ice sheet covering a large area of water and mountainous islands).



## The North Pole

The **North Pole** consists of a large ocean surrounded by land. This ocean, called the Arctic Ocean, is like no other ocean on Earth, and because of its special location and climate, the lands that surround it are unique. Most commonly, scientists define the Arctic as the region above the Arctic Circle, an imaginary line that circles the globe. The Arctic Circle marks the latitude above which the sun does not set on the **Summer** and does not rise on the **Winter**. At the North Pole, the sun rises once each year and sets once each year. There are six months of continuous daylight and six months of continuous night. At lower latitudes, but north of the Arctic Circle, the duration of continuous days and nights are shorter. The winters' are nine months long with temperatures reaching -60 c and the summer months last the other 3 months with the temperatures not going above freezing point. In the Arctic you never get direct sunlight, so the temperatures never get high. To live in these extreme conditions, you need to be prepared and able to survive. In total, only about 4 million people **live in the Arctic** worldwide, and in most countries indigenous people make up a minority of the **Arctic** population. Archaeologists and anthropologists now believe that people have **lived in the Arctic** for as much as twenty thousand years.



The Arctic there are over 40 different ethnic groups living in the Arctic. Arctic indigenous peoples include for example Saami in areas of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Northwest Russia, and the Inuit in Alaska, Canada and Greenland. All the above-mentioned countries except Iceland have indigenous people living within their Arctic territory. During the **1950s and 1960s**, the number of Arctic people started to grow rapidly because of improved health care for indigenous populations and the discovery of vast natural resources located in North which led to a large influx of immigrants. Recently population growth in the Arctic has slowed down in general and in some cases (e.g. Russian North) the total population has been even declining. Indigenous people have a specific connection to land, for example distinct language, culture and traditional livelihoods such as reindeer herding, fishing and hunting are characteristics of indigenous people in the Arctic. The **Sami** people who herd Reindeer in the spring months when the temp can be -30 from coast to coast for the reindeer to feed on lush grasses after the winter. The Sami people have been doing this for thousands of years, but things are changing. Environmental problems such as climate change, present threats to the continuity of these livelihoods and culture.



To the animals of the Arctic the changes have not been kind include the reindeer, **polar bear**, **Arctic fox**, narwhal, walrus, seal, ox, moose, orca, and snowy owl. This small, white fox lives farther north than any other land animal and birds make these cold conditions there home. Like the Arctic Tern not a big bird by any means, about a 2 foot wingspan flies up to 90,000 km a year. This was proven last year when trackers were placed on some Terns, they flew to the Antarctic and back to the Arctic during the year. Also, the Canadian Goose, Puffin and Guillemots are some of the birds that can all be found in the Arctic. The Arctic in spring attracts a lot of different creatures and one that makes their way to the Arctic is the Narwhal. The Narwhal is a whale with a giant tusk coming out from the front of its head. The narwhal can grow up to 18ft long, not including the tusk, and usually it's the male that has the tusk. The Arctic wolf lives like the Polar bear all year round in the Arctic circle preying on Moose and Deer.



## Antartic Fun Facts

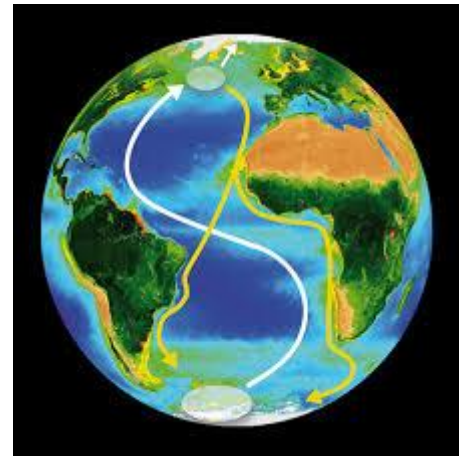
- Antarctica is the southernmost continent on Earth.
- The South Pole is found in Antarctica.
- Antarctica is surrounded by the Southern Ocean.
- Antarctica is bigger than Europe and almost double the size of Australia.
- Most of Antarctica is covered in ice over 1.6 kilometres thick (1 mile).
- Because it experiences such little rain, Antarctica is considered a desert.
- The coldest recorded temperature on Earth occurred in 1983 at Vostok Station, Antarctica, measuring a rather chilly  $-89.2\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ .
- While humans don't live in Antarctica, several thousand people live and work at various research facilities found on the continent.
- While Antarctica features harsh living conditions, several plants and animals have adapted to survive and call the icy continent home.
- Well known animals that live in Antarctica include penguins and seals.
- Around 90% of the ice on Earth is found in Antarctica.
- Sea levels would rise around (200ft) if all the ice in Antarctica were to melt
- Antarctica holds most of the world's fresh water. ...
- The Antarctica ice sheet is the single biggest mass of ice in the world, It's the size of France.



## Activities to do at home

You can do some searching online to discover the different Mammals that can be found in the Polar regions, make a list for your scrapbook.

Choose a variety of bird in the arctic that travels huge distances, draw a map of the world and follow a pattern of the route they follow using coloured pens. (Image below) This project will help you see the huge distances birds travel.



### Quiz

- 1, Name 2 countries that surround the Arctic?
- 2, How cold could the temperature get to in winter in the Arctic?
- 3, How many times bigger than Australia is the Antarctic?
- 4, What are the whales with the tusk called?
- 5, Name 2 of the ethnic people living in the Arctic?
- 6, The biggest single ice sheet is found in the Antarctic, how big is it?
- 7, What animal do the Sami people herd?
- 8, The Antarctic ice can be how thick?
- 9, How long are the Winters in the Arctic?
- 10, Name some creatures that live in the Antarctic?

**All answers will be on our next issue (The Barrie reef)**

### Last issue questions and answers (Single use plastic and Recycling)

- Quiz
- 1, Name the 3 brand names that produce the most waste? Coca Cola, Nestle, Pepsi.
  - 2, How much waste does one person produce each year? 1.5 Tonnes
  - 3, What should you do with your food or pet cans before recycling? Wash thoroughly.
  - 4, Can you put a toaster in your recycling bin? Local recycling plant, Electrical items area.
  - 5, Is glitter good for fish? No, it's microplastic.
  - 6, How long do aluminum cans sit in a landfill? 500 years
  - 7, What are the 3 Rs? Reduce - Reuse - Recycle
  - 8, Plastic straws take how long to decompose? 200 years
  - 9, What should you do with cardboard before recycling? Flatten all boxes
  - 10, If you lined plastic bottles thrown away, side by side, how many times would they circle the earth? Circle the earth 4 times.



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