

# GRAY SEAL

CARD 86

GROUP 1: MAMMALS

ORDER  
*Pinnipedia*

FAMILY  
*Phocidae*

GENUS & SPECIES  
*Halichoerus grypus*



A&E Bomford/Ardea London

**The gray seal has a thick layer of insulating blubber that enables it to survive in water so cold that it can kill a person in just seconds.**

## KEY FACTS



### SIZES

**Length:** Male, up to 11 ft.  
Female, 8 ft.  
**Weight:** Male, up to 700 lb.  
Female, 450 lb.



### BREEDING

**Sexual maturity:** Male, 6-10 years.  
Female, 5-6 years.  
**Mating:** September to March,  
according to location.  
**Gestation:** 1 year.  
**No. of young:** 1 pup.



### LIFESTYLE

**Habit:** Solitary hunters; sociable  
on shore.  
**Call:** Deep wailing song.  
**Diet:** Open sea and bottom-  
dwelling fish; some invertebrates.



### RELATED SPECIES

Gray seal species include *Halichoerus grypus grypus*, northwest Atlantic, *H. g. balticus*, Baltic Sea, and *H. g. atlanticus*, northeast Atlantic.



Range of the gray seal.

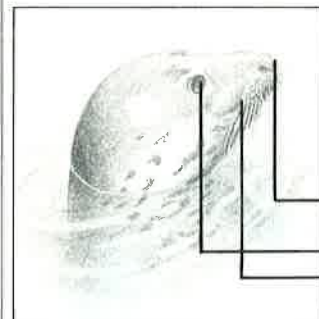
### DISTRIBUTION

Northeast and northwest Atlantic, as well as the Baltic Sea.

### CONSERVATION

Total population estimated at 120,000-135,000. Largest colony of 80,000 found near Great Britain. Protected by law in parts of Europe.

## FEATURES OF THE GRAY SEAL

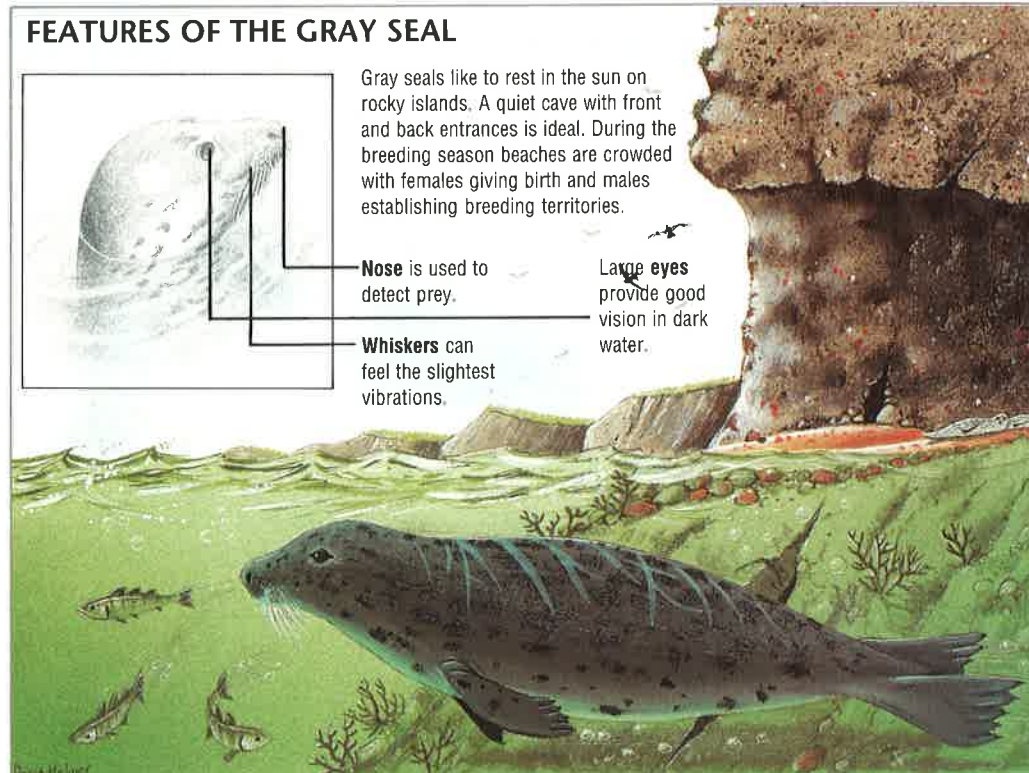


Gray seals like to rest in the sun on rocky islands. A quiet cave with front and back entrances is ideal. During the breeding season beaches are crowded with females giving birth and males establishing breeding territories.

**Nose** is used to detect prey.

**Whiskers** can feel the slightest vibrations.

**Large eyes** provide good vision in dark water.







*Gray seals are a common sight*

*on remote coastlines in the North Atlantic.*

*They have large eyes and sleek coats like other types*

*of seal, but they can be distinguished from the*

*common seal by their larger,*

*more distinctive noses.*

## FOOD & HUNTING

The gray seal feeds primarily on fish. Its large eyes have flat corneas that enable it to see well in murky water. Still, its sense of hearing and taste are more important when hunting, and even blind seals have no difficulty catching prey.

The gray seal has no external ears, but it has a sensitive internal hearing apparatus to help in tracking prey. Its muzzle and whiskers are sensitive enough to feel water movements made by escaping prey as the seal moves closer. Its large, highly sensitive nose,

called a *rhinarium*, is used to detect chemical changes in the water that indicate the presence of prey.

Once prey is detected, the seal gives chase with great mobility and speed. Because its blood contains large amounts of *hemoglobin*, which stores oxygen, it can stay underwater for as long as 20 minutes. When it dives, its heart rate slows to conserve oxygen.

**Above right:** *Gray seals come together on shore in great numbers to breed.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The gray seal's Latin name is derived from Greek and means "little pig from the sea."
- Scientists estimate the age of dead seals by counting the number of rings in the roots of the canine teeth, similarly to counting tree rings.
- Gray seals appear to cry because, unlike humans, they have no gland to control the eyes' secretions.
- Gray seals travel hundreds of miles from their breeding rookery.

## BREEDING

Gray seals mate between September and December. Females come ashore to give birth to pups conceived the previous year. Since mating takes place soon after the pups are born, males haul out at the same time and fight to establish breeding territories.

The female gives birth to a single pup, which she suckles for 14 to 17 days. Pups are born with creamy white fur that is soon replaced with gray fur. Three weeks after giving birth, the female *comes into estrus* (is ready to mate) and

loses interest in her pup.

The older, more experienced bulls dominate small groups of females with which they mate at random. Although the females may conceive, the development of the fetus is delayed so that birth will occur at the same time the following year.

After mating, the females leave the breeding beach to search for food. Pups are left to fend for themselves.

**Below:** *A gray seal mother suckles her two-week-old pup.*



## GRAY SEAL & MAN

Seals have been hunted by man for thousands of years. Their skins were used for clothing and their blubber was a source of oil for lamps. Many coastal people made seal meat a staple of their diet.

In more recent times, gray seal pups were killed for their white fur to supply to the fashion industry. Today, due to the efforts of conservationists, the fur is no longer so desirable. The slaughter of seal pups has almost completely stopped.

Gray seals are not popular with everyone, however. Some fishermen claim that they eat too many salmon and cod. But scientists say that the seals do not seriously reduce the numbers of these fish.



## NATUREWATCH

Gray seals spend a large part of their lives hunting in the ocean. Still, they do *haul out* (come ashore) to rest and to breed. Most gray seals haul out on rocky islands, but they can occasionally be seen on sandy beaches.

Gray seals are abundant in

the cold northern Atlantic waters off Canada, Greenland, and northern Europe. They can be distinguished from common seals by their larger, more defined noses.

Some countries have coastal nature reserves from which seals can be observed.



# CARACAL

CARD 87

GROUP 1: MAMMALS

ORDER  
Carnivora

FAMILY  
Felidae

GENUS & SPECIES  
*Felis caracal*



**The caracal is a long-legged, slender cat that lives in semiarid lands. It can be identified immediately by its smooth, sandy coat and the prominent black tufts on its ears.**

## KEY FACTS



### SIZES

Length: 2-2½ ft.  
Height to shoulder: 1-1½ ft.  
Weight: 35-50 lb.



### BREEDING

Sexual maturity: 6-24 months.  
Mating season: Highly variable.  
Gestation: 10-11 weeks.  
No. of young: 1-6. Usually 2 or 3.  
Weaning: 10-25 weeks.



### LIFESTYLE

Habit: Solitary, territorial, and active by night.  
Diet: Birds, small to medium-size mammals, reptiles, berries.  
Lifespan: Up to 17 years in captivity.



### RELATED SPECIES

The caracal's closest relatives are the lynxes, including the European lynx, *Felis lynx*, and the bobcat, *F. rufus*.



Range of the caracal.

### DISTRIBUTION

Found over most of Africa, except the Sahara Desert and the equatorial rainforests. Also found in Arabia, southwestern Asia, Turkestan, and India.

### CONSERVATION

The caracal's population is fairly stable in many regions, but farmers hunt it in a few areas because it attacks poultry. The Turkmenian race is rare and protected.

## FEATURES OF THE CARACAL

**Senses:** Like most cats, the caracal has keen eyesight. It also has very sensitive hearing that helps on its nighttime outings.

**Coat:** The color varies according to locality, but it is usually sandy to reddish brown above and white below. The exceptionally dense fur keeps out the extreme cold at night.

### THE CARACAL'S EARS



The caracal's ear tufts provide camouflage on the savanna because they resemble the tips of grasses. The cat may lower its ears as an aggressive signal.





*The caracal is an agile predator that can kill animals as large as a young antelope. Its hunting skills were once much admired in parts of Asia, where it was tamed and trained to hunt game. In the wild it leads a solitary life, although, like other cats, it is a caring parent.*

## BREEDING

This solitary animal pairs only when ready to breed, and its mating season varies. After a gestation of 10 to 11 weeks, the female gives birth to two or three young. For the first few weeks, the young remain hidden in the den. They cannot see well until they are about 10 days old, so they do not wander away.

*Left: The caracal can angle its ear tufts to communicate with a mate or rival.*

*Right: With black ear tufts and tawny coats, kittens are miniatures of their parents.*



## DID YOU KNOW?

- The name *caracal* comes from the Turkish *karakulak*, which means "black ear."
- Though usually silent, the caracal occasionally cries out like a leopard. When disturbed at a kill, it hisses and growls like other cats.
- There are reports of caracals catching and killing roosting birds of prey, including tawny eagles and martial eagles.
- Caracals can kill large snakes. One adult in an Indian zoo killed a cobra.



*Above: Very young kittens are guarded in a concealed den.*

*Left: This agile predator catches small prey with ease.*

## HABITS

The caracal lives mainly on dry terrain from India to Africa. It prefers stony, scrubby ground and desert steppes, but it will venture into dry grassland and savanna woodland. In dense, moist grassland a similar-sized cat called the *serval* is more common.

During the day the caracal usually rests among rocks or in holes, where its coat color blends with the terrain. This cat is faster than most cats of its size, jumps well, and can climb trees quickly. Generally a solitary, territorial animal,

the caracal stakes out its domain by urinating on rocks, trees, and vegetation.

The caracal's ears are larger and have longer tufts than those of other cats. When a caracal encounters others of its kind, its ears become signaling devices. As it moves its head from side to side, the black and white markings make the ears very prominent. The caracal holds its ears upright when alert, but when stalking prey, it flattens its ears to make them less conspicuous.



## FOOD & HUNTING

The caracal hunts mostly at night, often over wide areas, using its speed and agility to stalk and snatch prey. Mostly it catches birds up to the size of guineafowl. It also hunts rodents, hyraxes, monkeys, lizards, and young antelopes, and it eats vegetable matter such as berries.

This versatile cat uses several hunting techniques. It kills most small mammals by

*Left: The caracal's coat blends with its hunting grounds in dry scrub or savanna.*

waiting behind cover and surprising them with a sudden dash and a bite on the neck. At water holes it may lie in wait and kill several members of a flock of birds before they can fly off.

Since it can climb trees and jump over six feet, the caracal can seize birds roosting in low branches. It can even leap up and strike birds from the air.

After a killing, the caracal often uses its strong jaws to drag its victim into a tree, where it can feed undisturbed by scavengers.



# GREATER BILBY

CARD 88



GROUP 1: MAMMALS

ORDER  
Marsupialia

FAMILY  
Thylacomyidae

GENUS & SPECIES  
*Macrotis lagotis*



**The greater bilby, sometimes called the greater rabbit-bandicoot, is extremely rare. The only other species in this genus, the lesser bilby, has not been seen since 1931.**

## KEY FACTS



**SIZES**  
Length: Head and body, 1-2 ft.  
Tail 8-12 in.  
Weight: 2-5 lb.



**BREEDING**  
Sexual maturity: 90 days.  
Breeding season: February to April.  
Gestation: 12-13 days.  
No. of young: 1-3



**LIFESTYLE**  
Habit: Active at night; solitary outside breeding season.  
Diet: Mainly insects, mice, lizards, and other small prey; some plant matter.  
Lifespan: At least 3 years.



**RELATED SPECIES**  
Related to the bandicoots. The only other species in the genus is the lesser bilby, *Macrotis leucura*, which is thought to be extinct.



Range of the greater bilby.

### DISTRIBUTION

Scattered small groups in southern Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory of Australia.

### CONSERVATION

*Macrotis* was once abundant in habitats across southern Australia, but it is now likely that there are few self-sustaining populations remaining in the wild.

## FEATURES OF THE GREATER BILBY

**Ears:** Long and pointed, with fine fur. Acute hearing helps to detect prey.

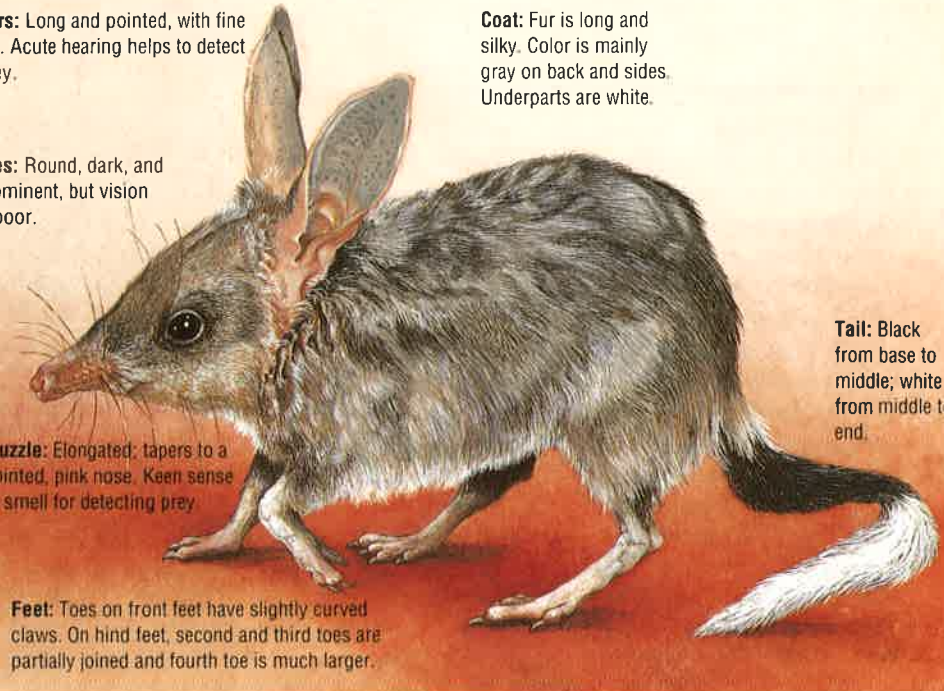
**Eyes:** Round, dark, and prominent, but vision is poor.

**Muzzle:** Elongated; tapers to a pointed, pink nose. Keen sense of smell for detecting prey.

**Feet:** Toes on front feet have slightly curved claws. On hind feet, second and third toes are partially joined and fourth toe is much larger.

**Coat:** Fur is long and silky. Color is mainly gray on back and sides. Underparts are white.

**Tail:** Black from base to middle; white from middle to end.







*The bilby's evolution from the bandicoot occurred as an adaptation to the arid and semiarid regions of Australia. As a result of increased ranching, development, and introduced species, the once abundant bilby has suffered a huge decline in numbers during the twentieth century.*

### FOOD & FEEDING

The greater bilby hunts both above and below the ground's surface. It feeds mainly on insects and small animals such as mice, birds, and lizards. Most of the bilby's water intake comes from the seeds and fruit that supplement its diet.

The bilby uses its strong forelegs and the stout, curved claws on its front feet to dig into the soil

*Left: The bilby uses its keen senses of hearing and smell to locate prey.*

*Right: This rare marsupial is found only in areas where the soil is suitable for burrowing.*

around trees and bushes. It pokes its long, tapered nose into the holes to find insect larvae. Areas occupied by bilbies are usually marked by several of these holes, which have soil scattered around the edges.

*Right: The bilby is a fast and powerful digger. It excavates tunnels that are almost six feet deep.*



### DID YOU KNOW?

- The bilby does not lie down to sleep. It squats on its hind legs, tucks its muzzle between its front legs, and folds its ears forward over its eyes.
- The bilby swallows large amounts of soil with its food. As much as nine-tenths of its waste matter

has been found to be soil.

- The bilby is sometimes called the "pinkie" in Australia—because of its bare pink nose.
- Aborigines are said to detect bilbies by putting their ears to the ground and listening for a scratching sound.

### GREATER BILBY & MAN

The bilby had been common throughout its range until the beginning of the twentieth century. At that time there was a sudden drop in the marsupial's numbers. The decline in population has since been linked to the colonization of Australia by European settlers: their cattle and other grazing livestock damaged

the grasslands of the bilby's habitat.

The introduction of other species that became wild also affected the bilby, which suffered from competition with rabbits for burrows and from predation by foxes. Its numbers also decreased as a result of being hunted for its pelt.

### BEHAVIOR

The habitat of the greater bilby's range includes semidesert areas of woodland, savannah, and grassland with loose soil. Its home range is temporary and depends on the availability of food.

Unlike bandicoots, which sleep in nests on the ground during the day, the bilby sleeps in its underground burrow until dusk. In this way it escapes the desert heat.

The bilby digs its burrow in a steep spiral to a depth of about five feet. At the end of the tunnel is the sleeping chamber. Unlike rabbits, which also dig burrows, the bilby is solitary, so its burrow

never becomes a *warren* (den with several chambers). Instead, each burrow is occupied by a single adult bilby, by a female with young, or, occasionally, by a breeding pair.

The bilby grooms its fur regularly, using the long claws on its hind feet. Even though its hind legs are longer than its front legs, the bilby does not hop like a rabbit. Instead, it moves on all four feet at a slow, shuffling pace. This unusual gait is caused by the hind legs moving together, alternating with the front legs, which also move together.



### BREEDING

Unlike the bandicoot species, which breed year-round, the female bilby bears her young from March to May. The mating season—February to April—is the only time when the usually solitary adult bilbies come together.

After a gestation period of less than two weeks, one to three young are born, even though the female bilby is capable of suckling eight. As with other marsupials, the newborn

*Left: The female bilby suckles her young for several weeks after they are born.*

are tiny—less than half an inch long—and they are so underdeveloped that they look like fetuses. Once born, the young crawl into the mother's pouch, which opens down and backward so that it won't be filled with earth while the mother digs for insects or vegetation.

In the pouch, the young bilbies attach themselves to their mother's *teats* (nipples) and suckle for several weeks. At the end of this time, the young are fully developed, but they will leap back into their mother's pouch if threatened.



# THOMSON'S GAZELLE

CARD 90

GROUP 1: MAMMALS

ORDER  
Artiodactyla

FAMILY  
Bovidae

GENUS & SPECIES  
*Gazella thomsoni*



**Thomson's gazelle is one of the most graceful and agile of all antelopes. It lives in large herds near sources of water on the grasslands of North Africa.**

## KEY FACTS



### SIZES

**Height:** At shoulder, 1-2 ft.  
**Head and body length:** 2-3 ft.  
**Horn length:** Male, 1 1/2 ft. Female smaller.  
**Weight:** Male, 20-40 lbs.



### BREEDING

**Sexual maturity:** 1 year.  
**Breeding season:** Varies with climate; often all year.  
**Gestation:** 5 months.  
**No. of young:** Usually 1.



### LIFESTYLE

**Habit:** Sociable, wary; seasonally migrant.  
**Diet:** Mainly grass.  
**Lifespan:** 10-15 years.



### RELATED SPECIES

Close relatives include the jebeer, *Gazella dorcas*, Speke's gazelle, *G. spekei*, and the red-fronted gazelle, *G. rufifrons*.



Range of the Thomson's gazelle.

### DISTRIBUTION

Found in large numbers throughout the drier regions of Kenya and Tanzania, from Laikipia plateau to Masailand. Isolated numbers in the southern Sudan.

### CONSERVATION

Some protection is available within wildlife parks and reserves. The species faces increasing habitat loss and competition from domestic livestock.

## FEATURES OF THE THOMSON'S GAZELLE

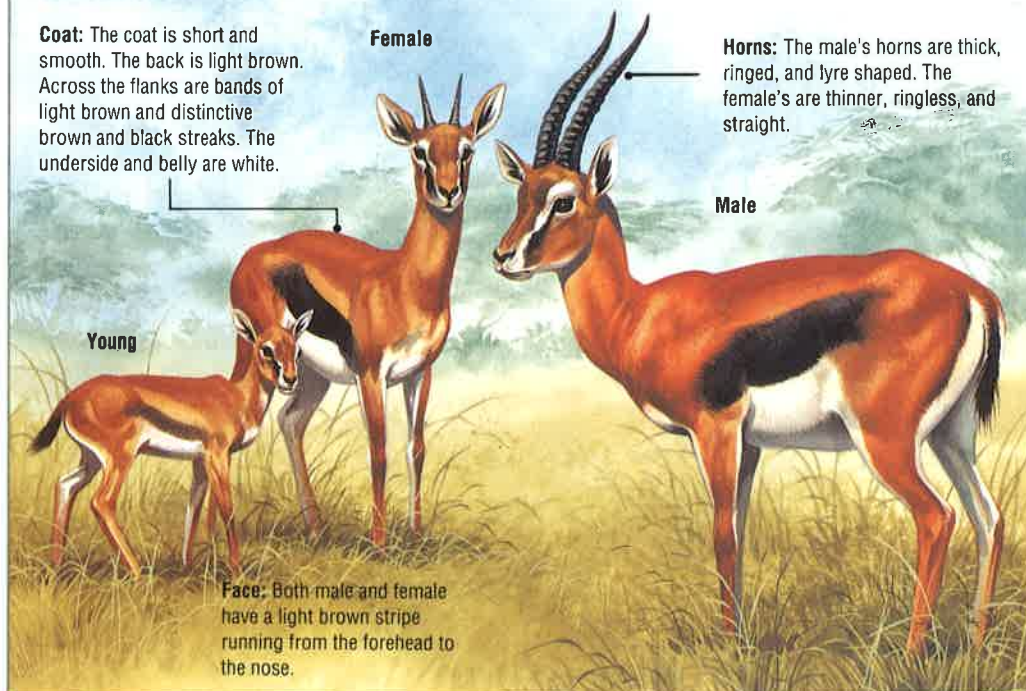
**Coat:** The coat is short and smooth. The back is light brown. Across the flanks are bands of light brown and distinctive brown and black streaks. The underside and belly are white.

Female

**Horns:** The male's horns are thick, ringed, and lyre shaped. The female's are thinner, ringless, and straight.

Male

Young



**Face:** Both male and female have a light brown stripe running from the forehead to the nose.





*The Thomson's gazelle faces a formidable army of predators, ranging from the big cats to man. To survive, it depends on both its sharp senses and its ability to sprint away at a speed that only the cheetah can match.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- The Thomson's gazelle can sprint at speeds of up to 50 miles an hour. It can also maintain speed at over 35 miles an hour for about 15 minutes.
- *Pronking* is when a gazelle leaps vertically into the air while running. This maneuver probably confuses and frightens an attacker and gives the gazelle a clearer view of its surroundings.
- The Thomson's gazelle was named for Joseph Thomson, a nineteenth-century Scottish explorer.
- Gazelles do not shed their horns each year; they are permanent bones.

### BREEDING

The Thomson's gazelle breeds year-round. But in part of its range, the births coincide with the greatest availability of food. During breeding season, adult males establish territories that they mark with urine, dung, and a strong scent produced by glands near their eyes. These territories are often small, with as few as 1,000 feet separating males competing for the attention of the females. Despite its dainty appearance, the Thomson's gazelle is aggressive. If one male trespasses on another's territory, they fight fiercely. The pair will lower their heads, lock horns, and test one another's strength. Eventually, one of them leaves the territory. Immature males prepare for these

trials in mock battles against one another, but fights between adults can become violent.

Once a male marks his territory, he mates with any mature females that stray into it. He may even herd a group of females into his territory, but the male will not follow them into a rival

gazelle's established area.

After a five-month gestation period, the female Thomson's gazelle moves a short distance away from the herd and gives birth to a single calf. The dark brown calf hides in the grass, camouflaged from predators, during its first week of life.



### HABITS

The Thomson's gazelle lives on the savannah grasslands of Tanzania and Kenya and in the drier bush country of the African Sudan. This sociable gazelle roams in herds as large as 200 animals. Each herd has clear social divisions: adult males tend to remain apart from the *bachelor*, or immature males, while

females with young herd more closely together.

Living in such open country, the Thomson's gazelle is alert for any sign or scent of its numerous enemies—the most feared is the cheetah. Although easily frightened, the Thomson's gazelle may graze peacefully within view of a napping

*Above: Herds gather on the plains to migrate in search of new feeding grounds.*

pride of lions.

The Thomson's gazelle has conspicuous black stripes along its flanks. They help break up the animal's outline and make it harder for a predator to spot it from a distance.



*Above: Fights between male gazelles occur when one intrudes on another's territory.*

*Left: There may be several generations of gazelle in one family.*

### FOOD & FEEDING

Most gazelles eat a wide variety of vegetation, but the Thomson's feeds mainly on grass. During the rainy season on the savannah, as much as 90 percent of its diet is grass. During the dry season, when the grass dies, the gazelle leaves the parched plains and moves into the brush. It adapts its diet to include the

tender shoots and new leaves of shrubs and small trees.

The gazelle grazes by gripping and biting the vegetation with its sharp incisor teeth. Each mouthful is chewed thoroughly before being swallowed. The gazelle has an extremely efficient digestive system common to all ruminants (cud chewers): it

swallows the food and digests it in its *rumen* (first stomach) before regurgitating and chewing it again. After the gazelle swallows a second time, the food passes through three more stomachs so that all the nutrients are extracted.

*Right: The Thomson's gazelle needs only a small quantity of water to survive.*



### THOMSON'S GAZELLE & MAN

The gazelle has long been preyed on by man for food. More recently, it has been pursued by trophy hunters. As a result, the gazelle's numbers have been reduced, although it still remains quite common.

The greatest threat to the Thomson's gazelle comes not from the hunter, but from the farmer. Domestic sheep, goats, and cattle require much the same diet as the Thomson's gazelle. Thus, the livestock is in competition with the gazelle for food and water. Farmers who increase grazing lands and water sources for their livestock may reduce the number of gazelle.

Also, the gazelle's seasonal migrations are becoming restricted by stock fences that are erected across the once open grasslands.



# BELUGA WHALE

CARD 91

GROUP 1: MAMMALS

ORDER  
*Cetacea*

FAMILY  
*Monodontidae*

GENUS & SPECIES  
*Delphinapterus leucas*



**The beluga is one of two species of white whale. It is known by some as the "singing whale" because the wide range of noises it makes underwater can often be heard above the surface.**

## KEY FACTS



### SIZES

**Length:** 10-16 ft. Male slightly larger than female.  
**Weight:** 1,000-3,000 lb.



### BREEDING

**Sexual Maturity:** Male, 8 years. Female, 5 years.  
**Mating season:** April to June.  
**Gestation:** 14-15 months.  
**No. of young:** 1 calf.



### LIFESTYLE

**Habit:** Sociable, living in groups.  
**Call:** Varies from delicate "cheep" sound to a roar.  
**Diet:** Bottom-dwelling fish and crustaceans, and shoal-forming fish.  
**Lifespan:** 30-40 years.



### RELATED SPECIES

There are only two species in the *Monodontidae* family: the beluga and the narwhal, *Monodon monoceros*.



Range of the beluga whale.

### DISTRIBUTION

Coastal waters of Arctic and sub-Arctic regions of North America, Greenland, Europe, and Asia.

### CONSERVATION

Present population is unknown but thought to be recovering from heavy casualties as a result of eighteenth and nineteenth century whaling. Modern threats include pollution and disturbance of breeding grounds.

## IDENTIFYING THE BELUGA WHALE

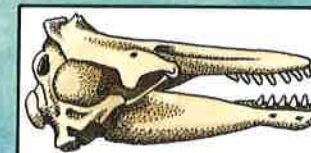
**Body:** Plump, white, narrower at neck.

**Length:** The beluga is a medium-sized whale.

**Tail flukes:** For forward motion. Notched; adults may retain streaks of dark pigment.

**Calf:** Grayish brown at birth. Slate blue in second year, then gradually turns white.

**Flippers:** Smooth; tips curl up.



**Teeth:** Peg-shaped to grip prey; usually 32 teeth total.



*The beluga whale lives in the icy waters of the Arctic where its white skin camouflages it throughout most of the year. The whale uses its head and back to smash through the ice so that it can come to the surface to breathe.*

## BEHAVIOR

The beluga is a vocal whale; it makes a variety of sounds from birdlike chirps to roars. Like all whales, the beluga uses these sounds to communicate. It also has a large range of facial expressions; these, too, may be a form of communication.

The beluga once roamed the seas in herds of tens of thousands. Over-hunting has

reduced its numbers. Now large herds gather only when returning to their shallow breeding grounds.

Each herd is divided into smaller groups, or *Pods*, of breeding or bachelor males and females with young.

Pods spread out in the feeding grounds but join up again for the annual migration to the breeding grounds.



## FOOD & HUNTING

The beluga hunts in small packs, eating worms, crustaceans, and fish that live in schools or on the seabed.

Working in groups of five or six, the whales herd their prey into shallow waters, or toward the shore. The beluga vocalizes, or "talks," to other whales in the hunting group.

The beluga's teeth, which appear when the mammal is about two or three years old, are not used for feeding, since it swallows its prey whole. Nevertheless, they wear down, probably because the beluga rubs them together to

*Below: The beluga's pale adult coloration accounts for its other name, "white whale."*

produce sounds—another way to communicate.

Unlike other whales, the beluga has a flexible neck and is able to move its head from side to side. This flexibility allows the whale a wide sweep of the ocean floor when hunting. Its flippers are flexible, too; they enable it to move easily in tight situations, even backwards if necessary.



## BELUGA WHALE & MAN

The beluga whale was easy prey for whalers of the nineteenth century. Whalers forced the belugas onto beaches, stranding them. Thousands of whales died this way.

The beluga is no longer killed for its meat in Western waters, since it contains toxic levels of poisonous marine pollution.



*Left: This beluga whale performs for man, as do other whales.*

## BREEDING

Mating occurs from April to June. The dominant male mates with more than one female. After the mating season, the beluga migrates south to warmer coastal waters and arrives in June or July.

A female, pregnant from last year's mating, will split off into a small nursing pod. She gives birth to a single calf, which arrives underwater, tail

first, and then makes its way to the surface to breathe. The newborn calf is grayish brown and turns lighter gray after a couple of years. It does not turn white until adulthood.

After about a month, when the calf is strong enough, all the belugas migrate back to the colder Arctic waters. The young beluga suckles from its mother for about two years.

*Below: The beluga is known to make a wide variety of facial expressions.*



## DID YOU KNOW?

- The beluga's breeding cycle takes three years: 14 to 15 months to carry the calf, and about two years to suckle it.
- The beluga does not have a dorsal fin.
- The beluga was called "sea canary" by nineteenth century whalers because of its high-pitched sounds.
- Most whales have thin skins. Because the beluga's skin is thicker, it was once used to make bootlaces.
- The beluga shares its habitat with the narwhal.