

## fun facts about reindeer!

Reindeer are the only type of deer where both the males and the females have antlers - and they shed and re-grow them every year! Males shed theirs every winter, but the females keep theirs until they have given birth to their young in the spring - meaning they can compete for food whilst they are pregnant.

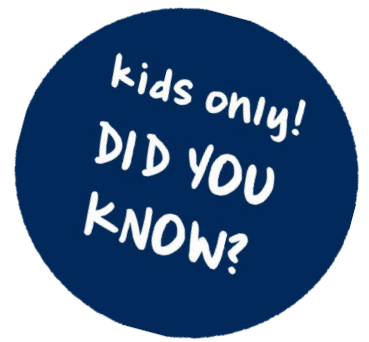


They are herbivores, which means they only eat plants to get their energy. Their favourite plant is lichen, otherwise known as reindeer moss which is a plant material that grows in sub-arctic climates. Lichen keeps their blood warm so that they can survive the icy winters.

They have a very strong sense of smell - they can find lichen under snow that is 60cm deep!



Reindeer are also called Caribou, which is French and means 'snow shoveller'. Their latin name is Rangifer Tarandus.



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Their fur is specially designed to keep them as warm as possible. Each hair is hollow, so that air flows inside the hairs as well as between them, and their winter coat is extra thick for when the temperatures drop!



Their hooves shrink in winter! When the ground becomes icy and hard, reindeer footpads shrink and tighten for a better grip, and they splay out so they don't sink into the snow when the ground is softer.

When they are migrating, reindeer follow a leader of the pack, and they move very quickly over huge distances.



Their eyes change colour depending on the season - from a golden green in the summer to blue in the winter, to help them see more easily. Researchers have also recently discovered that reindeer can see UV light - this means that they can easily detect white fur in the snow that we wouldn't even be able to see.