

Atlantic walrus *Odobenus rosmarus*



Roysningur
 Aaveq
 Rostungur
 Hvalross
 Morša
 Hvalros



Curious walrus © Robert Stewart

The walrus is the largest **pinniped** in the Arctic, with the males being twice as heavy as females. They can be found all around the Arctic, and are known for their moustache and their long **tusks**. Walrus are social animals, **hauling out** in tight groups on land or ice and travelling in groups at sea as well.

Adult length 3 metres
Adult weight 1,500 kg
Maximum age 40 years
Eats mostly clams, other bottom dwellers, sometimes seals or birds
Group size up to several thousands

Predators polar bear, killer whale
IUCN status near threatened (2023)
NA abundance 30,000
Hunted in 53 walrus/year mean 2019-2023

Main threats:



Noise disturbance



Climate change



Pollution



Hunting

Atlantic walrus *Odobenus rosmarus*



Roysningur
 Aaveq
 Rostungur
 Hvalross
 Morša
 Hvalros

Walrus are famous for their **tusks**, which can grow up to 1 metre in length and weigh around 5 kilograms. Males' **tusks** are usually slightly larger, and are used for fighting; the male with the largest **tusks** is usually the most dominant. **Tusks** can also be used to climb out of the water, or to make breathing holes in ice. Some large males have amber-coloured stains on their **tusks** from the **blubber** of the seals they might eat. **Tusks** are also valuable to humans, who make carvings and jewellery out of them.



A walrus on the ice
© Christian Lydersen / Norwegian Polar Institute



Walrus use they whiskers to find their prey
© Kit Kovacs & Christian Lydersen / Norwegian Polar Institute

A walrus' diet consists mainly of clams, which they find using their sensitive **whiskers** on or in the seafloor. When researchers studied the stomach content of walrus, they found only the meat of the clams, not the shells. This is because walrus suck the clams out, leaving the shells on the seafloor. They can eat thousands of clams in a single meal like this. The suction power of a walrus is about four times stronger than an average vacuum cleaner!



Research: Walrus generally have a cinnamon brown colour, but sometimes they can look pink. Why is that?