

Uncommon
Animals

Arctic Fox

Very Cool!



by Stephen Person

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Consultant: Dr. Maarten J. J. E. Loonen

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The Chase Is On!

In the Arctic, **biologist** Maarten Loonen watched as a group of geese led their young toward a lake. Maarten looked around. He had a feeling that he wasn't the only one watching these birds. Suddenly he saw a flash of gray. It was an Arctic fox!

The Arctic fox's speed helps it catch birds and other small animals.



The fox darted into the group of birds, snapping its jaws. Too young to fly away, the **goslings** scattered and swerved to avoid the attacker. “The rest of the flock sprinted toward the nearest water at top speed,” said Maarten. Running as fast as he could, Maarten followed the chase.



Arctic geese



Arctic geese and other birds are an important source of food for Arctic foxes.

Living with Foxes

Maarten watched as the Arctic fox caught a few of the goslings. Then he saw the fox dig a hole and bury the dead birds. Hidden food supplies, such as these, are called **caches**. This fox will need many caches to survive the long cold Arctic winter, when there is little food available.

Maarten Loonen lives in the Arctic during the summer.



Maarten has been studying Arctic wildlife since 1990. Every summer, he travels from his home in the Netherlands to the **Arctic region**. There, he lives in Ny-Ålesund, Norway—the northernmost town in the world. This is a great place to study Arctic animals. “In my town, there is a pair of foxes under my neighbor’s house,” Maarten says. “I see the young foxes every day in July and August.”

Arctic Foxes in the Wild



The Arctic fox is a very uncommon animal. It lives farther north than any other land **mammal** in the world.

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About the Author

Stephen Person has written many textbooks, as well as children’s books about American history. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Rachel, and their daughter, Anna.



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In the Arctic, winter lasts for eight months. Powerful snowstorms are common and temperatures can fall to -58°F . Few animals can survive these extreme conditions. One animal that can, however, is the Arctic fox. Biologist Maarten Loonen has been studying Arctic wildlife for over 15 years. Look inside to discover what he has learned about this fascinating and uncommon creature.

Arctic Fox
Very Cool!

Fossa
A Fearsome Predator

Tasmanian Devil
Nighttime Scavenger

Aye-Aye
An Evil Omen

Platypus
A Century-long Mystery

Weddell Seal
Fat and Happy

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