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### FAST FACTS

**NAME:** Wolverine

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Gulo gulo*

**AVERAGE HEIGHT:** 66 to 86 cm

**AVERAGE WEIGHT:** 12 kg to 18 kg (males), 8 kg to 12 kg (females)

**AVERAGE LIFESPAN:** 7 to 13 years (in the wild)

### DID YOU KNOW?

The wolverine is actually related to the weasel family — not the wolf family like its name suggests.

### PHYSIOLOGY

This funny little creature looks like a combination of a skunk and a small bear. Its tiny eyes and short round ears offset a small round face. Its thick head, neck and shoulders are insulated with muscles that are covered in a brown coat with two adjacent yellow stripes. Despite how beautiful their sleek fur looks, you shouldn't get too close. Wolverines are fierce animals. They have strong, sharp teeth and semi-retractable claws that they use for digging, climbing and scaring away predators. Their paws are large and furry, and act as snowshoes that keep wolverines from sinking into the snow.

### HABITAT/BEHAVIOUR

Wolverines are a shy species, so don't expect to see one out in the wild. They live in dens made out of snow tunnels, rocks and boulders and can be found in remote forests and tundra. They are constantly on the move, looking for their next meal. When more food is available, wolverines don't have to walk as far. On average, the males have a home range of approximately 1,000 square kilometres, while females stay within 100 square kilometres.

Although sometimes this species will eat berries and plants, they usually go after meat — everything as small as mice and rabbits to as big as moose and caribou. Wolverines are opportunistic eaters meaning they will eat whatever is close and easy. Sometimes they eat animal carcasses and other times they'll dig into burrows to eat hibernating animals. The small wolverine will even scare bears away and steal their food instead of going to get their own meal. When they hunt, they climb trees or tall rocks and boulders from which they jump onto their prey's backs. If the wolverine can't finish all the food, it sprays it with musk, like a skunk, and buries it for later.

Wolverines are private animals. They are usually only seen near others of its kind when mating, or when mothers are caring for their young. Females usually give birth once a year and have two to three babies in late winter. The young kits remain with their mother for two years.

### RANGE

These wolverines can be found across the Arctic region of Canada. They are also found up north in Alaska, Russia and Greenland.