

Animal life on mountains

Life on mountains for animals can be very harsh. Food is scarce and the climate is cold. Many animals have adapted to survive the bitter cold. The type of animals that live on mountains include things like mountain goats, black bears, wolverines, mountain lions and snow leopards.

Let's have a look at some of them more closely:

Mountain lion:



Mountain lions live on mountains because the rocks, long grass and vegetation mean that they can hide and stalk their prey more easily. They claim a patch of territory and are very protective over it. They often refuse to let any other mountain lions enter the territory they have

claimed. A mountain lion's back legs are longer than its front legs, which means it can leap from cliff to cliff, making it easier to live in the rocky mountains.

Mountain goat:

Mountain goats are large animals, closely related to antelopes that live high



on the mountains. They use their tough hooves (with rough pads underneath) to balance along cliff edges and rocks. They have powerful legs, and are also nimble, allowing them to leap nearly twelve feet in a single jump. They have white coats that camouflage them in the mountain snow, and in hotter seasons, they shed their fur.

Black bears:



Black bears are extremely strong. Their muscles allow them to bend trees, break rocks, and climb mountains easily. They use their sharp claws to grip onto the sides of cliffs and to catch fish from mountain streams. They also use their muscles and claws to climb trees and reach berries. In the winter months, when it is extremely cold, black bears hibernate in their

dens. This means that they sleep for months at a time. When they hibernate, their heart rate slows down, which means they do not eat and they need can sleep to stay warm.

Wolverines:



Wolverines are about the size of a dog, but their sharp claws and viscous teeth mean that it can kill and eat animals bigger than itself. Wolverines have been known to eat birds' eggs, squirrels, and even moose. Every two years, a female wolverine digs a den in the mountain snow and in there, she gives birth to babies.

As the babies grow up, she hunts for food for them, and buries it in the snow to keep it cold before they eat it, a bit like a fridge! A wolverine's jaws are strong enough to crunch through bones and meat that has been frozen in the snow. They also have large claws and paws which help them run fast through snow.

Snow Leopards:



Snow leopards are coloured a grey/orange colour which makes them invisible against the grey rocks of the mountains. Their fur is thick, and their tail, which is long and fluffy, can be used as a blanket when they wrap it around their bodies.

Snow leopards have long, strong back legs, similar to those of the mountain lion, which allow them to leap up to 6 times their body length. Their paws act like snowshoes to grip the slippery rock and ice in the mountains.