

ALL ABOUT

# COZY

BY  
SAN  
BRETT

## The Musk Ox Lives!

The Pleistocene era is fascinating since some of the megafauna like sabre-toothed cats and woolly mammoths lived at the same time as humans. The Musk Ox almost was hunted to extinction but a few populations survived. I went to the Musk Ox farm and was awestruck!



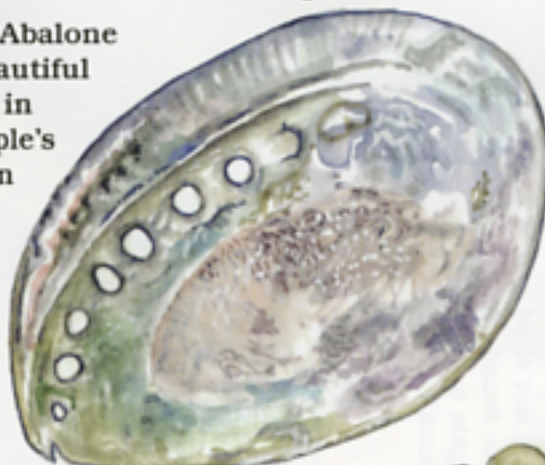
## Fun Facts

- Any Musk Ox is ready to protect itself if it sees a dog. Wolves are its major predator after man.
- The Aurora Borealis is seen after solar flares particularly in an area of latitude around Fairbanks, AK. Farther North, in the original Musk Ox range they are not as visible.
- The Wolverine's pelage (coat of fur) is unique because ice cannot cling to it.
- The "Pinto" Abalone Mollusk's beautiful shell is used in Northern people's art. I used it in my book because it looks like Alaskan skies.



One can't think of Alaskan animals without including the sled dog. I used my friend Dr. Cera's Siberian Huskies as my models.

In Talkeetna, AK, we visited Iditarod champion Dallas Seavey's Kennel. He invites tourists to learn about mushing dogs, and to mush his super friendly Alaskan Racing Huskies.



This bull's horns are not shed and are found on male and female.

**The Magnificent Musk Ox**  
*ovibes mosehatus*  
also called Oomingmak

For protection the herd will form a circle horns out, calves protected in the middle.

Flowing guard hairs cover the thick under coat.

The pupils are rectangular, like a goat.

Cloven hooves are modified to dig through snow.





**Neartic Brown Lemming**

*Lemmus trimucronatus*

In summer it eats tender grass, sedges, moss and berries. In winter they tunnel under snow for bark and twigs of dwarf willow.



**Snowshoe Hare**

*Lepus americanus*

Young hare are called "Leverets". This hare is white with black ear tips in winter and turns brownish in summer.



**Snowy Owl**

*Buteo scandiacus*

Some Snowy Owls are pure white and other have black spots. I like it's traditional name, Ookpik. It's eyes are yellow.



**Arctic Fox**

*aloex lagopus*

In Summer this fox turns brownish to blend in. The males are "Reynards" and the females, "Vixens".

**The Wolverine**

*gulo gulo*

Wolverines are adapted to Arctic regions with dense coats and special teeth that can cut frozen carrion. Fun fact: ice balls cannot form on his fur.

## ALASKAN ANIMALS



**Sea Otter**

*ennydra lutris*

The endangered sea otter lives most of it's life in the ocean near kelp seabeds. It takes a rock and cracks crabshell and Abalone shell to eat. Pups ride on mom's tummy.



# THE MUSK OX FARM



Manager Mark and his daughter Isela have checked on the calves



We saw an arctic hare on a visit to the Museum of the North in Fairbanks. It was May and it's coat was changing from Winter white to brown.



I am a special friend of "Teal" a young musk ox visit their website at [muskoxfarm.org](http://muskoxfarm.org)

## **The Musk Ox Farm, Palmer Alaska.**

The big red barn is part of the historic Colony Farm built when settlers farmed the Matanuska Valley. Today, the valley is admired for growing giant vegetables that grow huge from the long daylight hours.

The large herd that roam these acres is a continuation of a special project led by John Teal, who wanted to domesticate the Musk Ox and produce Qiviut, a valuable fibre (yarn) collected by gentle combing.

Musk Ox were hunted to extinction in North America in the early 1800's. Called Oomingmak by early Alaskans they are an arctic goat that roamed the earth in the Pleistocene along with the Woolly Mammoths.

When I visited the farm I heard Musk Ox snort and bellow and saw them gamble, and sit on their haunches. But I never smelt anything musky, even when I sniffed Littleman's (an old bull) ruff!