

## Emperor Penguins

### Introduction

There are 17 species of penguins. Emperor penguins are the largest of them all with some reaching up to 115cm tall. They spend their entire lives in Antarctica and are thought to be the only bird that never steps foot on land. Some Emperor penguins can live up to 50 years and there are thought to be approximately 595,000 adult penguins in Antarctica.

### Appearance

Penguins are a type of bird which means that they have feathers, wings and lay eggs. They have wings called flippers. However, they do not fly because their wings are too small. Emperor penguins have a white stomach, black head, tail and wings. In addition to this, they have yellow patches around their ears and an orange beak. Male and female penguins look similar. However, the female penguin is slightly smaller. Their coats are made up of four layers of feathers therefore, they are windproof and waterproof.

## Diet

Emperor penguins are carnivorous. **Therefore,** their diet consists of fish, krill, squid and crustaceans. In order to feed themselves, they journey great distances from their breeding sites to hunt in the ocean. Once the female has laid an egg, she passes the egg to the male so that she can go hunting. The male will take care of the egg while eating nothing until the female returns.

## Habitat

Emperor penguins live in Antarctica, one of the harshest environments on earth. The temperature can reach as low as  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ . **In addition to this,** they face wind chills as cold as  $-60^{\circ}\text{C}$  and fierce blizzards. Emperor penguins spend their entire lives living on the ice or in the surrounding seas of Antarctica. **Also,** they are the only animals to inhabit the open ice of Antarctica during the winter.