

Arctic Fox & Fennec Fox Traits

Audience

Activity designed for ages 8-years-old and up.

Goal

Be able to identify key characteristics for Arctic and Fennec foxes.

Objective

- To understand the differences and similarities between 2 different fox species.
- To use a Venn diagram to organize information.

Conservation Message

There are 23 species of foxes worldwide that encompass four genera. Foxes are an important part of their ecosystem and without them there would be a devasting cascading effect.

Background Information

Fennec foxes are perfectly adapted for living in the Sahara Desert. They are smaller size with very large ears. They eat mostly insects, fruit and vegetation. Fennec foxes are a nocturnal species meaning they come out at night and sleep during the day. Arctic foxes are found in the tundra region of the northern hemisphere. They are carnivores, hunting mostly for lemmings and the occasional sea bird or fish. Arctic foxes can change color! In the winter they are completely white. In the summer, they shed their white coats and grow blueish gray to brown colored fur.

Materials Needed

- Fox Trait Sheet
- Venn Diagram Sheet
- Scissors

Length of Activity 20 minutes

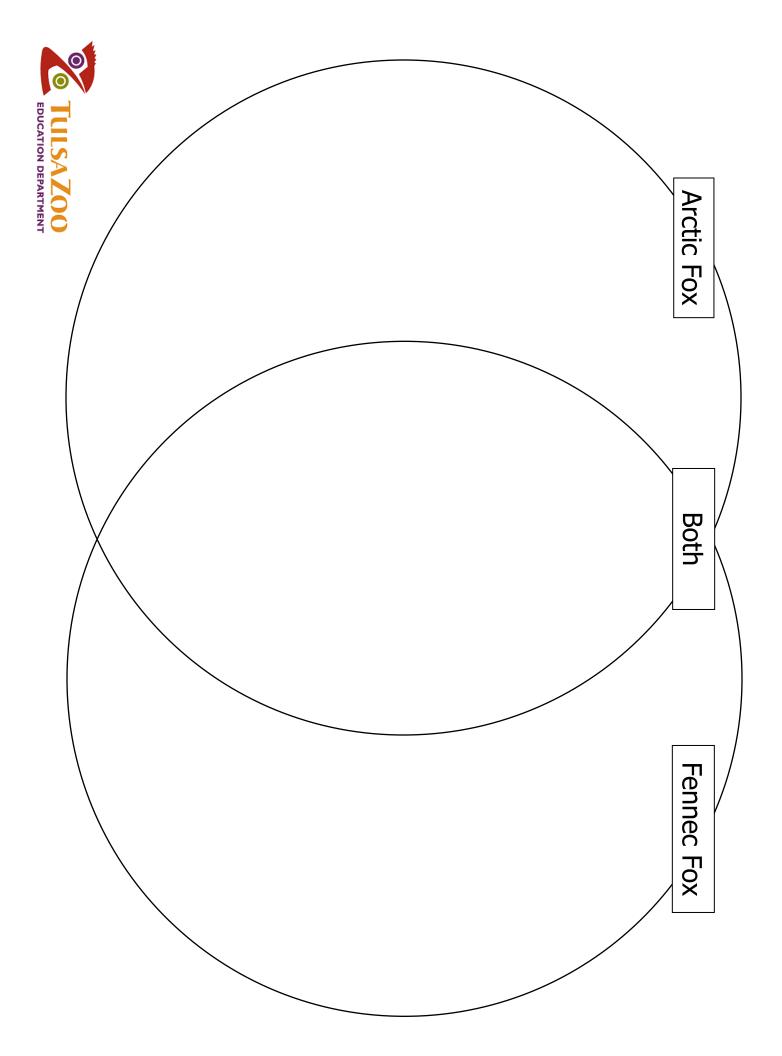
Procedure

- Cut apart all the traits from the Fox Traits sheet.
- Using the Venn Diagram sheet, place the traits under "Arctic Fox," "Fennec Fox," or "Both."
- Once all traits are placed, check your answers with the answer key.

Fox Traits

| Nocturnal | Sand-colored fur | Extra-large ears; to help keep cool |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Can get all its water from food | Extra fur on its feet | Thick bushy tail |
| Omnivore | Small ears | Fur changes colors with the seasons |
| Lives in underground burrows | Carnivore | Native to Africa |
| Found in the Tundra | Weighs 2-3 pounds | Conservation status: least concern |
| Weighs up to 20 pounds | Can be seen at Tulsa Zoo | Part of the Canine (dog) family |





Answer Key

| Fennec Fox | Both | Arctic Fox |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Nocturnal | Part of the Canine | Fur changes colors |
| | (dog) family | with the seasons |
| Sand-colored fur | Lives in underground burrows | Carnivore |
| Omnivore | Can get all its water from food | Small ears |
| Extra-large ears; to help keep cool | Extra fur on its feet | Found in the Tundra |
| Native to Africa | Thick bushy tail | Weighs up to 20 pounds |
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