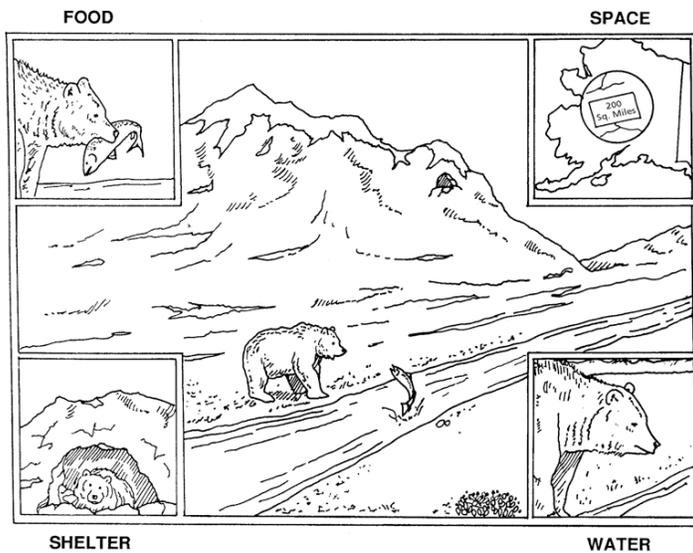


Habitat – Basis for Survival



Habitat Components

Food
Water
Shelter
Space

Seasonal Variations

Secret to Spotting Wildlife
Alaska's Habitats
Adaptations

FOOD: We wouldn't live long if we only had branches to eat, but a moose would.

WATER: We require freshwater to drink, but a harbor seal lives all its life in saltwater.

SHELTER: We can build a house on a hilltop, but a salmon would die up there.

SPACE: Swans that can nest, feed, and hide in a square mile of tundra would not survive in a square mile of city streets and buildings.

To survive, all living things need **food, water, shelter** (or **cover**), and **space** to roam in a place that's right for them (*a suitable arrangement*). These are called **habitat requirements** or **survival needs**.

Insects, spiders, frogs, worms, as well as plants, fish, birds, and mammals can live only where the environment provides these necessities.

- Polar bears cannot survive in a Southeast Alaska even though there are food, water, shelter, and space – they are NOT *the right kind* of food, water,

shelter, and space for an arctic marine mammal! The environment that meets all of the needs of an animal is called its **habitat**.

- The habitat of the red squirrel, for example, is a spruce forest – a place where trees provide plentiful seeds to eat, hiding places to escape from predators, and nesting areas to raise young squirrels.

SEASONAL VARIATIONS

An animal's habitat requirements may be different at different seasons and times in its life. Some wildlife use multiple habitats, either daily, periodically, or seasonally. Here are two examples:

- A female polar bear will den (shelter) from November through April to give birth to cubs. After the cubs are old enough to emerge from the den, she will not use a den again until the next time she is pregnant.
- A brown bear will dine hungrily on tender roots and sedges in spring when few other foods are available. When salmon swim into nearby