

## **THE ANIMAL KINGDOM'S CAST OF CHARACTERS**

This unique look at the lives of our “wild” friends is translated with whimsical mixtures of action, sound, and captivating narrative. Here’s a brief overview of those species receiving the “Animalopolis” treatment:

### **LION**

These kings of the jungle can spend up to 21 hours a day just lying around and napping. Males can grow to 550 pounds and stand a full four feet at the shoulder. While they can live up to 30 years in captivity, their lifespan in the wild averages about half that time. They are increasingly limited to living in protected areas due to human encroachment and loss of natural habitat.

### **BLACK BEAR**

Though referred to as “black” bears, they can also sport brown, blonde, or rarely, even white fur. The cubs, which usually are less than one pound at birth, can grow to over 500 pounds as adults. These plant eaters will occasionally dine on meat and they are sometimes hunted for their gallbladders, which are thought to have healing properties by some Asians.

### **BROWN BEAR**

Each year, when the brown bear emerges from its winter hibernation period, its weight loss can be up to one-third of its total weight. They don’t defecate or urinate during their winter sleep, and doctors have been able to help patients with kidney failure by studying the ways bears recycle urine.

### **HIPPOPOTAMUS**

The hippo population has suffered greatly since 1989 when the international ban on the trade of elephant ivory went into effect, and the hippo became the next target of the illegal hunting trade. Their eyes, ears, and nostrils are on top of their head, making it easy for them to see, hear, and breathe while most all of their body is underwater.

### **RHINOCEROS**

This endangered species tips the scale at a weight that tops a heavily loaded station wagon—nearly 5,000 pounds. In fact, just the head of a white rhinoceros can weigh in at close to 1,000 pounds! They live to be 40-45 years old, and they achieve their substantial size despite being herbivores, primarily existing on grass and leaves.

### **SEA BIRDS**

The film looks at frigate birds, blue-footed boobies, and the albatross—and only those with the unusually colored webbed feet are able to escape mention on the vulnerable or endangered lists. The albatross has been known to have a life span of 50 years in the wild—yet they’re rarely seen on land.

### CAPE BUFFALO

These 1,500-pound grass grazers can't survive in regions with less than 10 inches of annual rainfall, and live in herds that can number into the thousands. They live up to 20 years, and the biggest threat to African wild cattle, including the Cape buffalo, are foreign diseases introduced by non-native species.

### CHEETAH

This endangered species—known for its ability to quickly accelerate to 70 miles per hour in just a few strides—lives without drinking water! They find the moisture they need from their prey. While their appearance may indicate that the cheetah roars like a lion or tiger, they make other sounds: purrs, snarls, hisses, and a bird-like call when excited.

### ZEBRA

Zebras are a dentist's dream, as they spend many hours each day chewing on grass, their primary diet. This continuous chewing wears their teeth down, so their teeth keep growing their entire lives. Of all the species, two (Grevy's and Mountain) zebra groupings are on the endangered list.

### POLAR BEAR

This species is listed as threatened, as opposed to endangered, but the continuing threat of climate change and the accompanying decrease in the thickness of sea ice presents a significant problem. Don't try to sneak up on one of these mammals, as their sense of smell is so sensitive they can catch the scent of a seal on the ice up to 20 miles away!

### RED CRAB

These unique crabs migrate in such large groups (by the millions) that they can be seen from the air, and their natural home, Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean, makes life for them as easy as possible. Special tunnels have been constructed beneath roads so that they can continue their migrations without the fear of being crushed by oncoming traffic.

### SEA LION

With a seafood diet consisting mainly of fish, squid, and octopus, the male of this endangered species can tip the scales at close to 3,000 pounds. While they live up to 20 years, sea lions are born one to a litter. Fortunately, they are protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, which forbids hunting or harassment in U.S. waters.

### SEA OTTER

Even though this endangered species weighs in relatively light (up to 65 pounds for the female and 85 pounds for the male), sea otters are known to eat up to 20 pounds of food per day—a rate of metabolism that many humans would pay handsomely to achieve! Their dense fur ranges from about 100,000 to over 1,000,000 hairs per square inch, depending on the location on the body.