

**Seals, sea lions, and walrus** live in two different worlds. They spend part of their lives on land and part of their lives in water. On land, they may look clumsy. In the water, they swim with a speed and grace that is wonderful to watch. In fact, many species swim so well that they seem to fly underwater.

**To help them fly through the water**, these animals have flippers instead of arms and legs. The flippers look like fins, or “wings,” and this is why seals, sea lions, and walrus are called pinnipeds, which means “wing-footed.”

**In general, pinnipeds have streamlined**, cigar-shaped bodies that slip through the water easily. Strong muscles propel their bodies, and this helps to make these animals very good swimmers. Some pinnipeds swim long distances, and some dive deep to find food.

**Pinnipeds are marine mammals.** Like people and other land mammals, pinnipeds have lungs and must breathe air to stay alive. Like you and me, they are warm-blooded, with a body temperature that must be kept at a certain level all the time. Their babies are born alive like human babies, and the babies get milk from their mothers. Like many land mammals, pinnipeds have hair that covers their bodies.

**Most pinnipeds live in cold places.** For instance, many seals and walrus are found close to the North Pole. There are also seals in waters near the South Pole. In such places, seals often spend a long time swimming under huge blocks of ice looking for food.

**Many people think of snow and ice** when they think of seals and other pinnipeds. But there are seals and sea lions that live in warm places as well. There are sea lions in California, and seals in Hawaii and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Adult male pinnipeds are called bulls.** Adult females are called cows. Baby seals are called pups until they are about five months old, and then they are called yearlings. A young walrus is called a calf.

