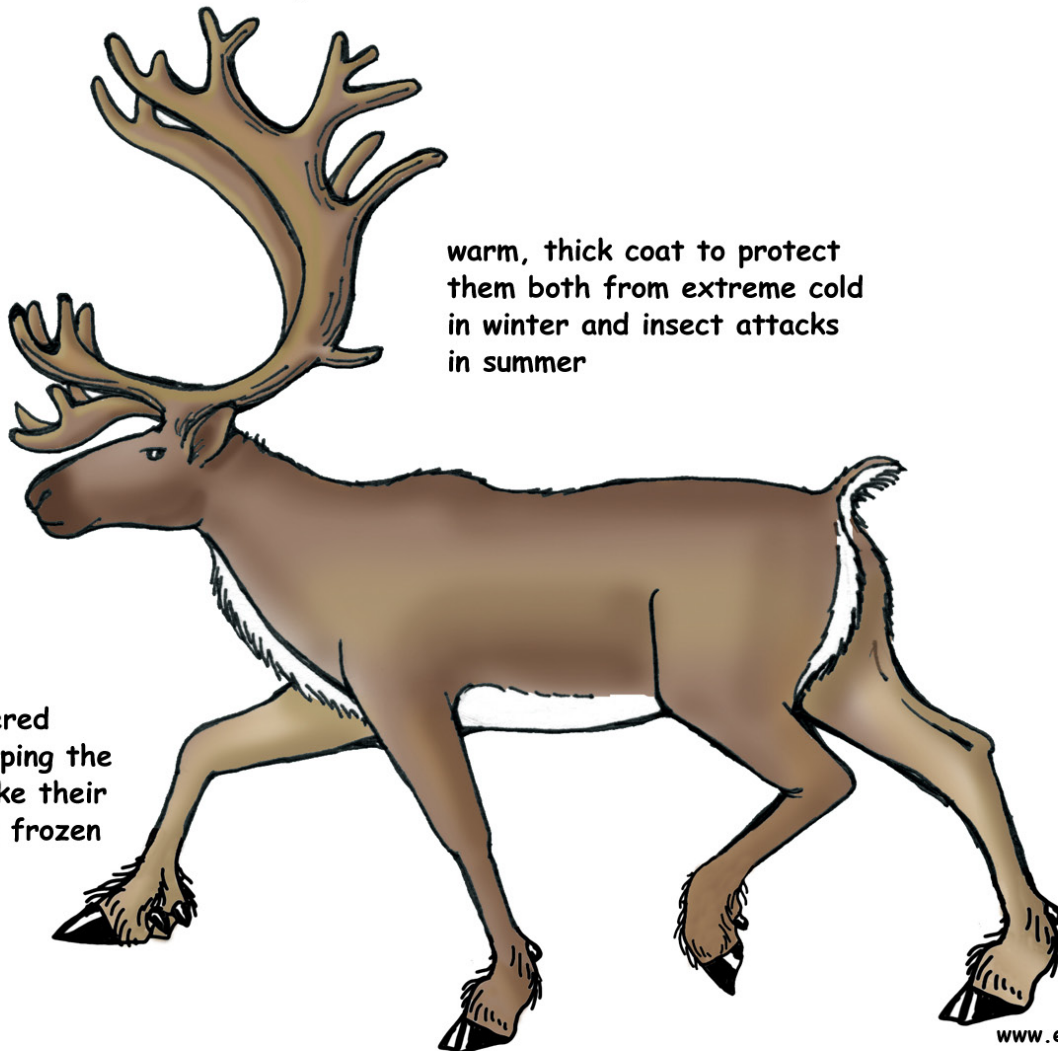


Adaptation in the Caribou

Adaptation in a **population** of living things happens as a result of an **adaptive trait**. This is any **inheritable trait** that increases its survival rate so that it can live longer, reproduce longer, and have more offspring (that also have that trait). Adaptive traits can improve animals find food, make a safer home, escape predators, survive cold or heat or lack of water.

The caribou have developed many helpful adaptations for living in the far north. These adaptive traits include have large, fur-covered hooves for gripping the ice as they make their way across the frozen landscape in their annual migrations. They also have a warm, thick coat to protect them both from extreme cold in winter and insect attacks in summer. They can survive eating only lichens that grow on the barren rocks on the tundra. These **physical adaptations** make it possible to survive in their harsh, northern climate.

Adaptations of the Caribou



warm, thick coat to protect them both from extreme cold in winter and insect attacks in summer

large, fur-covered hooves for gripping the ice as they make their way across the frozen landscape

For Discussion and Critical Thinking:

The caribou has adaptive traits that helps it survive out on the frozen tundra

1. Name one of the caribou's adaptive traits and how it helps them survive:

2. Name one behavioral adaptation that the caribou all do together at the same time each year:

3. Why does the caribou do this?

4. Name two other animals that live on the tundra and describe an adaptive traits that helps them survive.

1. _____

2. _____

4. Do you have any physical traits that help you survive? Discuss one.
