



## Caribou

We know caribou by the more popular name of reindeer. They inhabit the Arctic, “frozen north”, and are an example of God’s design. To prepare them for their inhospitable habitat, God gave caribou several features that make their survival possible.

Both male and female caribou have antlers, while other species of deer do not. Since they use those antlers in the winter to search through the snow for food, it becomes obvious why God graced both genders with them.

Caribou have a two-layered fur coat.<sup>1</sup> The outer layer keeps the cold out and the inner layer keeps the heat in. The outer coat consists of hollow hairs that help conserve the heat of the caribou’s body.

The long legs of the caribou help them plod through deep snow but also pose a problem since they are often immersed in the snow. How to keep them warm is a problem that a specific design of God solves. God placed the veins and arteries in the legs close together. The warm blood being pumped from the heart and warmer body runs through the arteries in the legs, warming the cooler returning blood of the veins. This heat exchange helps keep the legs at 50 degrees Fahrenheit while the normal body temperature is 105 degrees.

Caribou hooves and feet are also a marvelous design by God. The tundra becomes soft and wet during the summer. During that time, the footpads of the caribou are spongy, giving better traction. Since winter brings ice and crusty snow, God designed the footpads to shrink so that the edges of the hooves bite more deeply into the harder surface.

In the caribou, we see the antlers, the two-layered fur coat, the hollow hairs, the long legs, veins and arteries in close proximity, and the hooves and feet all designed by God to help caribou survive in cold Arctic winters. He equipped them well for the harsh environment in which they live.

By Dennis Lange

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/caribou/BuildACaribou.html>