

HERE COME *the* Bears

Alice Goudey



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HERE COME
the Bears



by Alice Goudey
illustrated by Garry MacKenzie

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Prior to 1975, Alaskan brown bears and grizzly bears were considered to be separate species. Now it's known that they are the same, *Ursus arctos*, but that grizzly bears are a subspecies, *Ursus arctos horribilis*, of brown bears.

Even though grizzlies are a subspecies, the difference between a grizzly bear and a brown bear is fairly arbitrary. In North America, brown bears are generally considered to be those of the species that have access to coastal food resources like salmon. Grizzly bears live further inland and typically do not have access to marine-derived food resources.

Besides habitat and diet, there are physical differences between brown and grizzly bears. Large male brown bears in Katmai, Alaska, can routinely weigh over 1000 pounds in the fall. In contrast, grizzly bears in Yellowstone National Park weigh far less on average. There have been no documented cases of grizzly bears weighing over 900 pounds in Yellowstone.

—US National Park Services

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THE GRIZZLY BEARS





THE GRIZZLY BEARS

Two furry little Grizzly Bears peek out of their den high in the Rocky Mountains.

It is the first time they have seen the outside world.

Patches of snow lie upon the mountainside. But the sun is warm, the sky is blue and tiny blades of grass can be seen here and there.

The little cubs whimper and cry for their mother even though they can see her just outside the den.

Mother Grizzly Bear rears up on her hind legs and sniffs the air.

It is spring and she is hungry.

She has been sleeping and dozing in her den all winter. But she did not sleep as soundly as a woodchuck does. She is a light sleeper. She would have awakened if a hunter had entered the den.

She has had no food or water since she went to sleep. She did not store food in her den to eat during the winter as squirrels do. She stored *her* food in her own body.

Before she went to sleep she ate acorns and beechnuts, mice, berries and many other things until her sides grew fat and round.

She ate so much that she did not need another bite of food for four months.

Now Mother Grizzly Bear is hungry for the young green grass, the tender ferns and the skunk cabbage roots that are growing where the snow has melted.

She is very thirsty. She drinks some water made by the melting snow which she finds in a hollow place in a rock.



Mother Grizzly Bear is a large shaggy creature with a big head and a dished face. She belongs to the “dish-faced” bear family.

She has small eyes for such a large animal. She has little rounded ears and a funny stump of a tail. She has a hump on her shoulders which makes her look different from her cousins, the Black Bears.

Her shaggy coat is dark brown. Many of the hairs are tipped with a whitish-silvery color. This is the reason she is sometimes called Silvertip.

Brother Cub is dark brown like his mother. Sister Cub, who is smaller than her brother, has a pale yellow coat.



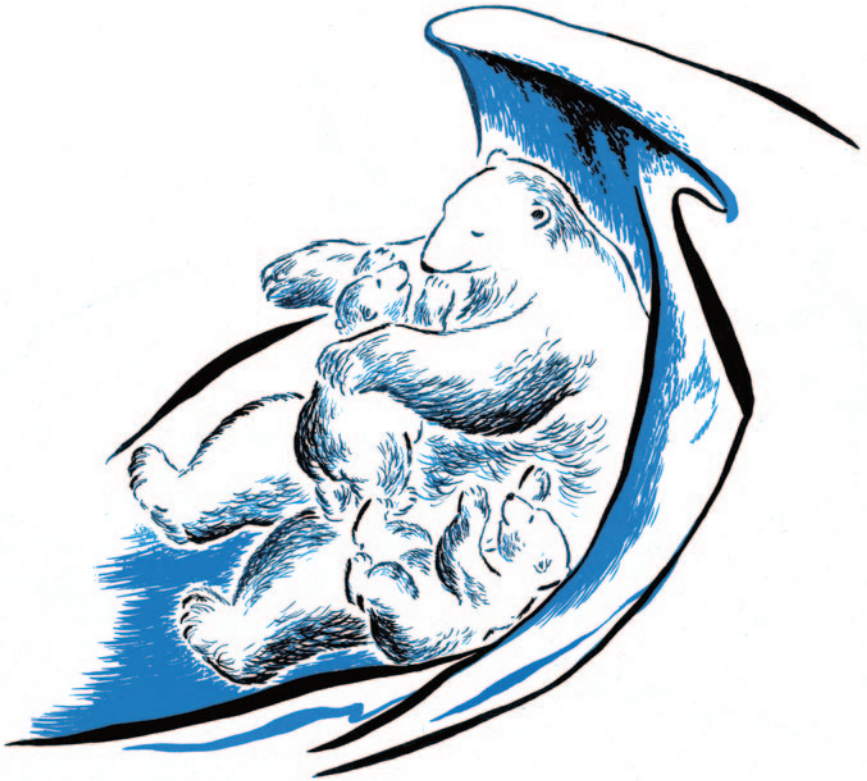
Mother makes herself into an umbrella for the tired cubs. She pushes them underneath her, and straddling wide, she leads them safe and dry to the den.

The days come and go. Mother takes Brother and Sister farther and farther from the den. Every day they learn more about bear ways.

Sometimes they do not go back to their den at night. They find shelter beneath some drooping pine boughs or in a hollow place in the ground made by an uprooted tree.

They learn to strip the mountain berries from the vines. They do this by pulling whole branches through their mouths and chomping down berries, stems and leaves. They learn to dig for

THE POLAR BEARS





THE POLAR BEARS

Two little Polar Bear cubs follow their mother across the snow-covered land near the North Pole.

They look like little walking snowballs, with black-button eyes and black-tipped noses.

Mother Polar Bear makes big tracks in the snow but the cubs make little tracks no bigger than a silver dollar.

Walking through the deep snow is hard work for such small bears. Brother falls down in a snow drift and cries. Sister tries to comfort him.

Mother Polar Bear is a kind mother.
She lets the tired little cubs climb up
on her back for a piggy-back ride.

Hi! Ho! Away they go toward the
open sea.



It is easy for Mother to carry her cubs on her back, for she is big and strong.

She wears a yellowish-white coat of heavy fur which keeps her warm in the cold Arctic weather. Her enemies, as well as the animals she wants to kill, cannot see her very easily because her coat is nearly the same color as the snow. Her nose and lips and eyes are black.

Mother Polar Bear's neck is longer than that of Mother Grizzly Bear, and her head is small and slender.

Of all the bears in the world, the Polar Bear family is the most beautiful.



Before the long Arctic winter began Mother Polar Bear left her hunting grounds along the water's edge and came inland to make her winter home.

With her huge paws she scooped out a den in the deep snow. Down and down she dug. Then, curling up in the hole, she let the snow drift over her. The rising warmth from her body kept open a little breathing hole in the snow that covered her.

Mother Polar Bear drowsed in her snug white bed all during the cold, dark winter while the snow drifted deeper and deeper in the outside world.

Here, in January, the two little cubs were born.

Like their cousins, the Grizzly Bears, they were born with no teeth, and eyes shut tight. They were somewhat larger, but they did not weigh as much as *two* pounds of butter. Their pink skins were almost naked, but before long they were covered with snow-white downy fur. They opened their eyes and cut their teeth when they were about six weeks old.

The little Polar Bears grew much faster than human babies. Now, by mid-March, they are big enough to follow their mother as she returns to her hunting grounds near the water.

