



## BREAKWATER STUDY GUIDES

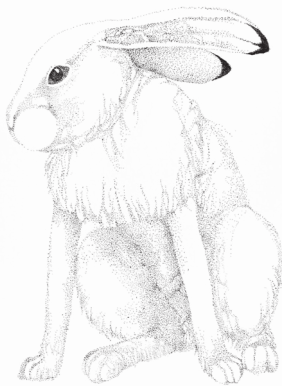


# LITTLE SNOWSHOE

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# THE ARCTIC HARE



**L**ittle Snowshoe is an Arctic Hare that lives on the coastal tundra of Labrador. He was born in June in a shallow nest stamped out by his mother in the vegetation near a big boulder. Like his brother and sister leverets, he was born with grayish-brown fur. His eyes were open, and very soon he was ready to hop about over the sedges and grasses and scattered rocks of the tundra.

It is September. Little Snowshoe is large, perhaps 8 pounds, and his coat is white. (In the High Arctic, the Arctic Hare is white the year round.) His mother has been nursing him once a day all summer long, but soon she will stop. Little Snowshoe and his brothers and sisters will not be nursed anymore. They will find all their food by themselves.

Little Snowshoe likes to nibble the delicious plants of the tundra, especially the Arctic willow which grows everywhere. He eats its bark, twigs, leaves, flowers, even its roots. And when spring comes, he will discover the purple saxifrage flower, a favorite food of the Arctic Hare.

Little Snowshoe is named for his very large furry feet. They are like snowshoes and keep him on top of the snow. All four of his feet have sharp claws. With these, he can dig into the snow. If he finds meat, he may eat it. If he sees seaweed in the ice, he will be able to chisel down to get it. And if he is cold, he may dig out a shelter to rest and to keep warm.

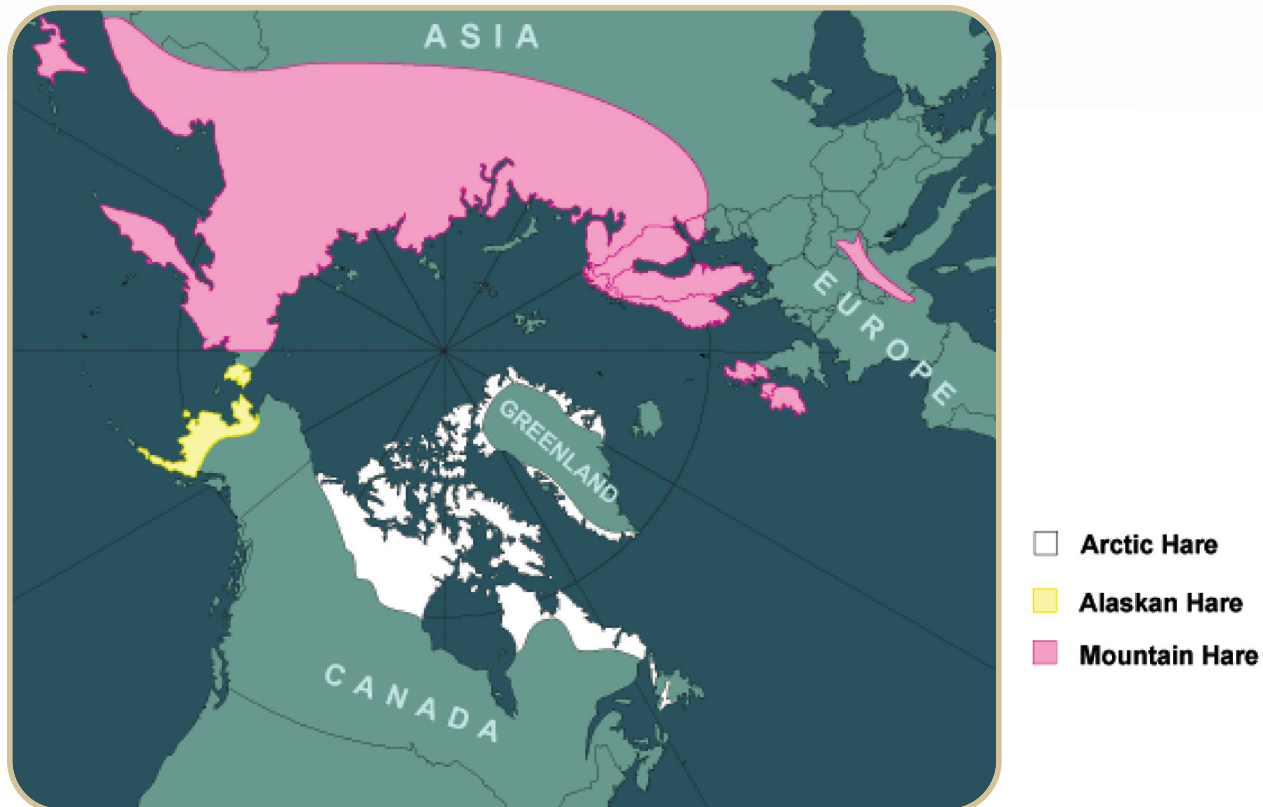
Little Snowshoe can leap and bound very fast. When chased by a predator, he looks like a kangaroo bounding on his hind feet!



*David R. Gray*

Arctic Fox, Canada Lynx, wolves, weasels, the Snowy Owl, hawks, Gyrfalcon, Peregrine Falcon and human hunters. All these predators have to be smart and quick to catch Little Snowshoe and his brothers and sisters.

Little Snowshoe likes the tundra because he is an Arctic Hare. There are no trees on the tundra. Only rocks, small plants and long open spaces to run and feed and play. But here in Labrador, where Little Snowshoe lives, there is a bay that extends inland from the ocean. Here the tundra changes to woods with willow thickets and spruce trees. There is even a village here in the sheltered bay. This is where Little Snowshoe has travelled and this is where he is lost and cannot find his mother.





## WORDS TO KNOW

**Arctic Hare**, *ukaliq* in the Arctic and *ukalik* in Labrador, (*Lepus arcticus*): a small fur-bearing mammal that belongs to the hare and rabbit family (*Leporidae*).

**Arctic willow** (*Salix arctica*): the most common and most northern willow of the arctic. Musk Oxen and Arctic Hares graze on it.

**Camouflage**: having the same coloration as one's surroundings.

When the Arctic Hare is white, he is *camouflaged* in the snow. When his fur is mixed gray and brown, he is *camouflaged* among the rocks and vegetation of the tundra. *Camouflage* provides protection from predators.

**Hare**: small mammals in the same family as rabbits but differing from rabbits in many ways. Hares like open places and escape predators by running. Their leverets are born above ground. They have fur at birth; their eyes are open and they can help themselves. Rabbits dig burrows. Their young (bunnies or kits) are born in a nest below ground. They are naked and helpless at birth. They live in many kinds of habitats – forests, thickets, hedgerows, and marshes.

**Leveret**: a baby hare.

**Partridge**: local name for Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*) found in low areas where there is much vegetation.

**Predator**: an animal that kills and eats another animal.

**Purple saxifrage** (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*): one of the first plants to bloom in the Arctic spring. It spreads in cushion-like mats and is found from the High Arctic south along the coast of Labrador to Newfoundland. It is one of the four plants that grow closest to the North Pole in northern Canada and in Greenland. Purple saxifrage is the official flower of Nunavut.

**Tundra**: treeless plains of the Arctic extending southward along the coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland.

**Vegetation**: plant life.



# ACTIVITIES

## 1. Where is Little Snowshoe?

**OBJECTIVE:** *Learning about Camouflage*

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**MATERIALS:** paper • markers • paints • crayons • pencils

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**ACTIVITY:**

- a. Children draw Little Snowshoe camouflaged in the snow in winter or in the vegetation and rocks of the tundra in summer, **OR**
- b. They draw leverets hidden (camouflaged) in their pictures. Other children see how many leverets they can find in the pictures.

## 2. Following Little Snowshoe?

**OBJECTIVE:** *Learning Story Sequence*

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**MATERIALS:** a roll of paper or large sheets of paper to tape together • tape • popsicle stick

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**ACTIVITY:**

- a. On the roll of paper or on the sheets of paper taped together, map out where Little Snowshoe travelled when he was lost.
- b. Draw tracks to each of the six spots where Little Snowshoe stopped in the story (1. clump of grass... 2. rock... 3. bucket by village... 4. snowman... 5. partridge... 6. balsam fir tree...).
- c. Draw a picture of each spot.
- d. Make a Little Snowshoe. Cut him out and attach him to a popsicle stick.
- e. Hop Little Snowshoe along as the story is read.

### 3. What does the Arctic Hare Eat and what are the Arctic Hare's Predators?

**OBJECTIVE:** *Learning about the Food Chain*

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**ACTIVITY:** P.E. Game: Arctic Hares vs. their Predators

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**SET UP AND EQUIPMENT:**

- Picture cards of the Arctic Hare's food (grass, purple saxifrage, roots and twigs of Arctic willow, meat, blackberries, seaweed) or beanbags to represent food placed around the gym or in hoops at the corners of the gym.
- One mat in front of each wall to be a safe area for the Arctic Hares who cannot be tagged while resting there.
- Five children are Predators. (Each child might wear a card around his/her neck to identify which predator he/she is.) Choose from: Canada Lynx, Arctic Fox, wolf, weasel, Snowy Owl, Gyrfalcon, Peregrine Falcon, hawk.
- Everyone else is Prey (Arctic Hares).

**PLAY:**

- The object of the game is for the Predators to tag as many Arctic Hares as possible. The Prey (Arctic Hares) try to find as much food (beanbags or cards) as possible to bring back to a safe area (mat) before being tagged by the Predators.
- To start, the Predators are in the center circle, the Prey stand on mats.
- If the Prey (Arctic Hares) are tagged, they crouch down and become baby leverets. They can be freed by being tagged by an Arctic Hare.
- Game continues. Pick new Predators every three minutes or so.

*Can also be adapted for outdoors by using trees or other natural features for 'safe areas.'*

# Ukaliq

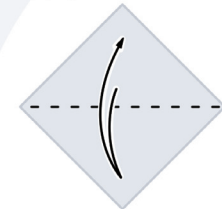
*The Arctic Hare.*



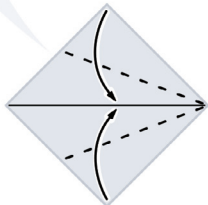
## Arctic Hare Origami Figure



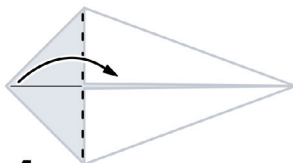
- 1** Start with a square piece of paper.



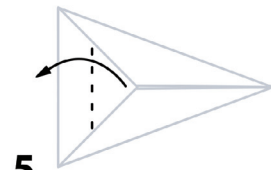
- 2** Fold it in half to make a guideline.



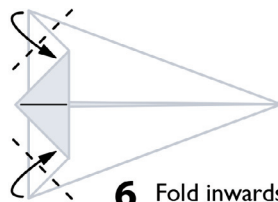
- 3** Fold in towards this guideline.



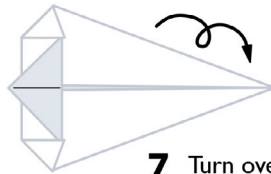
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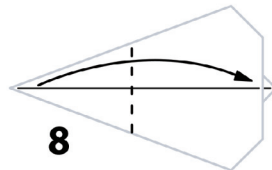
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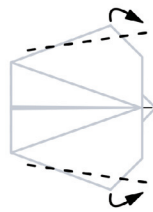
- 6** Fold inwards.



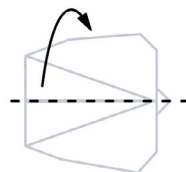
- 7** Turn over.



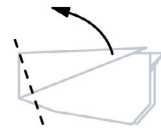
**8**



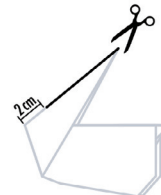
- 9** Fold under.



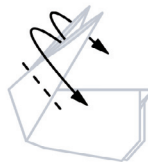
- 10** Fold in half and under.



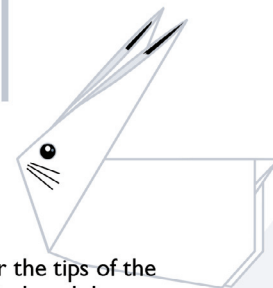
- 11** Lift and then fold along the dotted line.



- 12** Cut along the middle, leaving 2 cm uncut at the bottom.



- 13** Open the ears by spreading the inside and outside of each, to the point of the dotted line.



Colour the tips of the ears black and draw eyes and white whiskers.

