A Day in the Life of an animal The Reindeer I’m a reindeer. Some people call me a caribou as well. I can be found in North America. I am a species of deer, native to Arctic, Subarctic, and tundra, boreal and mountainous regions of northern Europe, Siberia, and North America. I can reach up to four feet at the shoulder and weigh up to 113 kilograms. Our entire species have been domesticated-there are no more wild reindeers. I can pull up to twice my own weight. This makes me an ideal animal to pull a sleigh that can be loaded with a large amount of cargo. Life in the tundra is hard, but I have it easy thanks to my amazing evolutionary enhancements. I am well-adapted and designed to living in cold regions and I can smell food even if it is buried under deep snow. My hooves are special and they are broad and function as snowshoes to support me over snowy grounds.

They emit a “clicking” sound as I walk. In the summer, my foot pads are softened which provides me with extra traction. My pads tighten during the winter which provides me with traction in the slippery snow and ice. My coat consists of thick fur and stiff hairs which protect me from the worst of the weather. A thick, woolly, and waterproof undercoat keeps out the deep cold by trapping air near my skin. My nose is specially adapted to warm the air I breathe before it enters my lungs. My calves were born early summer last year and within only 90 minutes of their birth, my baby calves could run as fast as me. Our calves are blessed with this important ability which they require to keep up with their mothers. I am able to cover vast distances, crossing both rivers and lakes, in search of feeding grounds. My husband’s antlers are larger than those of mine.

I forage on a variety of plants throughout the year. During winter, I feed on lichens, shrubs and grass. During the summer, I eat a wide variety of green plants and flowering plants. Our generation played an important role in the survival of many cultures. The hunting of reindeer kept various tribes alive. Most of our organs are edible and many are important ingredients of traditional dishes of Artic tribes. Researchers at University College London discovered that we are the only mammals that can see ultraviolet light. While human vision cuts off at wavelengths around 400 nanometers, we can see up to 320 nanometers. It is enough to help us see things in the glowing white of the Arctic. Things like white fur and urine are difficult, even impossible, for humans to see in the snow, but for us, they show up in high contrast. I am well known in folklore due to Santa Claus's sleigh being pulled by flying reindeer, a popular element of Christmas.

Science still hasn’t worked out how nine of us manage to fly while pulling a sled carrying presents for every child in the world.