



**Baltimore Woods
Nature Center**
Nature in your hands

Warm in Winter

How do animals survive the cold temperatures of winter? What adaptations do they have that helps them stay warm? One strategy is to increase their body fat! Test out how fat helps animals in winter with this fun experiment.

Materials:

Large bowl

Ice & cold water

Plastic baggies

Shortening

Part 1 of experiment: Fill a large bowl with ice and water and stick your hand in it.

How does it feel?

Part 2 of experiment: Fill a plastic baggie with about 1/2-3/4 cup of shortening. Make sure the shortening covers the sides and bottom of the bag. Cover your hand with another plastic baggie (so you don't get covered in shortening) and smush your covered hand into the baggie of shortening. Now put your plastic baggie/shortening covered hand into the same bowl of icy water from part 1 of the experiment.

How does it feel now? Is your hand colder, warmer, or the same?



You think it gets cold in New York for the animals—what about Arctic animals? Check out <https://explore.org/livecams/polar-bears/> to see live footage from the Arctic—you might just spot a polar bear!