

D E C E M B E R 2 0 0 6

TRAIL Tails

✧ Santa's Reindeer ✧



Kenai's Korner

Kenai got into the holiday spirit with her reindeer antlers. Here she poses for the camera - I swear she thinks she is "all that" and the attention she is getting is going to her head.

Santa brought a lot of gifts to our home and didn't forget about Kenai. She received a 2 foot long chew bone shaped like a candy cane. It only took her 4 days, but the bone is gone! Maybe if she is a good girl, Santa will bring her another one next year.



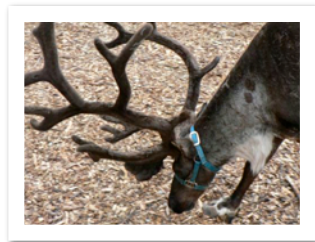
What are reindeer? According to Wikipedia, they are caribou when wild in North America, but reindeer as found in Northern Eurasia. Caribou and reindeer are the same species. They are found throughout Scandinavia (including Iceland), Finland, Northern Russia, and in North America they are found on Greenland, Canada, and Alaska. Wild reindeer, caribou, are still found in North America, Greenland, Iceland, and in southern Norway. In Northern Scandinavia and Russia, the reindeer are mostly domesticated.

While visiting Alaska this past summer, I had the opportunity to meet some domesticated reindeer and found out they are a little smaller than their wild counterparts the caribou.

The Chukchi herders from Russia were the first to bring the domesticated reindeer to Alaska. Then in 1894, the Sami reindeer herders from Lapland were hired by the United States government to introduce herding skills to the Yup'ik and Inupiaq Peoples of

Alaska. As I found out from my visit to the Alaska Native Heritage Center, at the end of their three-year duty, some Sami stayed in Alaska to establish homes and some married into Alaska Native families. They built up large domesticated reindeer herds which provided food, clothing, and transportation during the Gold Rush and into the 1930's.

The wild caribou herds are still found in Alaska and migrate in large herds between their birthing habitat and winter habitat. Their wide hooves help them travel through the snow and tundra.



Find more information on reindeer and caribou at the following websites: http://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/html/caribou_reindeer.html and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reindeer>