

Make Ice Age Animal Puppets

Explore some of the animals that lived in Alaska long ago!



Pleistocene of Alaska by Jay Matternes

During the last Ice Age, about 100,000 to 12,000 years ago, interior Alaska was home to many BIG mammals, including woolly mammoths, steppe bison, muskoxen, bears, and even giant beavers! These animals, called *megafauna*, were some of the largest land animals to ever live on Earth.

Materials Needed:

Puppet templates (or draw your own), googly eyes, brown yarn, tissue paper, popsicle sticks, scissors, colored pencils or crayons, glue or tape, other craft supplies (sequins, craft foam, pipe cleaners, etc.).

Instructions:

Step 1: Choose which puppet to make: woolly mammoth, steppe bison, short-faced bear, or scimitar cat. Make one puppet, or make them all!

Step 2: Cut out the puppet template. Use craft materials to decorate your puppet. Make your puppet look realistic, or use your imagination!

Step 3: Glue or tape a popsicle stick to the back of the puppet as a handle.

Step 4: Put on a puppet show. Tell a story about the animals! Try making an Ice Age landscape collage as a backdrop for your puppet show.



Note: Images are not to scale.

Ice Age Animals in Alaska



See Ice Age fossils at the Museum of the North!

During the last Ice Age, about 100,000 to 12,000 years ago, interior Alaska was free of glaciers, and the climate was cold and dry. This *Mammoth Steppe* was home to many mammals, including woolly mammoths, steppe bison, horses, muskoxen, short-faced bears, scimitar cats, American lions, and humans. Paleontologists study fossils to learn more about the plants, animals, and climate of the Ice Age.

Woolly Mammoth (*Mammuthus sp.*)



- Stood up to 10 feet (3 m) tall
- Both males and females had tusks
- Could eat 440 lbs (200 kg) of grass per day
- Scientists study mammoth remains frozen in permafrost

Steppe Bison (*Bison priscus*)



- Could weigh up to 2000 lbs (900 kg)
- Ate a variety of grasses
- A common fossil found in Alaska
- A mummified steppe bison, "Blue Babe", is on display at the Museum of the North

Scimitar Cat (*Homotherium serum*)



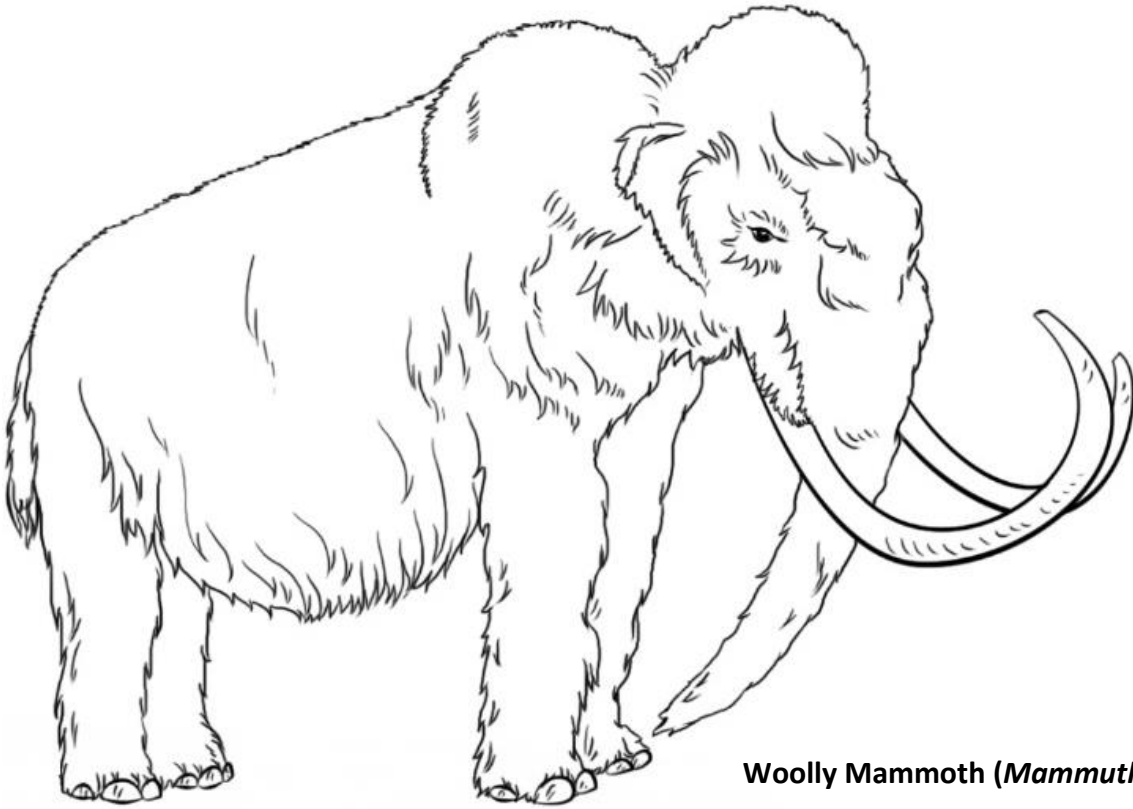
- Related to the saber-tooth tiger
- Had serrated upper canine teeth
- Hunted mammoth calves, horses, & bison
- Many fossils found in interior Alaska are about 35,000 years old

Short-faced Bear (*Arctodus simus*)

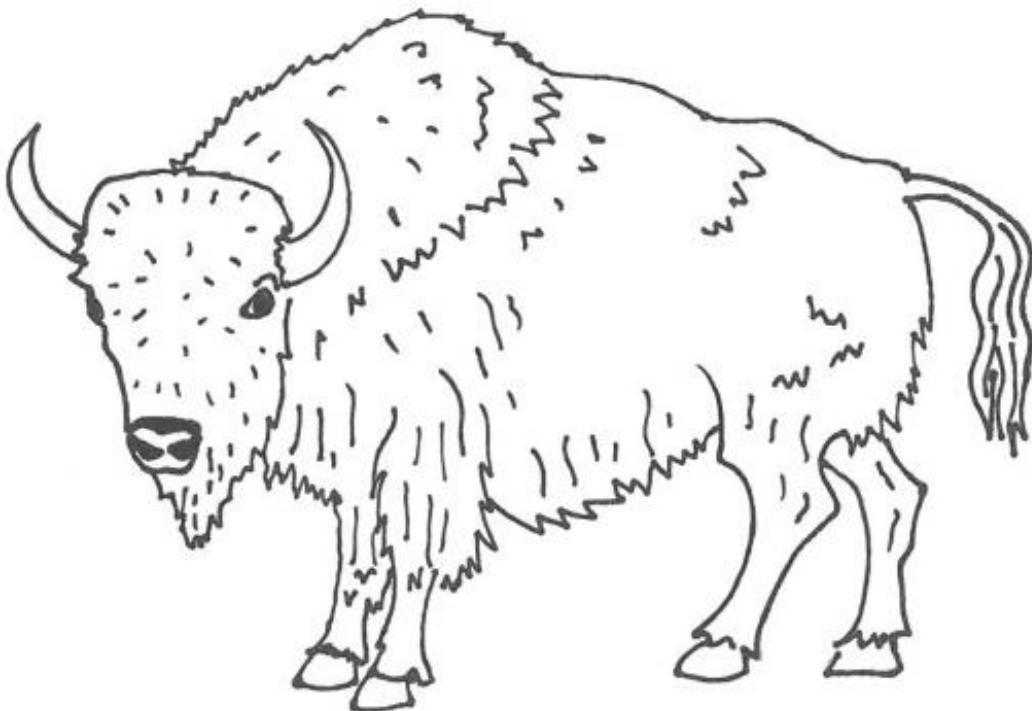


- Stood up to 11 feet (3.4 m) tall on their hind legs
- Were likely scavengers, with wide nostrils letting them smell food from far away
- Only lived in North America

Ice Age Puppet Templates



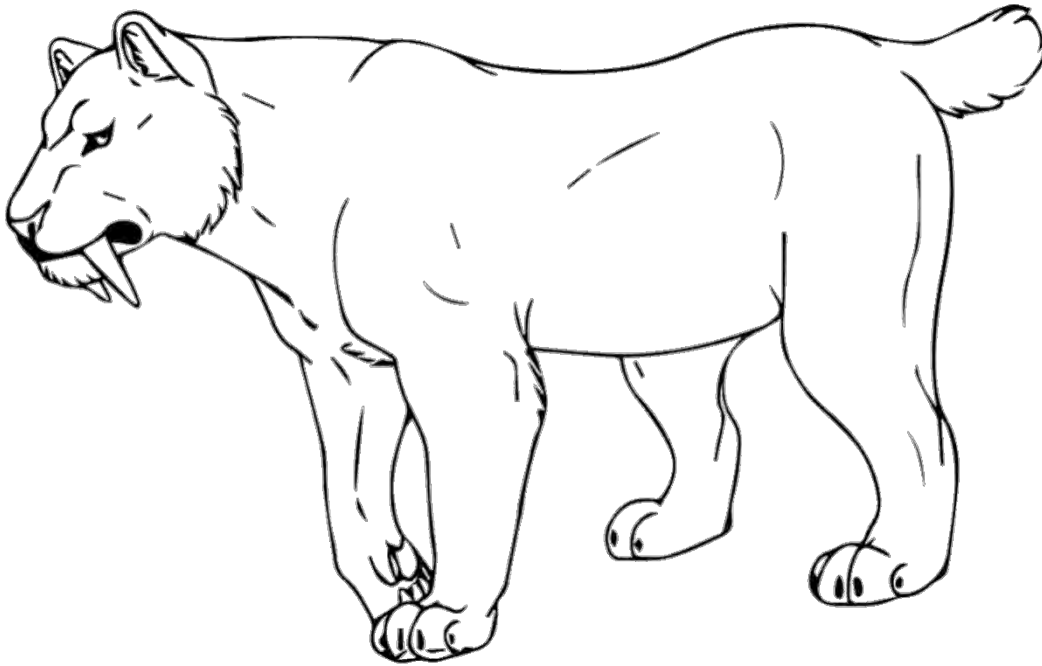
Woolly Mammoth (*Mammuthus sp.*)



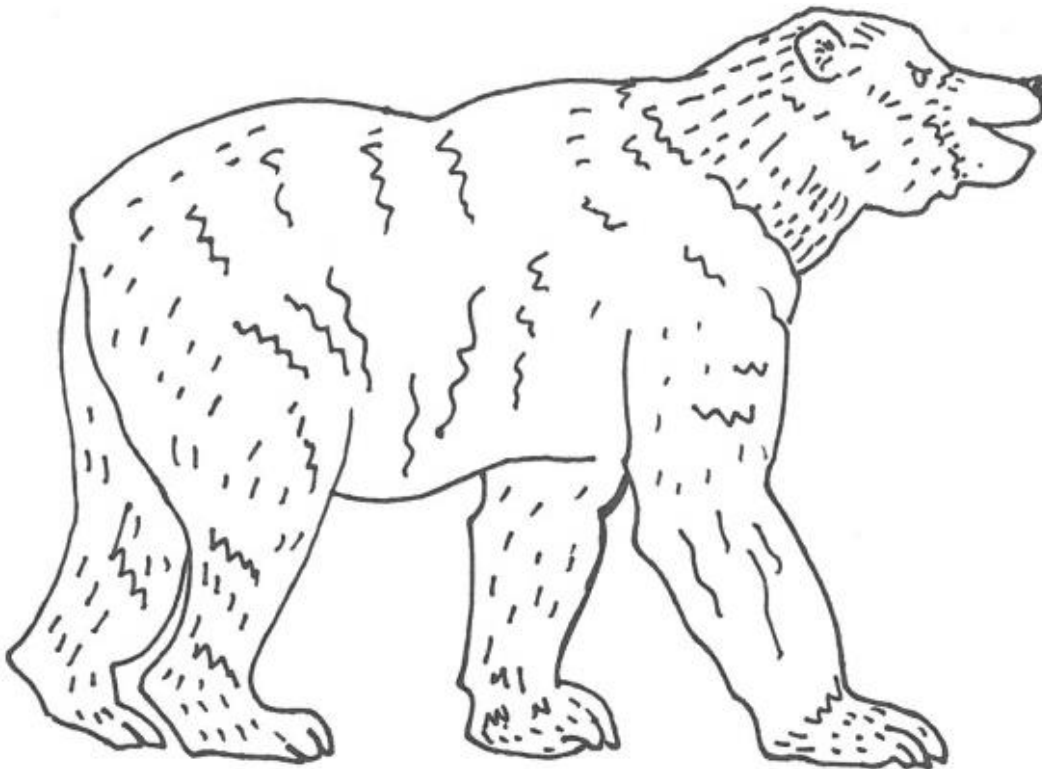
Steppe Bison (*Bison priscus*)

Note: Images are not to scale.

Ice Age Puppet Templates



Scimitar Cat (*Homotherium serum*)



Short-faced Bear (*Arctodus simus*)

Note: Images are not to scale.