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COURAGE // WOLVERINE // RED

If you've ever seen a wolverine, you're lucky. They're not related to wolves, and they're not actually superheroes! But these elusive members of the weasel family, living in the western mountains of North America as well as in northern Europe and Asia, have amazing characteristics.

They have an unusual appearance, with a masked, bear-like face and a stripe on either side of their bodies. An adult wolverine weighs only 30 to 35 pounds, but if snow conditions are right, it can take down a moose, reindeer, or caribou! Wolverines also travel great distances through extreme conditions.

They are not picky eaters. They enjoy vegetarian fare especially in summer, and will also eat carrion (dead animals) if they have to. But they are also fierce predators

and have ferocious appetites. With strong jaws and super-sharp teeth, they will even eat the bones and teeth of animals they hunt.

A wolverine is fearless. One was observed trying to steal a kill from a black bear more than 10 times its size! Wolverines have a keen sense of smell, able to find carcasses or their own stored food buried deep beneath the snow. Their paws act as snow shoes, and their razor-sharp claws help them navigate icy terrain. They don't hibernate; their dense fur helps keep them warm in winter.

Though described as solitary, wolverines have a secret social side. Recently, scientists discovered that wolverine dads visit their young every once and a while, during the kits' first year with their mother.

COURAGE: Being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you're afraid.

Though not the biggest predators around, wolverines have super-sized courage.

