



Animal #12 The Pika

A **pika** is a small mammal with short limbs, a chubby body, rounded ears, and no **tail**. Because of its **high-pitched alarm call** (usually given out when diving into its **burrow**), it is also known as '**whistling hare**'. Pikas are native to **cold climates**, mostly in **Asia, North America**, and parts of **Eastern Europe**. Most species live on rocky mountain sides, where they use the numerous crevices available as shelters. Some pikas, though, dig burrows which they often share with **snowfinches** during the winter, so as to make the shelter warmer for both. Pikas have probably developed a form of **social communication** through a range of **distinct calls** that vary in duration. The calls are used as either a **warning signals** or as a way to **attract the opposite gender**. There are also different calls depending on the type of season. In the spring, for instance, the calls become more frequent due to the **breeding season**, whereas in late summer, the vocalizations become short calls.



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