

BSE 51897

# WAKE UP!



As the sun rises over a field of melting snow, this *alpine marmot* welcomes spring with a sleepy pause. It has a good reason to feel a little groggy: It's been asleep for nearly six months!

Last fall, tucked safely inside a burrow, the furry marmot curled up with its family. As the weather outside became harsh and cold, the marmots began a sleep that would last the rest of the fall, all of winter, and part of spring. That super-long sleep is called **hibernation**. Some furry, warm-blooded creatures such as marmots and chipmunks do it. But they aren't the only ones. Many toads, snakes, and even insects also choose to snooze when the temperatures drop. Turn the page to find out who else hibernates—and why hibernation is so much more than just a really long nap!



# WINTER SLOW-DOWN

Winter can be a tough time for wild animals. **Frigid** weather makes it hard for them to stay warm. And there's not usually much food to go around. Some animals **migrate**, or travel to another place. Some stay put and struggle through. But many animals find burrows or dens and put their lives on pause.



When an animal hibernates, it stops eating, moving, and going to the bathroom. Its heart rate slows way down—from as many as 150 beats per minute to as few as five. Often, its body gets much cooler, though for some, like the *American black bear* (above), this isn't the case. And a hibernating animal may hardly breathe at all.

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