

Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE 23



Marmot

GROUND SQUIRREL (RODENT)

HABITAT & DIET

Burrows in mountains and plains. North America, Asia, and Europe. Eat mainly flowers, grasses, and insects.

FUN FACT:

Marmots are large ground squirrels and are known by many names including: Whistle Pig, Groundhog, and Rock Chuck.



WHERE DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE HARDEST PLACE TO LIVE?

My family and I often drive up to explore areas above the tree line. Do you know what a tree line is? It is the elevation where trees no longer grow. Where I live in Colorado, the tree line is around 11,500 feet above sea level. Above the tree line is the tundra ecosystem. On the tundra, there are no trees. It is often freezing and windy. It can seem like nothing lives up there. However, when you look closely, you can see life all around! All kinds of flowers grow up on the tundra. You'll find some species of birds and a surprising amount of animals, including marmots!

Whenever we explore the tundra, my family and I find yellow-bellied marmots. They live in one of the harshest areas on earth but seem very happy! God designed them to thrive, or to do very well, up on the tundra. Their thick fur protects them and keeps them warm, and they find plenty to eat with not many other animals competing for the flowers and grass so high up.

Have you ever heard Philippians 4:13? "I can do all things through Christ, because he gives me strength." The apostle Paul wrote these words, and he was talking about facing challenging conditions in life. Here are verses 12–14: "I know how to live when I am poor, and I know how to live when I have plenty. I have learned the secret of being happy at any time in everything that happens, when I have enough to eat and when I go hungry, when I have more than I need and when I do not have enough. I can do all things through Christ, because he gives me strength."

Paul was making an important point that when conditions are harsh (like life on the tundra), we can persevere and stay strong because Jesus gives us strength. Like the marmots, God has given us everything we need to thrive even in tough conditions.

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