

# Pine Marten

Martens are related to mink, otters, badgers, wolverines, weasels, and skunks. Pine martens are very agile and can climb high up in the tree tops. They are slender with a pointed face and a bushy tail. Their tail helps them balance in the trees. Male martens are larger than females. They are about the same length as a house cat. These cute animals are between 19-27 inches long including their tail which is from 5-9 inches long. They only weigh between 1-3 pounds. Pine martens are brown with paler underparts and dark brown legs. They have small rounded ears and sharp teeth for eating meat.



Martens prefer old coniferous forests in Northern climates. Martens live in most parts of Canada in old growth forests best because there are plenty of dead trees to find food and shelter in. An old forest has a thick canopy that provides shade for the ground cover which stays dark and damp. This environment is ideal for small animals such as voles and squirrels.

Martens have special ways of keeping warm during the winter. They burrow into the snow which insulates them from the cold. Martens look for hollows in the snow around tree stumps and shrubs to find mice and other small mammals. They even have fur on the soles of their feet to keep them warm and to create a snowshoe effect when they walk!



Martens have very few enemies besides humans. Logging has had major effects on marten populations. Since the martens rely on old growth forests for food and shelter, clearing the forests leaves the animals hungry and homeless.