

## 'Santa's reindeer' are being hunted by wolves

25th December 2025



Reindeer in the region of Lapland, Finland, are famous worldwide. They are also very busy at this time of year. That's because they are helping Santa Claus to deliver presents to children all over the world. However, the

animals are facing a great danger. Reindeer herders report that an increasing number of reindeer are being killed by wolves. The Reindeer Herders' Association in Finland says wolves have killed around 1,950 reindeer this year. That is a 70 per cent increase from last year. Juha Kujala, a Lapland herder, is worried about the future of his animals. He said there has been a sudden increase in the number of wolves in Finland. This has upset the natural balance between reindeer and wolves.

Mr Kujala joked to reporters about his animals, even though he is worried about them. He said: "These are Santa's reindeer. But we are really lucky because Santa needs them for only one day of the year, so we can fly them for the other 364 days." Many herders believe the Ukraine War is the reason why there are suddenly more wolves in Finland. They say that men who used to hunt wolves in Russia have gone to fight in Ukraine. This means many wolves are crossing the 1,340-km border between Russia and Finland. Kujala said: "It's worse since the Ukraine War started. The wolves are coming from the Russian side. There's nobody left hunting the wolves."

Sources: [nordicvisitor.com](http://nordicvisitor.com) / [cnn.com](http://cnn.com) / [mezha.net](http://mezha.net)

## Writing

We should stop all hunting of animals. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

reindeer / famous / worldwide / presents / animals / wolves / natural balance / joked / reporters / worried / lucky / fly / fight / Ukraine War / hunting / Russia

## True / False

- 1) The region of Lapland is in the north of Norway. T / F
- 2) Reindeer herders said wolves are killing more and more reindeer. T / F
- 3) There was a 70% rise in the number of reindeer wolves killed this year. T / F
- 4) More wolves in Finland have disrupted the reindeer-wolf balance. T / F
- 5) A herder is happy that he can fly his reindeers 365 days a year. T / F
- 6) Russia is sending its soldiers to Finland to hunt the wolves. T / F
- 7) The border between Finland and Russia is over 1,300 km long. T / F
- 8) A reindeer herder said no one was hunting the wolves. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. <b>region</b>   | a. rise      |
| 2. <b>deliver</b>  | b. think     |
| 3. <b>helping</b>  | c. disturbed |
| 4. <b>increase</b> | d. fortunate |
| 5. <b>upset</b>    | e. take      |
| 6. <b>worried</b>  | f. remaining |
| 7. <b>lucky</b>    | g. area      |
| 8. <b>believe</b>  | h. concerned |
| 9. <b>started</b>  | i. assisting |
| 10. <b>left</b>    | j. began     |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about reindeer?
- b) What do you know about Finland?
- c) Why are reindeer used in the Santa Claus story?
- d) What do you know about the Santa Claus story?
- e) What animals in your country are facing great danger?
- f) How worried are you about the future?
- g) What do you know about wolves?
- h) What advice do you have for the reindeer herders?

## Phrase Match

1. They are also very busy
  2. they are helping Santa Claus to deliver
  3. a Lapland herder is worried about the future
  4. there has been a sudden increase
  5. upset the natural balance between
  6. Santa needs them for only
  7. men who used to
  8. many wolves are crossing
  9. It's worse since
  10. There's nobody left
- a. presents to children
  - b. reindeer and wolves
  - c. the 1,340-km border
  - d. the Ukraine War started
  - e. at this time of year
  - f. hunting the wolves
  - g. one day of the year
  - h. in the number of wolves
  - i. hunt wolves in Russia
  - j. of his animals

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of reindeer?
- c) Would you like a job that involves animals?
- d) What do you think of hunting?
- e) Should all hunting be banned?
- f) What can Finland do to protect its reindeer?
- g) What questions would you like to ask a reindeer herder?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Santa Claus?

## Spelling

1. reindeer in the inoegr of Lapland
2. smaofu worldwide
3. helping Santa Claus to ilredev presents
4. the reindeer herders' saooacsniiit
5. there has been a desndu increase
6. upset the natural bnclaae
7. even ghouht he is worried
8. we are really lykcu
9. the nsroea why
10. crossing the 1,340-km ebrdor
11. It's wsoer since the Ukraine War
12. There's nobody left utihngn the wolves.

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. a	5. c
6. h	7. d	8. b	9. j	10. f

## Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.  
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	In which area of Finland do reindeers live?
2.	What do reindeer help Santa Claus do?
3.	Who reported on the number of reindeer killed this year?
4.	By how much did reindeer deaths rise compared to last year?
5.	What natural balance has the increase in wolves upset?
6.	Who did a reindeer herder joke to?
7.	For how long did the reindeer herder say Santa needed reindeer?
8.	What do many herders say is the reason for the increase in wolves?
9.	How long is the border between Finland and Russia?
10.	Who did the reindeer herder say was hunting wolves?

## Speaking – Presents

Rank these with your partner. Put the best presents at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- A book
- Chocolate
- Socks
- A game
- A watch
- A nice pen
- Flowers
- A restaurant meal

### Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	T	5	F	6	F	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.