

Figure 7 In the tundra, mosses and lichens cover rocks.

The tundra biome, as shown in **Figure 7**, has long, cold winters with almost 24 hours of night. It also has short, cool summers with almost 24 hours of daylight. In the summer, only the top meter of soil thaws. Underneath the thawed soil lies a permanently frozen layer of soil, called *permafrost*. This frozen layer prevents the water in the thawed soil from draining. Because of the poor drainage, the upper soil layer is muddy. This muddy layer of soil makes a great breeding ground for insects, such as mosquitoes. Many birds migrate to the tundra during the summer to feed on the insects. Other animals that live in the tundra are caribou, reindeer, and polar bears. Plants in this biome include mosses and lichens.

Tundra

- Average Temperature Range
-27°C to 5°C (-17°F to 41°F)
- Average Yearly Precipitation
0 to 25 cm
- Soil Characteristics
frozen

Tundra

The climate zone located at the North or South Pole and its surrounding area is called the **polar zone**. Polar climates have the coldest average temperatures of all the climate zones. Temperatures in the winter stay below freezing. The temperatures during the summer remain cool. **Figure 6** shows the distribution of the biomes found in the polar zone.

The Polar Zone

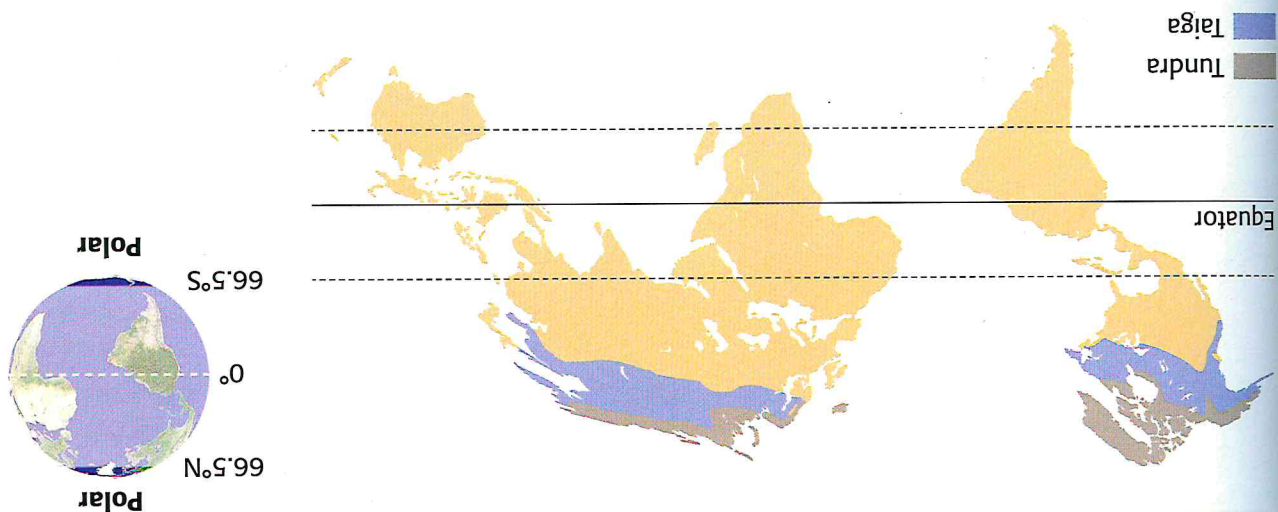


Figure 6 Biomes of the Polar Zone