

Otter



- **Otters** are semi-aquatic (or in one case **aquatic**) fish-eating **mammals**. The otter subfamily **Lutrinae** forms part of the **family Mustelidae**, which also includes **weasels**, **polecats**, **badgers**, as well as others.



Food

- With **twelve species** in seven genera, otters have an almost worldwide distribution.



- They mainly eat **aquatic animals**, **fish** and **shellfish**, but also **birds**, **frogs**, **crayfish**, **crabs** and **small mammals**.

- For most otters, **fish** is the primary staple of their **diet**.



- Some otters are **expert** at opening **shellfish**, and others will feed on available **small mammals** or **birds**.

Gestation

- The time of **gestation** of otters is about **60 to 86 days**. The **newborn baby** is taken care of by the **mother**, the **father**, and all the other **offspring**.



- **Female** otters reach sexual maturity at approximately **2 years** of age, while **males** can produce offspring at approximately **3 years** of age.

- After **one month**, the young otter can come out of the **cave**, and **after 2 months** it is able to **swim**.



- It lives with its family for about **1 year** so that it can **learn** and be **kept safe** until **maturity**. Otters live up to **10 years**.

Characteristics

- Otters have **long, slim bodies** and relatively **short limbs**, with **webbed paws**. Most have **sharp claws** on their feet, and all except the **sea otter** have long **muscular tails**.



- The **twelve species** range in **adult** size from **0.7 to 1.8 metres** (2 to 6 feet) in length and **5 to 45 kilograms** (10 to 100 pounds) in weight.



- They have a very **soft**, insulated **underfur** which is **protected** by their outer **layer** of long **guard hair**. Their fur keeps them **dry** and **warm** under **water**.



- Many otters live in **cold waters** and have very high **metabolic rates** to help keep them **warm**.

- Because of their beautiful fur, some people are still hunting otters and buying clothes and shoes that are made of otter fur.





□ Sea Otter Fur Trade

- Sea otters can do well in **captivity**, and are featured in over 40 public **aquariums** and **zoos**.



Videos

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQLQhZ-YO_s&NR=1
(Celebrity otters - otters holding hands - otter video)
– almost 15.000.000 views
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhuvaKLJbNw&NR=1> (baby otters)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUJDmAXsEvs> (noisy otters in Zoos)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NQqOiGTUWw&NR=1>

Sources

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otter>
- <http://www.otterjoy.com/otterholdings.html>
- <http://www.google.si/imgres?imgurl=http://upload.wikimedia.org/>
- <http://www.youtube.com/>
- Google pictures





The end

