



OTTERS



KEY INFORMATION

Otters are semi-aquatic mammals found across rivers, lakes, coastal areas, and wetlands in many parts of the world, including North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. They prefer clean water habitats with plenty of food sources.

Otters are excellent swimmers and can reach speeds of up to 11 km per hour in water. They typically live 8 to 12 years in the wild and can weigh between 5 and 14 kg depending on the species.

APPEARANCE

Otters have long, streamlined bodies covered in dense, waterproof fur that keeps them warm in cold water. Their fur is usually brown with lighter patches on the chest and face.

They have webbed feet for swimming, a muscular tail for steering, and small ears and nostrils that close when underwater. Their whiskers help sense the movement of prey in the water.

DIET

Otters are carnivores and primarily eat fish, but they also consume crustaceans, amphibians, and small mammals. They are skilled hunters and often use tools, such as rocks, to break open shellfish.

Otters play an important role in maintaining healthy aquatic ecosystems by controlling fish and invertebrate populations.

FUN FACTS

Otters are known for their playful behaviour, often sliding down muddy banks or playing with objects. They are highly social and may live in family groups.

A group of otters is called a raft when in water. Baby otters are called pups and are cared for by their mothers until they can swim and hunt on their own.

Otters have thick fur with up to 1 million hairs per square inch, making it one of the densest coats in the animal kingdom.

FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.bbcearth.com/factfiles/animals/mammals/otter>



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Where do otters like to live?
2. How fast can an otter swim?
3. What helps otters stay warm in cold water?
4. What do otters use their whiskers for?
5. What do otters eat? Name two things.