

National Geographic Readers: Sea Otters

Sea otter

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The sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*) is a marine mammal native to the coasts of the northern and eastern North Pacific Ocean. Adult sea otters typically weigh between 14 and 45 kg (30 and 100 lb), making them the heaviest members of the weasel family, but among the smallest marine mammals. Unlike most marine mammals, the sea otter's primary form of insulation is an exceptionally thick coat of fur, the densest in the animal kingdom. Although it can walk on land, the sea otter is capable of living exclusively in the ocean.

The sea otter inhabits nearshore environments, where it dives to the sea floor to forage. It preys mostly on marine invertebrates such as sea urchins, various mollusks and crustaceans, and some species of fish. Its foraging and eating habits are noteworthy in several respects. Its...

Marine mammal

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Marine mammals are mammals that rely on marine ecosystems for their existence. They include animals such as cetaceans, pinnipeds, sirenians, sea otters and polar bears. They are an informal group, unified only by their reliance on marine environments for feeding and survival.

Marine mammal adaptation to an aquatic lifestyle varies considerably between species. Both cetaceans and sirenians are fully aquatic and therefore are obligate water dwellers. Pinnipeds are semiaquatic; they spend the majority of their time in the water but need to return to land for important activities such as mating, breeding and molting. Sea otters tend to live in kelp forests and estuaries. In contrast, the polar bear is mostly terrestrial and only go into the water on occasions of necessity, and are thus much less...

Sea

filter feed on them toxic, harming animals like sea otters. Nuclear facilities too can pollute. The Irish Sea was contaminated by radioactive caesium-137

A sea is a large body of salt water. There are particular seas and the sea. The sea commonly refers to the ocean, the interconnected body of seawaters that spans most of Earth. Particular seas are either marginal seas, second-order sections of the oceanic sea (e.g. the Mediterranean Sea), or certain large, nearly landlocked bodies of water.

The salinity of water bodies varies widely, being lower near the surface and the mouths of large rivers and higher in the depths of the ocean; however, the relative proportions of dissolved salts vary little across the oceans. The most abundant solid dissolved in seawater is sodium chloride. The water also contains salts of magnesium, calcium, potassium, and mercury, among other elements, some in minute concentrations. A wide variety of organisms, including...

Monterey Bay Aquarium

shark. The organization's research and conservation efforts also focus on sea otters, various birds, and tunas. Seafood Watch, a sustainable seafood advisory

Monterey Bay Aquarium is a nonprofit public aquarium in Monterey, California. Known for its regional focus on the marine habitats of Monterey Bay, it was the first to exhibit a living kelp forest when it opened in October 1984. Its biologists have pioneered the animal husbandry of jellyfish and it was the first to successfully care for and display a great white shark. The organization's research and conservation efforts also focus on sea otters, various birds, and tunas. Seafood Watch, a sustainable seafood advisory list published by the aquarium beginning in 1999, has influenced the discussion surrounding sustainable seafood. The aquarium was home to Otter 841 prior to her release into the wild as well as Rosa, the oldest living

sea otter at the time of her death.

Early proposals to build...

Tongass National Forest

archipelago, notably the Arctic tern. Orca and humpback whales, sea lions, seals, sea otters, river otters, and porpoises swim offshore. The Tongass is also home

The Tongass National Forest () in Southeast Alaska is the largest U.S. National Forest at 16.7 million acres (26,100 sq mi; 6,800,000 ha; 68,000 km²), an expanse larger than 10 U.S. states and 75 U.N. member nations. Most of its area is temperate rain forest and is remote enough to be home to many species of endangered and rare flora and fauna. The Tongass, which is managed by the United States Forest Service, encompasses islands of the Alexander Archipelago, fjords and glaciers, and peaks of the Coast Mountains. An international border with Canada (British Columbia) runs along the crest of the Boundary Ranges of the Coast Mountains. The forest is administered from Forest Service headquarters offices in Ketchikan. There are local ranger district offices located in Craig, Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan...

Clam

and Pacific, most species of sea lions, including the California sea lion, bearded seals and even species of river otters that will consume the freshwater

Clam is a common name for several species of bivalve mollusc. The word is often applied only to those that are deemed edible and live as infauna, spending most of their lives halfway buried in the sand of the sea floor or riverbeds. Clams have two shells of equal size connected by two adductor muscles and have a powerful burrowing foot. They live in both freshwater and marine environments; in salt water they prefer to burrow down into the mud and the turbidity of the water required varies with species and location; the greatest diversity of these is in North America.

Clams in the culinary sense do not live attached to a substrate (whereas oysters and mussels do) and do not live near the bottom (whereas scallops do). In culinary usage, clams are commonly eaten marine bivalves, as in clam digging...

Cairngorms National Park

due to its importance for salmon, otters and freshwater pearl mussels, and the Don supports fish such as salmon, sea trout, brown trout, eels and lamprey

Cairngorms National Park (Scottish Gaelic: Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh) is a national park in northeast Scotland, established in 2003. It was the second of two national parks established by the Scottish Parliament, after Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, which was set up in 2002. The park covers the Cairngorms range of mountains, and surrounding hills. Already the largest national park in the United Kingdom, in 2010 it was expanded into Perth and Kinross.

Roughly 18,000 people live within the 4,528-square-kilometre (1,748 sq mi) national park. The largest communities are Aviemore, Ballater, Braemar, Grantown-on-Spey, Kingussie, Newtonmore and Tomintoul. Like all other national parks in the UK, the park is IUCN designated Category V however it contains within its boundaries...

Gavin Maxwell

writing and his work with otters. He became most famous for Ring of Bright Water (1960), which described his experiences raising otters from Iraq and West Africa

Gavin Maxwell FRSL FZS FRGS (15 July 1914 – 7 September 1969) was a Scottish naturalist and author, best known for his non-fiction writing and his work with otters. He became most famous for Ring of Bright Water (1960), which described his experiences raising otters from Iraq and West Africa on the west coast of Scotland. Ring of Bright Water sold more than two million copies, and was made into a film starring Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna in 1969. One of his otters from Iraq was of a previously unknown sub-species, which was subsequently named after Maxwell. His other books described shark hunting in the Hebrides, his childhood, and his travels in Sicily, Iraq and North Africa.

Zion National Park

Markagunt and Kolob plateaus, at the intersection of three North American geographic provinces: the Colorado Plateau, the Great Basin, and the Mojave Desert

Zion National Park is a national park of the United States located in southwestern Utah near the town of Springdale. Located at the junction of the Colorado Plateau, Great Basin, and Mojave Desert regions, the park has a unique geography and a variety of life zones that allow for unusual plant and animal diversity. Numerous plant species as well as 289 species of birds, 75 mammals (including 19 species of bat), and 32 reptiles inhabit the park's four life zones: desert, riparian, woodland, and coniferous forest. Zion National Park includes mountains, canyons, buttes, mesas, monoliths, rivers, slot canyons, and natural arches. The lowest point in the park is 3,666 ft (1,117 m) at Coalpits Wash and the highest peak is 8,726 ft (2,660 m) at Horse Ranch Mountain. A prominent feature of the 229...

Forbes Creek (Washington)

river otter, weasel, and coyote. The Forbes Creek wetlands are noted as prime urban birdwatching areas by The National Geographic Society, Reader's Digest

Forbes Creek is a small, moderately sloping creek wholly within the city of Kirkland, Washington. From its headwaters on the Rose Hill moraine to its outlet at Juanita Bay is c. 2 miles (3.2 km) as the crow flies. The northern extent of its basin is a nearly east-west line at NE 116th Street; the eastern boundary is at the Rose Hill ridgeline, roughly north-south at 132nd Avenue NE. The southern extent is irregular trending roughly from Kirkland's high point at the northeast corner of Bridle Trails State Park (535 ft (163 m), 47°39'26"N 122°10'21"W) through South Rose Hill Park, to Lake Washington at 16 feet (4.9 m) above sea level.

Two major branches of the creek rise on Rose Hill between NE 70th Street and NE 85th Street and then run south to north on Rose Hill. One rises in the vicinity...

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