



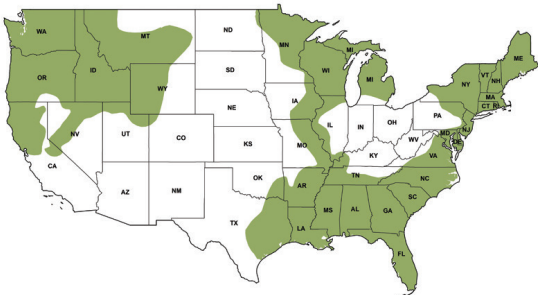
# Otter

*Lutra canadensis*



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**RANGE:** widespread in Louisiana; widely distributed across Canada and the U.S., excluding portions of the arid southwest and some states along the Mid-Atlantic coast



## Diet, Habitat & Behavior

Otters eat frogs, turtles, snakes, fish (generally non-game), crayfish, crabs, birds, small land mammals like rats and mice. They usually help a trout stream by containing populations, but can devastate a fish farm. Otters are highly skilled swimmers and love to play. They are constantly on the move. Young will stay with mother through first winter. Otters live near water in rivers, lakes or wetlands, in both fresh and brackish waters. They den in the bank of a canal or stream with the entrance below water level.

## Anatomy

Otters have a long, slender body, flattened head, and a long, flat tail, that is thick at the base and tapers towards the tip. They have a dense, oily underfur, glossy guard hairs and brown fur. Otters have five fully webbed toes on each foot. Adults average 15 pounds. They have 36 teeth. Adults are rarely preyed upon; juveniles may be vulnerable to bobcats and coyotes. They are relatively free of parasites, but suffer from habitat loss, pollution and poisons.

## Reproduction

Otters breed in late winter or early spring. Their gestation period can be as long as 10 months or more. Young are born in late winter, with one to three kits per litter.



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**Resources:** *place new website link here*

[www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov)