

# River Otter



GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  

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ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# RIVER OTTER

*Lutra canadensis*

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ 35 - 50 inches long
- ◆ long, slender body with dense dark brown fur
- ◆ round head with small ears and long, thick “whiskers”
- ◆ tail is thick and tapered
- ◆ short legs with webbed feet



## Where to Look

River Otters are found in fresh and coastal waters in lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, marshes and swamps. They are most active in the evening and morning.



## Tracks and Other Signs

The teeth marks on downed trees are a good sign of beavers. They also make piles of mud to mark the edges of their territory.



## Predators and Other Dangers

River Otters are preyed upon by bobcats, coyotes, alligators and birds of prey. However, they are very aggressive defenders of themselves and their young.

## What It Eats.

River otters eat primarily aquatic animals such as turtles, frogs, fish, crayfish and crabs. They also eat aquatic plants occasionally.



## Did You Know...

River otters are extremely ‘playful’ animals and can be seen playing in the water, sliding, wrestling, somersaulting, tossing and diving for rocks and shells.

## Role in the Ecosystem