

Primary Worksheets: Beaver



The beaver is a kind of rodent that is semi-aquatic, meaning some of the time it lives in water and some on land. They can only be found in North America and Europe. Beavers are well known for building and keeping dams in rivers.

A dam is a large wall that stops the flow of water, forming a large area of water. Beavers use branches, stones, and mud to build them. They fill the gaps in the dams with a combination of weeds and mud. A dam can stretch across a stream. Beavers build their homes in the still waters rather than in rushing streams.

Beavers like to work in groups and will build dams together. Pairs of beavers build homes called lodges out of sticks and mud. A lodge can be 5 feet high! When a beaver is frightened, they will use their tail to make a great sound to warn the other beavers.



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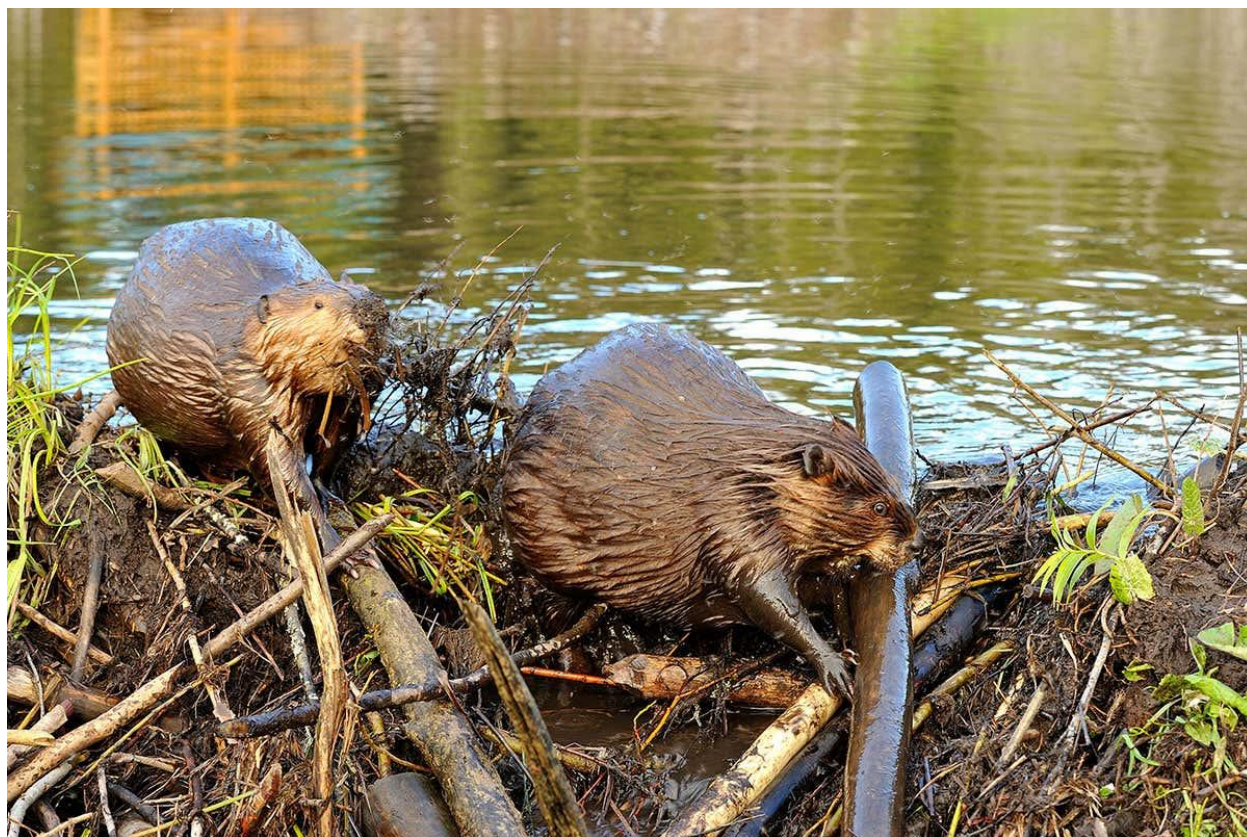
There are two species of beaver, the American and the Eurasian beavers. They are herbivores and do not hibernate but do like to store sticks and many logs in their homes.

Beavers can grow up to around 4 feet (1.3 meters) long including their long flat tail. Their tails are scaly and shaped like paddles. They have thick brown fur that covers their stock bodies and short legs. To carry objects, beavers use their small front feet. Their large back feet are webbed that help them swim. They can stay underwater for up to 15 minutes.

Beaver's teeth grow continuously so they will not be worn down by chewing on wood. Their teeth are self-sharpening because the inner surface is softer than the outer, making it faster to create a sharp edge.



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Beavers are mainly nocturnal as they are very active at night and are known to have poor eyesight but have keen senses of hearing, smell, and touch. They eat mainly trees, including buds, leaves, twigs, and the layer under the bark. They use their powerful jaws and teeth to cut down young trees.

The Eurasian beaver was nearly hunted to extinction because of their fur. They had a scent gland that was believed to have great medicinal abilities. Today the beaver is slowly being re-introduced throughout Europe.

Beavers are important to the habitat of many other animals. They create wetlands that are used by many other species that shape its landscape. Though beavers can cause problems as they may use young trees for food that can affect the planet.

Their dams can also kill other tree species by drowning, but this creates standing dead wood which is important for other animals and plants.

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Answer the questions.

What is a beaver?

What do they look like?

What is a dam?



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Answer the questions.

What do they eat?

What does semi-aquatic mean?

Why were the beavers nearly extinct?

