



Cabrillo
Marine
Aquarium

FISHIN' FOR F.A.Q.'S

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Fun Facts

The sea otter is one of the smallest marine mammals, but one of the largest members of the family Mustelidae, a group that includes skunks and weasels among others.

Adult males reach an average length of 4.5 feet with an average weight between 50 and 100 lbs, while adult females reach an average length of 4 feet and can weigh up to 45 lbs.

An otter must consume at least 25% of its body-weight in prey each day just to stay alive - for a 75 lb kid, that's 1/4 lb burgers!

A GROUP OF SEA OTTERS RESTING TOGETHER IS CALLED A RAFT.

SEA OTTERS



Q. What do sea otters eat?

Yes! Sea otters spend approximately 9 to 12 hours foraging each day. On average, an adult male California sea otter consumes over 4,000 calories daily. Sea otters eat many kinds of invertebrates, including sea urchins, abalone, clams, crabs, snails, sea stars, squid & octopuses.

Q. Do sea otters face any natural or man-made threats?

Yes! White shark bites, pathogens and parasites, food availability, nutritional deficiencies, habitat degradation, coastal pollutants and contaminant exposure are among many of the contributing factors threatening the recovery of the species. The single greatest threat to the sea otter is an oil spill. One large oil spill in central California could be catastrophic, with the potential of driving the entire southern sea otter population into extinction.

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Q. Why did the otter want to work at NASA?

A. So it could have a chance to visit 'Otter' Space!

At CMA

Be sure to check out the Kelp Room and learn all the unique features & adaptations of the Southern Sea Otter

FAST FACTS

Scientific Name:

Macrocystis pryeri

Habitat: Giant kelp grows best in well mixed, cool & clear ocean water.

Physical Traits:

Holdfast (anchor), Stipe (stem), Blade (frond), Pneumatocysts (air bladders).

Threats: Changes in water conditions and the near extinction of the southern sea otter, which resulted in a population explosion of the purple sea urchin, severely reduced the size and number of local kelp beds for several years.

Recovery: Due to restoration efforts, kelp forests have recovered along Palos Verdes Peninsula in the last several years.

COMMON NAME:
Giant Kelp

