

Beavers

QUICK GUIDE

North American Beaver

Castor canadensis

Conservation Status:
least concern



Beavers measure between 32 to 48 inches



Beavers can weigh anywhere from 27 to 67 pounds but could potentially grow larger

How to Tell a Beaver from a Muskrat

Size

Beavers are much larger than muskrats. Adult muskrats weigh up to about four pounds, whereas beavers average over forty pounds.

Swimming Pattern

While swimming at the surface, muskrats expose much of their heads and backs. Their long, slender tails have triangular cross-sections, and make unmistakably clear cuts through the water. Beavers have flattened tails that they sweep up and down while swimming, but you typically won't see more than just a beaver's head above the water's surface.

Diet

Muskrats eat plants such as cattails, and sometimes consume animals such as crayfish. Beavers

are exclusively vegetarian and eat the soft tissue under tree bark. If you see a stump that has been chiseled into a point, the culprit was a beaver.

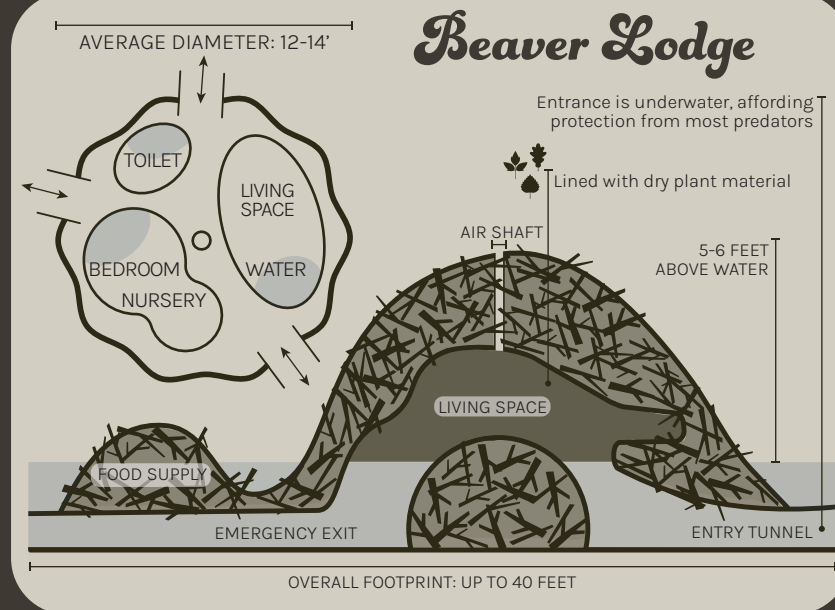
Structures

Beavers build dams in order to block off streams and create ponds, and muskrats do not. Both animals make lodges, which are dome-shaped structures where they sleep and give birth. However, muskrat lodges are smaller than beaver lodges, and they're mostly made of plants like cattails, whereas beaver lodges are full of large sticks and logs. Either animal may also make a home by digging into a stream bank.



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Beaver Bingo



beaver lodge



duck



beaver chewed branches



wood chips at base of cut tree



beaver tail slap



beaver dam



cattails



beaver chewed tree trunk



beaver