



# Amazing Animals Fact sheets

## Otters

Otters are part of the Mustelid family which also includes ferrets, weasels, badgers, skunks and minks. There are 13 species of otter worldwide, and every continent of the world is home to at least one species of otter except Australia and Antarctica. Otters have been on earth for 30 million years.

litters of young per year. Each of these litters can produce up to six cubs.

Otters are very social and will live in large family groups of up to 20 individuals.

### Australia Zoo Asian Small-clawed Otter profiles



### Asian Small-clawed Otter

Both sexes generally weigh between 2.5 to 3kg. Of the 13 species of otter found throughout the world, this is the smallest, attaining a body length of 41 to 64cm and a tail length of 25 to 35cm. Otters have one of the most flexible backbones of all vertebrates, as well as a very streamlined body for fast swimming and agility. Asian small-clawed otters have fully webbed 'feet' and partially webbed 'hands', which greatly assist survival in their primarily aquatic lifestyle.

#### Habitat

Asian small-clawed otters are found through South-East Asia in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, South China and Himalayan regions. They select areas with equal amounts of land and running water. Otters will inhabit rivers, streams, rice paddies and coastal mangroves. They build a den, called a holt, into the side of river banks.

#### Diet

The diet of the Asian small-clawed otter consists of fish, crustaceans, shellfish, small land prey and eggs. In the wild they can take down prey twice their own size. They are excellent hunters due to their speed. Asian small-clawed otters eat one third of their body weight in food each day. They are very active and have an extremely high metabolism. They can spend 40-60% of their day just on hunting and eating.

#### Breeding

Asian small-clawed otters are sexually mature as early as 12 months of age, but usually do not reproduce until 2-3 years of age. They mate for life and can produce two

### Rosie

Rosie was born on 10/02/2003 and arrived at Australia Zoo in late 2010. She currently lives with one male otter but is very distinct in appearance and easy to identify by her golden yellow whiskers. Rosie has so much personality and is an incredibly cheeky and playful otter who loves her daily interactive sessions with her keepers. She is very clever and loves her food, so quickly picks up new skills when treats are on offer!

### Threatened Species!

Otters are facing extinction within the next fifty years.

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