

Name: _____

The Busy Beaver

By Guy Belleranti

Imagine you're walking along a beautiful stream. You happen to spot a large pile of sticks, logs, mud, and stones right in the water. Chances are you're in beaver territory, and you're looking at either a beaver dam or beaver lodge.



A beaver is a member of the rodent family.

What's the difference between a beaver dam and a beaver lodge?

Beavers build dams on rivers and streams to stop moving water. The dam creates large ponds of still water behind it. In these ponds, beavers build homes called lodges. When the water current is too strong or the water is too deep, beavers can't build a dam. When this happens, they will build their lodge on the edge of the river or stream.

Why do beavers live in lodges?

Lodges provide beavers with shelter from hot or cold weather and a safe place to hide from

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How do beavers go in and out of their lodges? Do they have doors?

No, beaver lodges do not have doors. Entrances to lodges are always through hidden underwater openings. The beaver must dive underwater to find the entrance. Beavers design their lodges this way so predators can't find their way in.

Are there rooms inside of a beaver lodge?

Most beaver lodges have two rooms, called dens. One den is for drying off when a beaver exits the water. The other den is where the beavers spend most of their time.

What kind of foods do beavers eat?

They are herbivores, which means they eat only plants. They love to munch on woody plants like trees and shrubs and aquatic plants like lily pads, sedges, and cattails.

Do beavers live alone?

Each beaver lodge usually houses a father, a mother, and young beavers. Newborns are called kits. When they're just over a year old, they're called yearlings. Together this beaver family group is called a colony.



A beaver's home, called a lodge, is usually built in the middle of a pond.

Where do beavers live?

Beavers live across most of North America. They can also be found in Europe and Asia.

How big are beavers?

Except for the South American capybara the beaver is the largest rodent in the world. They can grow over three feet long not including the tail and weigh over 60 pounds.

In what ways is a beaver's body adapted to its surroundings?

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Where can I learn more about beavers?

There are so many things to learn about beavers. You can find terrific books about beavers in most libraries. The Internet has countless beaver articles, pictures, and videos as well.

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1. Why do beavers build dams?

2. List four predators of the beaver that are mentioned in the article.

3. Why are the entrances to beaver dams underwater?



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4.

- b. a rodent that is smaller than a beaver
- c. a rodent that is larger than a beaver
- d. a predator that hunts beavers

5. How long can beavers stay underwater?

- a. about half an hour
- b. about a quarter of an hour
- c. about an eighth of an hour
- d. more than an hour

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The words below are vocabulary words from the article. Some letters are missing. Write the missing letters and then write the full word on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. ___ er ___ ito ___ _____

hint: area of land controlled by a particular animal or group of people

2. ___ ___ m _____

hint: structure built to block flow of water

3. _____



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4. _____

hint: mammal with teeth that continually grow

5. ___ o ___ ___ y _____

hint: group of animals that live together

6. ___ i ___ _____

hint: baby beavers less than a year old

7. ___ ___ r ___ i n ___ s _____

hint: young beavers that are between one and two years of age

ANSWER KEY

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1. Why do beavers build dams?



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