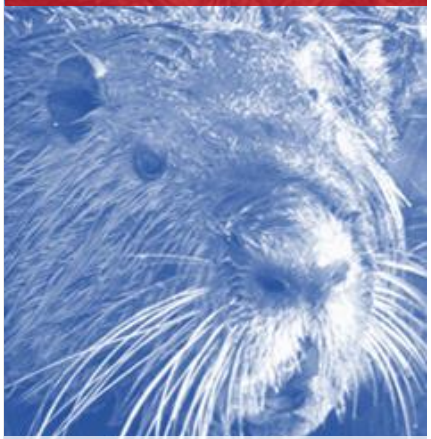
NUTRIA
POCKET GUIDE



A Guide to Identifying Nutria and Other Aquatic Mammals

WHY BE CONCERNED?

Nutria:

- Burrow into levees
- Destroy wetlands
- Damage agricultural crops
- Rapidly reproduce
- Can disperse up to 50 miles

Burrowing damage from nutria in Oregon. (Photo by USFWS)

WHAT ARE NUTRIA?

- Large semi-aquatic rodents
- Considered highly invasive
- Also known as 'coypu'
- Found in CA's Central Valley since 2017

HOW TO HELP

Report sightings:

(866) 440-9530

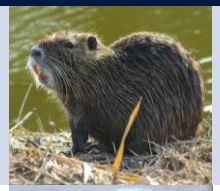
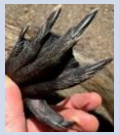
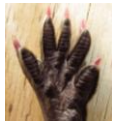
invasives@wildlife.ca.gov

For private landowners:

- Grant CDFW access to your property for nutria surveys

Learn more:

- Visit wildlife.ca.gov/nutria for the current distribution map, private access permits, and more information

	ADULT SIZE		FEET AND TRACKS		BODY AND TAILS	
NUTRIA NON-NATIVE		**2' body** **1' tail** **10-20 lbs**	**Partially webbed rear feet** **4 front toes show in tracks**		**White whiskers** **Tail still while swimming; propels body with feet**	**Round, rat-like** **Bristly hairs**
MUSKRAT NATIVE		1' body 9" tail 2-5 lbs	No webbing on feet Often have pink nails		Black whiskers Rapid side-to-side tail motion when swimming	Flattened side-to-side (wedge shape)
OTTER NATIVE		>2' body >1' tail 10-25 lbs	Fully webbed front and rear feet		White whiskers Slender, elongated body	Thick with dense, fine fur
BEAVER NATIVE		>2' body 1' tail 40+ lbs	Fully webbed rear feet 5 front toes show in tracks		Black whiskers Slap water with tail when disturbed	Oval-shaped, flat

NUTRIA FEATURES

Dark colored ears, with lighter colored fur below

Blocky head, often with orange teeth

Hunched appearance on land

Primarily active at night

Cylindrical, 2-3" scats; may float in water

Spanish word for otter is 'nutria'

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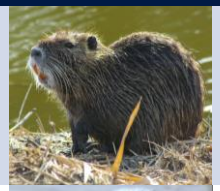
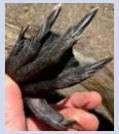
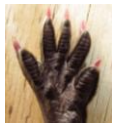
NUTRIA NON-NATIVE		**2' body** **1' tail** **10-20 lbs**	**Partially webbed rear feet** **4 front toes show in tracks**		**White whiskers** **Tail still while swimming; propels body with feet**	**Round, rat-like** **Bristly hairs**
MUSKRAT NATIVE		1' body 9" tail 2-5 lbs	No webbing on feet Often have pink nails		Black whiskers Rapid side-to-side tail motion when swimming	Flattened side-to-side (wedge shape)
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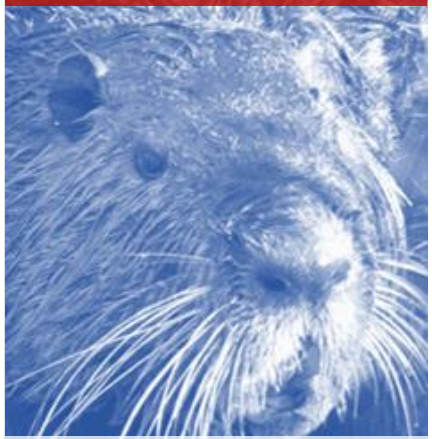

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