

# ASIAN SMALL-CLAWED OTTER

(*AONYX CINEREA*)

**WE ARE MAMMALS**

with a lifespan of 2-6 years in the wild, 15-20 years in captivity

**CONSERVATION STATUS: VULNERABLE\***

**POPULATION HAS DECLINED BY 30% IN THE LAST 30 YEARS**



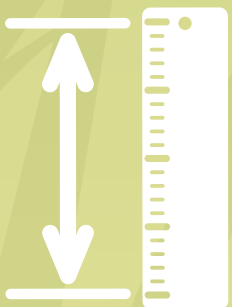
\*The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015. Downloaded 01.09.20

**Origin:** Asia (Southern India, Southern China, Southeast Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines).

**Diet:** Shellfish (clams, mussels, crabs, cray fish, prawns), snails, small fish, insects, amphibians, snakes and small birds and mammals.

**Predators:** Snakes and crocodiles.

**Habitat:** Fresh water streams, rivers, marshes, rice paddies, coastal wetlands and mangroves.



**Height**

**61cm** including a 25-35cm tail



**Weight**

**2.5-3kg**

## DID YOU KNOW?

Asian Small-Clawed Otters are the smallest of the 13 species of otter. They are facing extinction in the wild within the next fifty years due to habitat loss, pollution, hunting for their fur and the illegal pet trade.

They have fully webbed back feet and partially webbed hands, giving them greater dexterity and they have one of the most flexible backbones of all the vertebrates.

40-60% of their day can be spent hunting and eating. In the wild they eat one third of their body weight every day.

A group of otters is called a romp. They are very sociable and playful with one another and are often found in groups of up to 13 otters.

## ADAPTATIONS

They have small ears and nostrils which close when they swim under water. They have two layers of fur and a natural body oil that coats the fur forming a waterproof layer. Between the two layers of fur is a pocket of air which keeps the otter warm and dry all year round, even under water. Their large, powerful molars are used for crushing the shells of crabs and other shellfish. Their speed and agility, both on land and in water, helps them to escape from predators.

## REPRODUCTION

They are monogamous, meaning they stay with the same mate for life. A pair can have up to two litters every year. After a gestation period of 68-72 days, females will give birth to a litter of 1-6 pups. The babies weigh around 50g when they are born and are just 14cm in length. Their eyes stay closed until around 5 weeks old and they will learn to swim at around 7 weeks old. Both parents and older siblings will help to care for the young and all use a special call to keep in contact with the family.

**PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE OTTERS**