

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

NUTRIA

(*Myocastor coypus*)



ADULT NUTRIA PHOTO CREDIT: TREVOR SHEFFELS

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

DESCRIPTION

- Large semi-aquatic rodents with coarse dark brown fur.
- Have a white muzzle, long white whiskers, and webbed hind feet.
- Have two bright orange/yellow incisor teeth
- Weigh 5-9 kg when adults, with a body length of 40-60 cm and a 30-45 cm long tail.
- Have a hunched appearance, and hold tail still while swimming.

PRIMARY THREAT:

Nutria's destructive feeding and burrowing habits threaten wetland habitats, agricultural crops and infrastructure.

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Download the App!



www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

SPREAD

Nutria have been introduced worldwide for fur farming and as a food source. Suitable habitats for Nutria in B.C. are around the coastal regions of the Lower Mainland, Southern Vancouver Island, and Gulf Islands. Nutria can spread quickly, as females can have up to 13 offspring per litter (average is 4-5) and up to three litters per year.



Photo Credit: Tommy Farquhar. iNaturalist.

DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

Nutria are native to South America. Within B.C., Nutria have been found in the lower Fraser River valley and Salt Spring Island.




For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/invasive-species>



NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*)

LOOK-ALIKES:

Nutria may be confused with two of B.C.'s native species, the beaver and muskrat.

Distinguishing Features	Nutria (<i>Myocastor coypus</i>)	Beaver (<i>Castor canadensis</i>)	Muskrat (<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>)
Body size	 10-20 lbs.	 40+ lbs.	 2-5 lbs.
Body Colour	brown	brown	brown with lighter underside
Tail	long, hairless, rounded *held still when swimming	scaly, wide, horizontally flattened *smacked loudly on water to signal alarm	vertically flattened, hairless *snake like movement when swimming
Hind Feet	partially webbed	fully webbed	no webbing between toes
Incisors (front teeth)	large, dark orange	large, orange	less noticeable
Whiskers	long, white	short, brown	short, brown
Social Behavior	can live in colonies	normally solitary	solitary and form small groups

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Raise awareness to avoid the spread of this species.
- Do not release Nutria in B.C.
- Report sightings.



DID YOU KNOW?

Nutria means otter in Spanish.

For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/invasive-species>

