

Marine Otter

Lontra felina

RED LIST STATUS

ENDANGERED



A group of marine otters was recently found living hundreds of km inland in a river system!

ALIAS: sea cat, huallaca, chungungo
PREDATORS: birds of prey, sharks, dogs
THREATS: habitat loss, persecution, poaching, accidental trapping, pollution, disease
SIZE: 87-115 cm (body 57-79 cm, tail 30-36 cm); 3-6 kg

The smallest of the new world species, the marine otter is also a very special otter – it is the only exclusively marine species apart from the sea otter. It lives on rocky coasts with an abundance of caves which it uses for shelter and dens. It rarely strays more than 30 m inland. It has long whiskers and a dark coat and it prefers a diet of crustaceans, octopus, molluscs and fish. The marine otter is monogamous and, like the Southern river otter, its habitat is extremely fragmented and the areas in which this otter no longer occurs increase every year, also due to human-otter conflict, as this species is viewed by some as a competitor. This takes a heavy toll and the marine otter's numbers are steadily decreasing over its whole range.