

World Otter Day:

Otter Puppet and Paper Fish Craft



In this activity, kids will create their own otter puppets and learn about what giant otters eat.

Age: Families with children 5 - 9 years old

Gather your Gear

- Brown paper bag
- White glue
- Scissors
- Crayons/colored pencils/markers
- Googly eyes (optional)
- Construction paper (brown for the otter, any other colors for the fish)
- Optional: color coding label stickers (or you can cut out small semi-circles with the construction paper)



** credit: International Otter Survival Fund (left) and Handmade Charlotte*

Get Ready *You can help your child make connections by thinking about concepts before the activity.*

As the name implies, giant otters are the longest of all otter species. Like other otters, they are land mammals that can swim, making them semi-aquatic animals. The giant otter is known as the “river wolf” in South America because it is one of the top predators in its aquatic environment. Giant otters are very fast and maneuverable swimmers, enabling them to catch fish as well as manipulate sticks and rocks underwater to find treats such as crayfish. Giant otters primarily eat fish, but they also eat a wide variety of other aquatic creatures such as prawns, frogs, small caimans or snakes. At the Zoo, they are offered a variety of whole fish such as trout, tilapia, catfish and smelt.

Now you can create your very own otter puppet and its food (fish)!

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Create your Craft

Otter Puppet

- Draw out the body parts of your otter on the brown construction paper. You will need two arms, two legs, two ears, and a tail.
- Cut out the otter body parts.
- Turn the brown paper bag upside down and start gluing the body parts to it.
- Add googly eyes (optional).
- Draw on the otter's eyes, nose, mouth and whiskers.

Paper Fish

- Gather your colorful construction paper and cut out as many fish shapes as you would like.
- Time to decorate!
 - Cut the color-coding labels in half (or cut out small semi circles) and place on the fish cut-outs (these are the scales).
 - Add googly eyes (optional).

Recap *Have a conversation about what you saw/did and questions your child may have.*

- What species of otter is the longest?
- What do they call giant otters in South America?
- What is the main diet for giant otters?

Relate *Create connections to the idea through activities.*

You can help by eating sustainable seafood! Giant otters and other marine mammals are having a hard time finding food. Ninety percent of the world's fisheries are being overfished. This means that so many fish are being removed that the species are not able to reproduce enough to keep the population at stable levels. The next time you are thinking about buying or eating seafood, download the Seafood Watch App. It is available in the Android and Apple stores. It is a guide on places that serve and sell sustainable seafood, because they catch their seafood using sustainable practices that do not catch bycatch. It also tells you which seafoods to stay away from. Downloading the Seafood Watch App and eating sustainable seafood is just one way we can help giant otters!

It takes a team.... join ours

Help us save species by joining the "Zoo Conservation Corps" and raise awareness about wild animals, their habitats and why conserving both is so important. If your family members are on social media, post to show what you have learned, and use the hashtag #OnlyZooATL so that we can see all your great work!

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Want to know more?

- For more on World Otter Day and Otter Conservation: <https://www.otter.org>
- Eat sustainable seafood
 - For more on Sustainable Seafood: <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/>