

*Myocastor coypus*

# Nutria

Myocastoridae, the rodent family



## Diagnostic Characteristics

- Large rodent resembling beavers and muskrats
- Long, thin round tail as opposed to muskrats which have laterally flattened tails
- Brown or yellow-brown in color
- Webbed hind feet
- Prominent incisors which are bright orange-yellow

## Background

- Native to South America
- Consumes wetland plants and crops as well as roots of plants
- Litter sizes range from 2-9
- Sexually mature in 3-9 months
- Causes extreme habitat destruction:
  - undermines river and stream banks
  - converts marshland to open water by consuming plants when in high densities
  - threatens populations of species that inhabit wetland habitats

Photo Credit:

5371506 - John and Karen Hollingsworth, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bugwood.org

Angelo Rossi <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/rougenair">rougenair</a>

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