

4 interesting rare otter species of Vietnam

Vietnam is home to 4/13 otter species in the world including hairy-nosed otter (*Lutra sumatrana*), common otter (*Lutra lutra*), smooth-coated otter (*Lutra perspicillata*) and small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*).

Vietnam's otters are quite diverse. Besides common otters, Vietnam also has rare species.

What is an otter?

Otters are carnivores and members of the weasel family. Most species are small, covered with soft brown fur, with short ears and noses and long tails.

Although you may think they are just one species, there are actually 13 different species living around the world! Some are big, some are small, and some live in freshwater while others live in the sea. These 13 species are:

1. Eurasian otter;
2. Smooth-coated otter;
3. Asian small-clawed otter;
4. Hairy-nosed otter;
5. Sea otter;
6. North American river otter;
7. Neotropical Otter;
8. Giant river otter;
9. Southern River Otter;
10. Sea otter;
11. African clawless otter;
12. Congo clawless otter;
and spotted-necked otter.

Otters are found on every continent except Australia and Antarctica. Most live in freshwater rivers, lakes and wetlands, while sea otters and smaller sea otters live in the Pacific Ocean.

Vietnam is home to 4/13 otter species in the world, including the hairy-nosed otter (*Lutra sumatrana*), common otter (*Lutra lutra*), smooth-coated otter (*Lutra perspicillata*) and small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*). Currently, all 4 Vietnamese otter species are seriously threatened by habitat loss and hunting for their skin, medicine and meat.

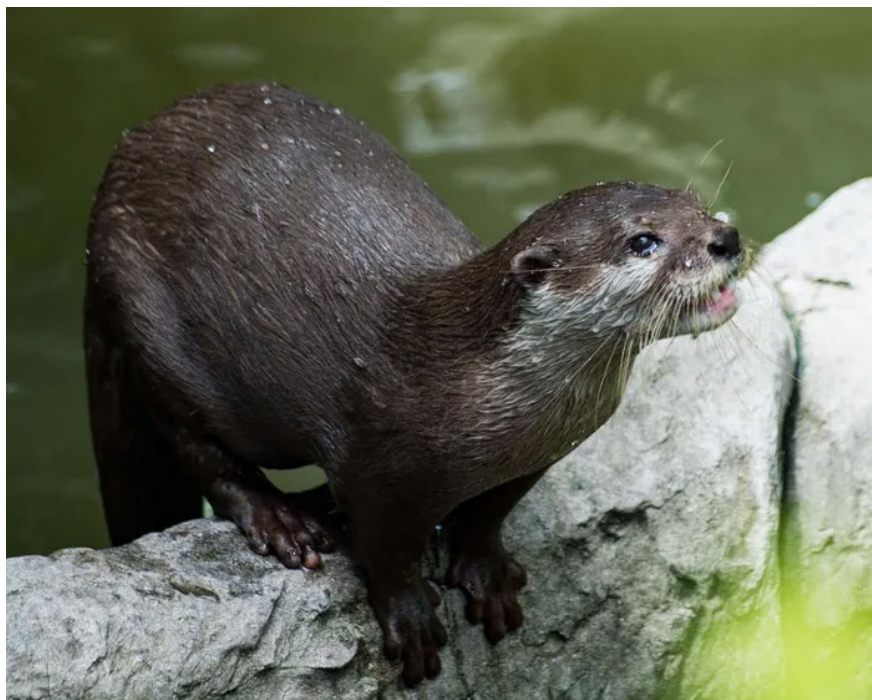
Common otter (*Lutra lutra*)



This common otter has a body length of about 57-95 cm (excluding the tail), weighing about 7-12 kg. This otter has gray to brownish-brown fur with grizzly spots, ash-gray fur on the belly, and whitish throat and cheeks.

Their tails are almost half the length of their bodies, round and gradually tapering from the base to the tip. This otter species has been recorded in Lai Chau, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Bac Kan, Hoa Binh, Quang Ninh, Hanoi, Gia Lai, Lam Dong.

Hairy-nosed otter (*Lutra sumatrana*)



The hairy-nosed otter has dark brown fur, with whitish fur on its lower lip, chin, and front of its throat. The tip of its tail is sometimes spotted with white. A distinguishing feature of this species is the hairy skin on its nose.

This otter species has a body length of about 51 - 81 cm (excluding the tail), weighing 5 - 5.9 kg. Previously, this otter species commonly lived in Melaleuca forests and mangrove forests in the Mekong Delta.

Smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)



The smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) has a body length of about 79 cm (excluding the tail) and weighs 8-9 kg. Its identifying features are its larger ears than a normal otter and its tail, which is flattened out to the sides like a paddle. It has long, smooth fur that is gray to tawny brown; its belly fur is lighter than its back; its chest, upper lip, cheeks, throat and neck are milky white.

Previously, smooth-coated otters were quite numerous and widely distributed throughout Vietnam. Samples were collected or observed in Quang Ninh (Ha Long Bay), Dak Lak, and Lam Dong. However, their distribution area has now been greatly reduced and their numbers have seriously decreased due to hunting and environmental degradation.

Small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*)



The small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*) is the world's smallest otter species, measuring about 40-63 cm in length (excluding the tail) and weighing 4-5 kg.

This species has a short body, light brown or gray fur, and a lighter belly. Its identifying features are small claws that do not extend beyond the toes, swimming webs that do not cover the toes, and flaps covering the ears.

Previously, small-clawed otters were widely distributed throughout the country, and were sampled and observed in Quang Ninh (Ha Long Bay), Quang Tri, Binh Phuoc, Lam Dong, Kien Giang, and Ca Mau. However, the number of this species has now decreased significantly due to hunting and loss of habitat.

You finished reading the article "**4 interesting rare otter species of Vietnam**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.