

## Nutria

Nutria are an exotic species native to South America. Nutria live in aquatic habitats along the banks of marshes, swamps, drainage canals, ditches, rivers, and impoundments in some areas of eastern North Carolina. High populations of nutrias are capable of converting marsh habitat into open water.

**What kind of damage is caused by nutria?** Nutria can cause damage to dikes and dams by burrowing or destroying native vegetation creating areas that are susceptible to erosion. Nutria can also cause crop damage (i.e. corn, rice, cabbage).

**Can a WCA write a depredation permit?** Yes, if property damage has occurred, a depredation permit can be issued by a WCA. WCAs that possess trapping licenses would not need to issue depredation permits during the trapping season.

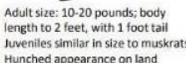
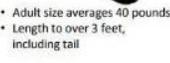
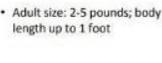
**Can nutria be relocated?** No, nutria cannot be relocated. They must be released on site or humanly euthanized either at the site of capture or at a facility designed to humanely handle the euthanasia.

**What can I do with a sick or injured nutria?** Nutria cannot be rehabilitated. Advise individuals to leave the animal alone. A nutria with a life-threatening injury or illness should be humanely euthanized and disposed of in a safe and sanitary manner.

**Are there safety concerns?** No, however, it is good practice to wear gloves when handling any animal.

### Lethal Options:

- Nutria can be hunted year-round with a state hunting license. A landowner does not need to purchase a hunting license to hunt on his/her own property.
- East of I-77 there is no closed season or bag limit for trapping nutria. A second party trapping nutria on a landowner's property must have a trapping license or depredation permit. A landowner does not need to purchase a trapping license to trap on his/her own property.
- West of I-77, nutria can be trapped during the regulated trapping season with a trapping license or if the landowner is trapping on their own property.
- Nutria caught in the act of causing property damage may be shot by the landowner without a depredation permit (where permitted by local ordinance).

<b>Identifying Nutria (<i>Myocastor coypus</i>)</b>			
	<b>Nutria</b> <i>Invasive</i>	<b>Beaver</b> <i>Native</i>	<b>Muskrat</b> <i>Native</i>
<b>Whiskers/ head</b>	 <small>Photos courtesy of Tony Northrup and Joyce Grass</small>	 <small>Photos courtesy of Alaska DFG and Cheryl Reynolds</small>	 <small>Photos courtesy of N. Carolina State Parks and Merle Ann Loman</small>
<b>Tail</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conspicuous <b>white whiskers</b></li><li>• Muzzle often white</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Black whiskers</b></li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fine, <b>black whiskers</b></li><li>• Muzzle may be white</li></ul>
<b>Body</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tail <b>rounded</b>, rat-like, and sparsely covered in coarse hair</li><li>• Tail still while swimming; body propelled by feet</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tail <b>broad and flat</b>.</li><li>• Tail flattened top-to-bottom</li><li>• Slap water with tail when disturbed</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tail <b>flattened side-to-side</b></li><li>• Tail used for swimming with rapid side-to-side serpentine motion</li></ul>
	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adult size: 10-20 pounds; body length to 2 feet, with 1 foot tail</li><li>• Juveniles similar in size to muskrats</li><li>• Hunched appearance on land</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adult size averages 40 pounds</li><li>• Length to over 3 feet, including tail</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adult size: 2-5 pounds; body length up to 1 foot</li></ul>

Drawings courtesy of Danielle M. Crowler

Silhouettes courtesy of USFWS