Sea Otter Quick Stats!

1. The average life span for a sea otter is 15-20 years. Males usually don’t live longer than 15 years.
2. Average weight of an adult male in CA = 30 kg (66 lbs), adult female = 18 kg (40 lbs)
3. Average length of an adult in CA = 1 meter (3.2 ft)
4. Pups per year: 1 (twins are rare, and the mom can only care for one)
5. Gestation: 6 months total (~ 2 months delayed implantation + 4 months active pregnancy)
6. Season sea otter pups are born = spring, summer, fall, winter (any season!)
7. Average amount of time that sea otter pups are dependent on their mom = 6 months
8. Average daily (kilo)calories consumed by an adult male = 4,300
9. Deepest recorded sea otter dive in California = 264 feet (9-year old male from SLO county)
10. Longest recorded sea otter dive in California = 7.9 minutes (10-year old male from Monterey county)
11. Average dive depth in California = 24 feet
12. Average dive duration in California = 61.5 seconds
13. Hairs per square inch on a sea otter’s foreleg >1,000,000 (humans have 100,000 on their entire head)
14. Average number of hours spent foraging each day by central California sea otters = 9.5-12 hours (40-50 % of 24 hours)
15. Sense most used to locate prey (especially in dark or turbid water) = touch (paws and whiskers)
16. Prey on which sea otters are most likely to use a tool = sea snails, clams, and mussels
17. Most common sea otter prey in CA: Cancer-type crabs (Rock crabs and Dungeness crabs)
18. Number of prey specialist foraging types in CA = 5 (Cancer-type crabs; 2. abalone; 3. mussels; 4. sea snails; and 5. clams)
19. Predominant cause of death for CA sea otters = bite from Great White Shark (~60 % of mortality, 2017)
20. Sea otter mating fact: male sea otters bite a female’s nose during mating, perhaps to keep hold of her in a watery environment. Some bites can result in serious, even life-threatening wounds.
21. Primary reason for listing of CA sea otters as "threatened" in 1977 under the Endangered Species Act = Risk of oil spills
22. Wild sea otters are rarely observed “holding hands”, although mothers will keep their pups close by holding onto just about any body part!