

5 BEAVER MYTHS

BUSTED





BEAVERS EAT FISH

False! Beavers are strictly herbivores, subsisting on a diet of the inner bark or *cambium* of their favorite tree species, as well as leaves, grasses, and herbaceous and aquatic plants.





BEAVERS LIVE IN DAMS

False! Beavers build dams to deepen water, protecting the entrance of their homes called *lodges*. Beavers also may live in hollows in the side of stream banks called *bank dens*.





BEAVERS SPREAD GIARDIA

False! While this naturally occurring parasite is known as “beaver fever,” beavers are no more likely to spread it than other mammals! In fact, livestock, pets, and humans are much more likely to blame.





BEAVERS MULTIPLY LIKE RABBITS

False! Beavers don't reproduce until they are 2-3 years old and then have 2-6 babies, called *kits*, once per year. Kits stay with their families and help raise their younger siblings for two years before leaving home!





BEAVERS SMELL LIKE VANILLA

Oh wait, this one is kinda true! Beavers produce a substance called *castoreum* that they use to waterproof their fur and mark their territory. Castoreum smells musky and sweet, often characterized as vanilla mixed with mint. It has been used as a "natural flavor" in foods such as soda and ice cream, but also in some of the finest perfumes.