

# American Beaver

Greetings! We are the American Beaver. Our scientific name is *Castor canadensis*. As semi-aquatic mammals, we spend equal parts of our lives on land and in the water which is why our back feet are webbed. Having webbed feet is helpful for moving swiftly through streams and rivers. Our forepaws are dexterous which is helpful for our intricate building projects.

Our distinctive tails are broad and flat for balancing on land and navigating in water.

Our tails also help us to communicate!

When danger is near, we make a loud warning signal by slapping the water's surface.



Color us!



# Nature's Engineers

We are well known for creating two type of structures: lodges and dams. Our homes are called lodges and are dome shaped structures with a front door under water so that predators can't get in easily. Our dams, however, are for everyone. We serve our river community by creating habitats for other animals with our dams.

Our dams are permeable--which means water passes through them--and fish are easily able to navigate through or over our constructions. This helps our fish friends when they swim upstream to have babies. In the hot summer months, slowing the flow of water moderates the water's temperature to keep it cool.

Our babies are called "kits" and they learn a lot from us just like you learn from grown ups in your community. One more fact before you finish reading: beavers are members of the rodent family. We are the largest members of the rodent family in North America!

Well, Arkansas River neighbor, it's time for us beavers to get busy!

**Can you guess what type of structure this is?**

Hint: notice the *dome* shape of the structure.



Answer: Lodge.