

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

- As a last resort, trapping can be an effective method of dealing with troublesome wildlife. The most commonly used device is a live-trap which captures the animal physically unharmed. However, it should be known, that it is unlawful to fail to euthanize, or release on site, any nuisance raccoon, skunk, beaver, coyote, fox or opossum that is captured, trapped, or taken. Traps should be checked twice a day (morning and evening) to replenish bait or to humanely deal with captured animals. Contact the ODNR Division of Wildlife (1-800-Wildlife) for additional trapping regulations.
- Visit beaversww.org for additional solutions to beaver damming.
- Do not use poisons. Poisons are illegal, inhumane and may result in secondary poisoning of raptors, wild scavengers and neighborhood pets.
- Native wildlife is legally protected. It is illegal for anyone to possess a native wild animal unless permitted by the ODNR Division of Wildlife. Wildlife rehabilitators have a permit to care for orphaned or injured wildlife.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you find a wild animal and are concerned, leave it alone and call Brukner Nature Center at 937-698-6493, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.



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Brukner Nature Center is a non-profit, privately funded organization promoting the appreciation and understanding of wildlife conservation through preservation, education, and rehabilitation.

The purpose of our wildlife rehabilitation program is to educate people regarding the natural history of Ohio's wildlife, to offer help and advice when wildlife and people conflict, and to care for, rehabilitate, and release native Ohio wildlife expected to survive in their natural environment.

Living with **BEAVERS**

in Miami County



Brukner Nature Center

At 40-60 pounds, the beaver is one of the largest aquatic rodents. A full-grown beaver is about 4 feet long, including its 1-foot-long tail. Its body is stocky with short



legs, sharp front claws and webbed feet. Its glossy coat is tan to dark brown with

coarse over-hair and a fine, dense under-fur. The beaver's trademark is its large, front teeth. Two lower and two ever-growing upper incisors are essential tools for the animal's lumberjack activities.

People often confuse the beaver in the wild with its smaller "cousin", the muskrat. The most



distinctive feature of the beaver is its large, scaly and paddle-like tail. The tail is used as a rudder while swimming. When slapped against the water, the tail also serves as a warning signal to other beavers.

Tell-tale signs of a beaver's presence are a dam, conical-shaped tree stumps and diagonally cut branches. The marks made by the beaver's sharp front teeth can be seen as smooth cuts in the wood. Once a tree is cut down, the beaver will eventually gnaw it into portable pieces, eat the bark from the

trunk and branches and move the branches to the nearby waterway.

Dam building is an important element in the beaver's survival. Dams are constructed of branches of cottonwoods, willows and other trees that are cut by the beaver and that are stabilized with rocks and mud. A dammed stream becomes a pond that provides the beaver with drinking water, a travel route and a home site.

A beaver colony is made up of one family unit. Each family consists of a lifelong mated pair and offspring from two succeeding breeding seasons. Usually, there are four young per litter each spring. At 2 to 3 years of age, the beaver offspring leave the colony and seek their own home sites, thereby spreading the beaver population along waterways and re-colonizing vacant habitat.

Colony members usually construct a dome-shaped home of branches and mud in



the water. The lodge is warm and dry inside, sometimes rising five feet above the water, and is accessible through underwater passages. Beavers may also dig a tunnel and den in a riverbank or lakeshore. The only evidence of a bank den may be the submerged entrance.



Most active after sundown, beavers are strict vegetarians and will eat tender twigs, the roots of aquatic plants, marsh grasses and corn. Favorite tree barks include: cottonwood, willow, aspen, birch and poplar. Beavers store their winter food supply under water, anchoring large groups of branches and twigs into muddy pond bottoms around their lodges.

From the 1850's until the turn of the century, the beaver's flesh, fur and leathery tail made it one of the most valued fur bearing animals during the settlement of North America. Although once extirpated from Miami County and much of Ohio, beavers are once again making their homes in many rivers, streams and lakes.

RECOMMENDED DETERRENTS

Light, inexpensive wire fencing with a minimum height of 3 feet is the simplest long-term solution for keeping beavers out of waterside property or to protect clusters of trees. The lower 3 feet of individual trees can also be wrapped with heavy-gauged hardwire cloth. Remember to loosen the wire as the tree grows.