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3          <title>Hellbenders - Facts</title>
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7      <body>
8          <center>
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11                     <td id="leftcell">
12                         
13                         <h3>
14                             <a href="index.html">Hellbenders</a><br><br>
15                             <a href="fsheet.html">Fact Sheet</a>
16                         </h3>
17                     </td>
18                     <td id="rightcell">
19                         <h1>Hellbender Facts</h1><hr><br>
20                         <h3>Habitat</h3>
21                         <ul>
22                             <li>The Eastern hellbender prefers clear, cold, mountain
23                                 streams found in central Missouri and from New York south
24                                 to northern Alabama and extreme northeastern Mississippi.
25                                 Their habitat consists of riffles (areas of a stream with
26                                 swift running, fairly shallow water) where they spend most
27                                 of their time underneath large, flat rocks (called
28                                 flagstones) or logs.</li>
29                             <li>In western Maryland, they exist in very low numbers in
30                                 the Casselman and Youghiogheny Rivers and their associated
31                                 tributaries.</li>
32                             <li>Hellbenders are also known as snot otters, devil dogs,
33                                 or Allegheny alligators.</li>
34                         </ul>
35                         <h3>Characteristics</h3>
36                         <ul>
37                             <li>Length: 20 inches (can be up to 30 inches); Weight: 4-5
38                                 pounds.</li>
39                             <li>The coloration of the Eastern hellbender is variable,
40                                 but it is generally described as dark green or gray
41                                 dorsally and lighter on the underside. Irregular dark spots
42                                 - brownish or black in color - are often present on the
43                                 dorsal surface (back).</li>
44                             <li>Eastern hellbenders are stout bodied, with 4 short,
45                                 well-developed limbs and a heavy, laterally compressed tail.
46                                 Hellbenders retain a few juvenile traits as adults, such as
47                                 an absence of eyelids and having open gill slits. Lungs are
48                                 present but largely non-functional (vestigial).</li>
49                             <li>Hellbenders have extensively folded and wrinkled skin
50                                 over the span of their flattened body.</li>
51                             <li>They breathe cutaneously (up to 95% of their oxygen is
52                                 absorbed through their skin) primarily through these folds
53                                 and wrinkles.</li>
54                             <li>Due to the hellbenders' cutaneous respiration, they
55                                 prefer to live in streams with shallow, cold, rapid flowing
56                                 water where oxygen is plentiful.</li>
57                             <li>Males and females are quite similar, but males tend to
58                                 be heavier and broader.</li>
59                             <li>Hellbenders' bodies are covered in mucus that is
60                                 thought to aid in protecting the hellbender from abrasion
61                                 and parasites as well as being distasteful to potential
62                                 predators.</li>
63                             <li>Lifespan: 30 years in the wild and in zoos</li>
64                         </ul>
65                         <h3>Behaviors</h3>
66                         <ul>
67                             <li>Hellbenders spend their entire life in the water.</li>

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41      <li>They are nocturnal animals, seeking cover by day under
      large rocks and logs, and becoming active at night to feed.
      They conceal themselves beneath rocks on the streambed with
      only their head protruding and seize crayfish that swim by
      (termed "sit - and - wait predators").</li>
42      <li>Hellbenders are solitary creatures except for during
      the breeding season, when they have been known to
      congregate during the daytime in groups of 6 - 12.</li>
43      <li>They will defend their shelter rocks from other
      hellbenders but are generally only aggressive towards each
      other during the breeding season, when nest defense
      increases in importance.</li>
44  </ul>
45  <h3>Reproduction</h3>
46  <ul>
47      <li>Sexual maturity is reached at 5 - 7 years of age.
      Breeding occurs in the fall.</li>
48      <li>Males excavate nests on the streambed beneath flat
      rocks, crevices, and holes in bedrock.</li>
49      <li>Usually these nest sites are used as den sites for the
      male during the non-breeding season.</li>
50      <li>External fertilization is the mode of reproduction in
      hellbenders. Females enter the nest site and lay an egg
      mass of around 200 - 400 eggs on the bottom of the nest
      excavation where males then fertilize the eggs. Several
      females may deposit eggs in any one nest. Up to 2000 eggs
      may be found in a single hellbender nest.</li>
51      <li>Males guard the egg mass, sometimes defending it
      against other hellbenders attempting to eat the eggs.</li>
52      <li>Eggs hatch in about 72 days. Hatchlings are initially a
      uniform gray or brown, and are equipped with conspicuous
      yolk sacs that provide nourishment for the first few months
      of life.</li>
53  </ul>
54  <h3>Diet</h3>
55  <ul>
56      <li>In the wild: mainly crayfish but also fish and
      invertebrates</li>
57      <li>At the Zoo: frozen and live fish, live crayfish,
      earthworms, various species of shrimp</li>
58  </ul>
59  <h3>Conservation Status</h3>
60  <ul>
61      <li>IUCN status: Near Threatened; CITES Appendix: Not listed
      </li>
62      <li>The hellbender is given varying protection status
      depending on the individual state within its range. In
      Maryland, the hellbender is a critically endangered. The
      hellbender is not on the federal Endangered Species List.
      </li>
63      <li>The primary cause of hellbender decline varies
      depending on the area. In some places it is habitat
      degradation. Some places it is introduced game fish. Some
      places it is water quality/chemistry. Some places it is all
      of the above.</li>
64      <li>Collection for the pet trade has also caused population
      declines though it is illegal in Missouri, Ohio, Indiana,
      Illinois, New York, North Carolina, Virginia, and West
      Virginia.</li>
65      <li>Predators: northern pike, muskellunge, turtles, water
      snakes, humans</li>
66  </ul>
67  <br><br>
68  </td>
69  </tr>
70  </table>
71  </center>

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72     </body>
73 </html>
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