

WRNC Symposium
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Raising Beavers
It's A Whole New Experience!

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Cuteness Overload



Beavers weigh about a pound at birth. This kit weighed 580g on arrival, so we guessed about a week old.

So you want to raise beavers??

- Take most of the “rules” you are used to and throw them out the window.
- Don’t let them spend a lot of time alone-make them part of a “family group.” They do not imprint easily.
- Need to spend time with them – almost 24/7 when they are young and on formula.
- Groom them as their parents would, can use a small brush.
- They act like a two year old toddler most of the time.
- Very vocal.....almost constantly.
- Can’t release until they are two years old

Preparation for raising beaver

- Large veri-kennels when young.
- 2-3 (less is best) people that can dedicate to raising the kit and take it home every night.
- As they get older-need metal caging.
- Kiddie type pools up to large pools or ponds as they get older.
- Escape proof enclosures-can chew out of anything plastic or wood.
- Access to variety of trees throughout the year-can eat up to 4-5 pounds of browse a day.
- Release location determined early-prep for release.
- Need a way to change the water frequently-defecate in the water.
- When taking home-need a place away from pets but where they can still see or hear you.

Examination

- Check body temp., should be between 98-101°F – put in incubator
- Can get pneumonia very easily.
- Check for wounds on feet and tail, and look for punctures really well-fur is thick.
- Do fecal check – Giardia is very common.
- Kits often come in with diarrhea.
- Check teeth for any damage.
- Warming up and hydrating is very important.
- Determine age – will determine feeding schedule and care.

Around 1 month old

- ❖ Born eyes open, fully furred and incisors erupting.
- ❖ Despite being furred-needs incubator.
- ❖ Body temp 98-101. Will need an incubator
- ❖ Critical low temperature is 75-77 up to 8-10 weeks
- ❖ Stay in lodge first 1-2 months after birth.
- ❖ Fur isn't fully water repellent first few weeks.
- ❖ Swim time? Yes or No
- ❖ Grooming important.
- ❖ Need to stimulate to defecate and urinate.
- ❖ No towels or material that frays.
- ❖ Young need lots of attention and stimulation.
- ❖ Feeding with a syringe and nipple to control amount suckling.
- ❖ Feeding every 3-4 hours up to 20-30cc per feeding.



Feeding Schedule

- Fox Valley for Beavers
- 1 part powder/1 part whipping cream/1 ½ parts water (higher in fat to get her weight up)
- Mother's milk is about 19% fat.
- Slowly took out the whipping cream, around 4 weeks and diluted powder. Increased formula strength based on fecal.
- Added probiotics to formula on days 1,3,5, and 7
- Also add Critical Care for fiber.
- After about 7 days, start suckling from a bottle.

Daily schedule

- Wake up get weighed-first week, weight may go up and down or if kit has diarrhea.
- After first week and diarrhea clears up-should gain daily.
- Eat about 20-30cc milk/feeding for about 2 weeks
- Go to the bathroom
- Go for a short swim
- Get groomed
- Take nap
- Repeat every 3-4 hours

3 – 4 weeks old

- 4 weeks start introducing food.
- Start nibbling branches around 11 days.
- Can dive around 10 days. Swimming should always be supervised. Warm water for about 15 minutes; 3-4xs/day.
- Groom immediately afterward and dry off.
- Started putting a dish of baby food in cage about 3 times a day-in between feedings.
- Drinking around 45 – 50 cc milk/feeding; 4-5xs/day.
- Weight around 600-700 grams

4-5 weeks old

- Eating 60-75cc/ feeding; 3xs/day
- Weight around 900 grams.
- Getting warm bath 2-3xs/day. Swimming skills getting better but still supervised.
- Grooming self more often.
- Eating more baby food throughout the day
- Starting to nibble on browse.
- Offering vegetarian dog food soaked in milk.
- Kits will start urinating/defecating on own
- Require a lot of attention throughout the day.
- Very vocal-especially at night.

6 weeks old

- Start weaning: Only getting milk 2xs/day; will eat anywhere between 55-85cc/feeding
- Starting to eat more solid food: Nature's recipe dry dog food, herbivore pellets, offer omnivore pellets and rodent blocks, (apples, carrots, sweet potato as a treat 1-2xs/week).
- Offering aquatic plants, duckweed, lilies, sedges, grasses.
- Start to put some leaves and twigs in cage for them to smell and nibble on a little
- Still going home every night.
- Getting longer bath times-have a kiddie pool. Should be totally self grooming.
- Weight around 1 – 2 kg.

Swimming Lessons



Weaning



2 months ~ 4 pounds

8 weeks should start weaning. 10 weeks should be weaned.

- ❖ Only feeding 1-2xs/day, 85-100 cc per feeding.
- ❖ Weight is 1.8 -2.8 kg.
- ❖ Heating pad in sleeping area.
- ❖ Offering more browse, aquatic plants, vegetarian dog food, veggies, limited fruits.
- ❖ Supplement food with critic care and multi vitamin.
- ❖ Getting longer swim times. Should have areas to easily climb out of pool or swim area for grooming.



3 months old~10 pounds



- ❖ Swimming on own-shouldn't need supervised.
- ❖ Set up in larger area with kiddie pool during the day.
- ❖ Eating browse and supplemental diet.
- ❖ 11-13 weeks low critical temperature is 32-36 degrees.
- ❖ Weighing every 2-3 days as long as eating well.



Planning a lodge



Need a Beaver Enclosure





- ❖ Pea gravel on bottom.
- ❖ Pond has a filtration system but also gets sump pumped regularly.
- ❖ Lined entire enclosure with wire.
- ❖ Remember under 3 years of age-easy for them to climb.

Mimic natural den and entrance.

Moving water for aeration and prevent freezing.

Provide plenty of trees, branches to chew on.

Teeth can grow up to 4' per year.







- ❖ Most of diet should be natural but still provide a supplemental diet daily.
- ❖ Trees should be < 3" in diameter.
- ❖ Eat 20% body weight/day
- ❖ Adult beaver can eat 300 small trees a year.
- ❖ Provide aquatic plants
- ❖ Know trees in release area.
- ❖ Prep for winter.



Providing Trees

Food Selection

Will eat leaves, buds, roots, cambian layer of trees.

- ❖ Duckweed
- ❖ Clover
- ❖ Collard, mustard, turnip greens
- ❖ Kale
- ❖ Swiss chard
- ❖ Turnips, sweet potato, corn on the cob
- ❖ Water lilies, bulrushes, cattails, duckweed, pond weed, arrowhead
- ❖ Willow
- ❖ Aspen
- ❖ Sassafras
- ❖ Maple
- ❖ Cottonwood
- ❖ Birch
- ❖ Sweet gum
- ❖ Tupelo





Inside the Den



- ❖ Can you sex a beaver?? Not so much....
- ❖ Male and female similar size
- ❖ Internal sex organs
- ❖ Male has a penis bone-can see on x-ray. Best way to tell.
- ❖ Why does this matter??



Is putting unrelated beavers together okay?

Age matters



Gender matters



Release Prep

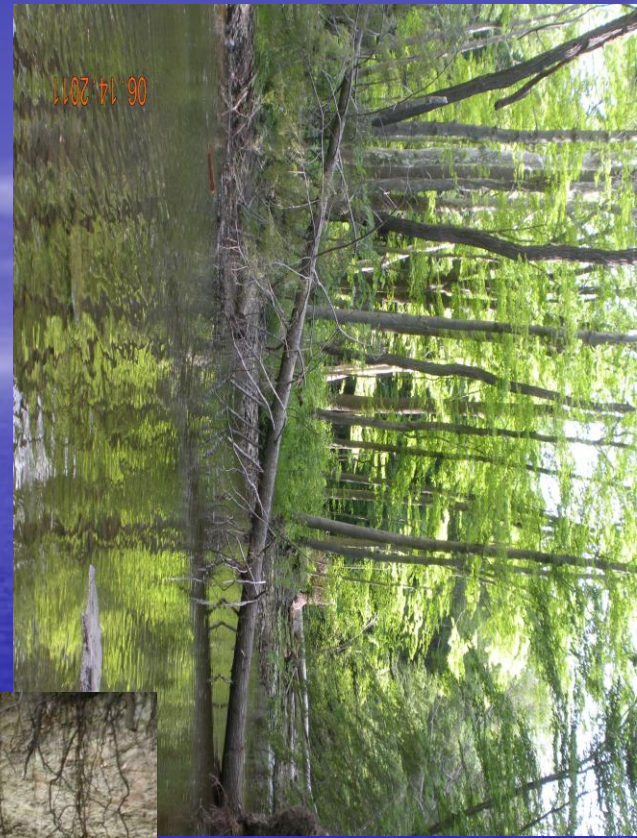


- Do you need to keep 2 years?
- Survive the winter okay?
- Seeing natural behaviors required for survival?
- Where to release?
- When to release?
- Single beaver vs two or more.

Release Sites



Release Day!



Good Luck!



Thank you!



Questions??

Resources:

North American Beaver, Suzanne McBride

Orphaned Beavers, Anne Miller, Wildlife Rehabilitation Bulletin, Vol. 24, No.1; Spring/summer 2006.

Ohio Division of Wildlife