

**ANIMALS IN  
DANGER**

# SEA OTTERS



Kevin Cunningham

**Mitchell Lane**

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CHAPTER  
**ONE**

**OUT OF  
BALANCE**



Hunters killed 99% of the world's sea otters before the early 1900s.

In 1969, scientists began a new program. Experts returned sea otters to some places the species once lived. Eighty-nine animals splashed down at Checleset Bay, British Columbia. Hundreds of sea otters lived in the area 50 years later. More than 4000 total lived in Canadian waters.

## CHAPTER ONE

But the sea otters' appetite caused a problem. A sea otter eats at least 25% of its weight each day. That's like an average fourth grader eating between 15 and 20 lbs. (6.8 to 9.0 kg) of food.

Clams, crabs, and other species disappeared. **Indigenous** peoples, or First Nations, depended on these seafoods to live.

Checleset Bay's **ecosystem** once remained in balance. "That included the people," Haida leader Kii'iljuus Barb Wilson told BBC.com, "because people are very much a part of what is the ecosystem."

# OUT OF BALANCE



The sea otter's wide-ranging diet includes crabs.

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