



Fact Sheet

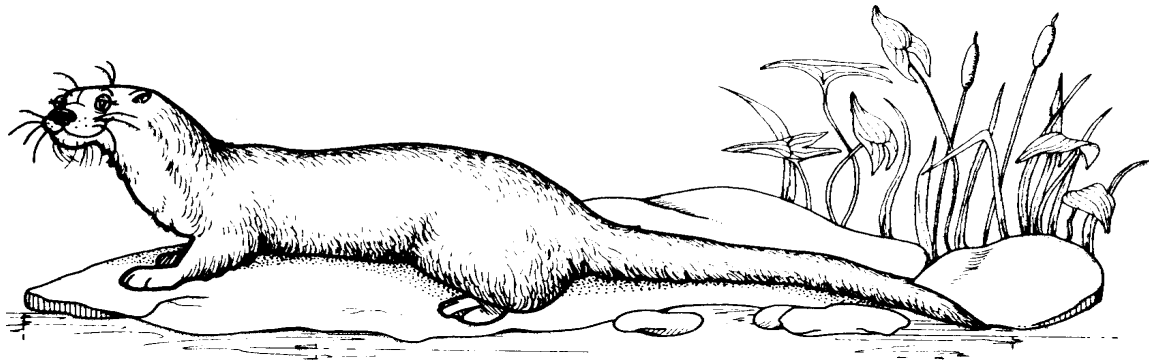
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Department of Environmental Protection

FACTS AND FALSEHOODS A TRUE/FALSE “TEST” OF WETLAND TRIVIA

1. Pennsylvania wet habitats consist, in part, of 45 percent forested, 28 percent scrub-shrub and 14 percent emergent wetlands. T F
2. Nearly one-half of the Commonwealth’s vegetated wetlands are concentrated in the southeastern portion of the state. T F
3. The smallest flowering plant known to science occurs in many of Pennsylvania’s wetlands. T F
4. In Pennsylvania, eight of the 13 (62 percent) species of birds listed as “Threatened” or “Endangered” are tenants of wetland habitats. T F
5. There are over 300 different, active ingredients registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for agricultural use on crops alone. When trapped in wetlands, many of these compounds are naturally destroyed by the sun, bacteria and other means. T F
6. In the United States, more than \$10 billion in fish and fish products are harvested from wetland and deepwater habitats annually. T F
7. The federal (national and international) list (U.S. Department of the Interior) of “Endangered and Threatened” plants and animals, many of which inhabit wetlands, numbers over 950 species. T F
8. During the past 14 years, more than 80 species of wildlife have been declared extinct while awaiting governmental approval to be included on the federal, international “Endangered and Threatened” Species List for protection. T F
9. Between 1956 and 1979, Pennsylvania had a net loss of nearly 42,500 acres of emergent wetlands, or 38 percent of this type. T F
10. On the national scene, the observation and photography of wetland dependent birds alone entices an estimated 50 million people to spend \$10 billion annually. T F
11. In 1979, nearly 498,000 acres of wetlands existed in Pennsylvania, including 67,000 acres of nonvegetated wetlands (ponds). T F
12. Since 1990, Pennsylvania experienced a net gain of nearly 4,000 acres of wetlands. T F
13. Conversion from vegetated wetlands to open water has increased the state’s acreage of ponds and deepwater habitats. Thirty-nine thousand acres of ponds alone were constructed from vegetated wetlands from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s. T F
14. According to some estimates, Pennsylvania experienced an annual loss of 1200 acres of emergent wetlands between 1956 and 1979. T F
15. Wetlands provide few benefits for the human family. T F

ANSWERS:

1. True
2. False: Nearly one-half are concentrated in the northwestern and northeastern regions of the state, in areas previously glaciated. The statistics are: 19 percent in the northwest, 26 percent in the northeast, 46 percent in the central portion of the Commonwealth and nine percent in the southeast.
3. True: Wolffia, Watermeal, is not only the world's smallest flowering plant, but is listed by an act of the Pennsylvania legislature as "believed to be in danger of population decline." Problems related to its biology prevent accurate determination.
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. True
11. True
12. True
13. False: It is estimated that 42 percent of new pond acreage came from wetlands, or approximately 16,000 acres.
14. True.
15. False: See DEP Fact Sheet, "Functions at the Junctions"



For more information, please visit the PA PowerPort at www.state.pa.us, Keyword: "DEP Wetlands," or contact:

Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Watershed Management
Division of Waterways, Wetlands, & Erosion Control
P.O. Box 8775
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8775
717-787-6827
Fax 717-772-5986