

North-American Beaver



**Captain John Smith
Chesapeake National
Historic Trail**



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North America's largest rodent, the beaver is nature's lumberjack.

Beavers can chew through a small tree in a matter of hours. They eat the bark and use the wood to build dams and houses known as lodges. Water builds up behind the dams, and the deep water protects the beavers from hungry predators. The flooded landscape in turn creates wetland habitat for other animals. The dam itself filters and slows water as it flows downhill. This reduces the damage of heavy rainfall and allows nutrients to soak into the soil.