Why do river otters play?

Play reinforces essential social bonds of the river otter. Examples of play include tunneling through snow or leaves, sliding down muddy or snowy embankments, and playful swimming behavior. Like many animals, otters rely upon play to learn survival skills. Juvenile otters commonly wrestle with one another to practice fighting and hunting. As adults, otters continue to practice such skills through play.

With their streamlined, sleek and muscular bodies, river otters are adapted to thrive in an aquatic environment. Otters have tightly packed underfur and long guard fur which repel water from the skin. This water resistant fur enables otters to playfully swim for hours at a time without getting thoroughly wet. They dive up to 40 feet and swim up to 7 miles per hour.
**BEHAVIOR & ADAPTATION**

_Social Behavior_

Red Wolf  
_Canis rufus gregoryi_

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*Why do wolves howl in the wild?*

Wolves howl to advertise their presence to other wolf packs. When packs meet, members fight which can result in the death of a wolf. To avoid encounters with competing packs, wild wolves maintain large home ranges of 40-400 square miles.

Wolves use sporadic, long, and deep howl calls to instantly communicate the whereabouts of one pack to another. Howling is contagious, and all members of the pack vocalize together. This integrated chorus may then travel up to six miles. Wolf vocabulary also includes yips, barks, growls, and whines.

*Why do these wolves howl at the chapel bell?*

The wolves at the Trevor Zoo engage in a chorus of their own. Our wolves howl daily in response to the ringing of the chapel bell. In a captive environment, the sounding of a bell (or fire siren) may trigger an innate howling response and prompt the wolves to join what they believe to be a howling chorus.
Why do red-necked wallabies play?

Play reinforces social bonds. Mothers often challenge their weaned joeys to playful wrestling and boxing matches to prepare their young for later battles. Adult wallabies also engage in play to practice and maintain fighting skills.

How and why do wallabies fight?

Males engage in a stiff legged walk upon encountering their opponent. Before engaging in combat, the animals often scratch and groom themselves while staring down the other individual. Finally, wallabies lock forearms and attempt to push their opponent to the ground. Sexually mature males battle to maintain sexual status or win a mate.
Who provides parental care for emu young?

Emus engage in a reproductive strategy known as polyandry. This means that female emus mate with more than one male while males provide complete parental care for emu young.

These birds mate during December and January. The female lays 9-20 large olive green eggs between February and April in a shallow nest built by the male. The maternal responsibilities end for the female after she lays the eggs, and she leaves the male to mate with other males.

The male incubates the eggs and lives entirely off of his fat reserves for an average of 56 days. During this stage the male typically loses half of his body mass. After the eggs hatch, the male aggressively protects and rears his hatchlings for the first 5 to 7 months of their development.

Who made that sound?

Vocalizations differentiate male and female emus. Males typically hiss and grunt, while females produce booming sounds in the throat.