

Baby Beavers in Atascadero!

By Terre Dunivant, SLOBeaverBrigade



SLOBeaverBrigade, working with Dr. Emily Fairfax of CSU Channel Islands, has gotten [this footage of a baby beaver](#) at a pond in Atascadero! Like all babies, this little one is just darling - and so promising!

Beavers are truly amazing. The ponds they build and maintain raise water tables, recharge aquifers, slow flood surges, and attract and support hundreds of mostly native species (as well as livestock). Beavers are biodiversity in action - the wetlands beavers create are among the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world.

Beavers also dig channels that radiate out from their ponds, spreading the water into surrounding fields. **Beaver ponds and meadows can and do stop wildfires.**

The BeaverCam also got footage of [a very pregnant mama](#). Once a year, the mama beaver makes a soft, dry bed where she'll bear between three and nine kits or so. Their living space is in the back of the lodge, on a leveled area above a sort of mudroom where beavers dry off after swimming into the lodge through an underwater tunnel. The babies' eyes are open when they're born and they have all their fur and teeth.

Amazingly, beaver babies can swim within 24 hours of birth. They explore outside the lodge with their parents within a few days, so this little one is less than a month old and could live 20

years. Young beavers stay with their parents about two years, helping maintain the pond and caring for the new year's babies before moving on to find a lifelong mate and build their own lodge, sometimes with their parents' help. Beavers are herbivores (like me!) so they don't prey on fish or anyone else.

Beavers are native to California and most of North America. They were hunted to near extinction over the past 150 years, especially on the coast and near settlements, where they have yet to recover as they (somewhat) have in more remote areas.

We are so lucky to have beavers in San Luis Obispo County, where there are more than 50 dams along the Salinas River, mostly in upper tributaries. Beavers also live in Arroyo Grande and Oceano.

We need beavers to help us deal with these extreme droughts and wildfires, and they work for free! We need to bring beavers back home. For more beaver love, go to SLObeaverbrigade.com

P.S.: Here's a photo of the dam and pond in Atascadero where this little beaver lives with her family (or his family - hard to tell the gender without getting very up close and personal, even in adult beavers):



Photo by Audrey Taub at slobeaverbrigade@gmail.com