

Sliding and Gliding

River otters have long, sleek bodies with short legs. Otters look funny moving on the snow. They run a few steps and then slide on their bellies. To slide, otters move their rear feet close to their front feet. They press the claws and rough knobs on their heels into the snow. Then, otters push off as hard as they can, just the way you would push off if you were on a sled! They glide across the ice on their bellies with their front paws by their sides. One slide can be over 20 feet!

Otters are also fast and nimble in water. They swim by bending their long bodies up and down. Otters use their webbed feet and strong tails to steer. They can float on their backs, tread water, and swim forward or backward.

