

Name _____

The Role of Otters in the Ecosystem

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Controlling sea urchin populations protects kelp forests, which are essential for other animals and help the planet by reducing carbon dioxide.
2. Otters protect animals by improving water quality and controlling pests, and they protect plants by preventing overgrazing in areas like kelp forests.
3. If otters disappeared, the populations of their prey could grow too large, leading to the destruction of habitats like kelp forests and affecting other animals in the food chain.
4. Humans can help otters by reducing pollution, protecting their habitats, and creating laws to prevent hunting and poaching.

