

Kelp Forest Fill-in-the-Blank

Ask a friend or family member for words to fill in the blanks below, and then read them the story aloud!

There once was a sea otter named Margot, and she lived off the coast of California with her otter friends, _____ and _____. Margot and her crew spent their days swimming and _____ among a kelp forest, an aquatic ecosystem found in shallow waters along the west coast of North America. These underwater forests consist of kelp, a type of extra-large brown algae that reaches lengths of 150 feet—about as long as _____! Margot and her friends loved feasting on _____, but their favorite thing to eat was prickly sea urchins. Sea urchins are _____ invertebrates that graze on kelp, and if there are too many of them, they can completely wipe out entire forests! By eating sea urchins, otters like Margot help kelp forests grow. It's important that otters help maintain the kelp forest because it's a vital habitat for thousands of aquatic animals, including fishes, eels, horn sharks, sea stars, anemones and sea birds—though you probably won't see a/an _____ there! These _____ animals rely on the thick underwater vegetation of kelp forests for protection from predators and storms, to hunt and find food, and to raise their young. _____, kelp forests are cool!