

Traces for You to Find



Bird Nest

A Bird's Home

Different bird species build unique nests. Some roost in the cavities of trees, some live in bushes and others build fancy nests. If you were a bird, where would you build your nest, in the hollow of a tree trunk like a woodpecker or in the canopy of a tall tree like the red-tailed hawk?

Diggin' for Food

The holes in this tree were created by a woodpecker in search of insects. How many trees can you find with traces left on them by woodpeckers?



Woodpecker Holes

Yesterday's Lunch

Many animals leave traces of their food choices for us to find. Squirrels and chipmunks leave fragmented nuts and pine cones, while birds perch in thickets of berry bushes, picking the best berries. Can you find something an animal has eaten?



Squirrel Midden

Sticky Situation

Spiders are usually solitary and shy, but if you look closely you may find the webs that they build. Different spider species make different styles of webs, so you can learn a lot just by looking at the web patterns. Orb Weavers build circular webs like the one in the photo, but there are also sheet webs, funnel webs, triangle webs, and more.



Spider Web

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Tracks & Traces

Tracking things in nature is fun! Hey TRACK, what kind of footprint is that?

Well KIP, judging by the size and shape of these tracks and scat, I think a raccoon was here last night.



No animal can pass through an area without leaving traces. As you walk down the trail, use this brochure to discover the tracks and traces you can find around this area.



WARNING:

Animal scat can contain parasites that are dangerous to humans. If you find scat, DO NOT touch it.

Rabbit

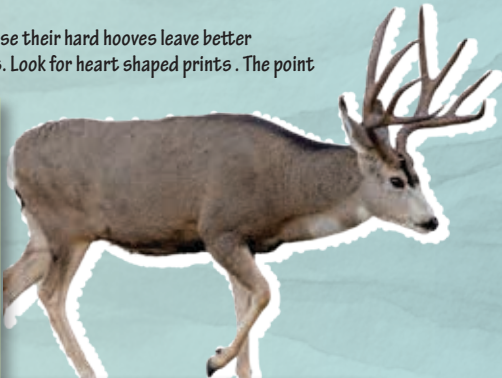
Rabbit tracks show up in a line of triangle-shaped prints. On closer inspection, you will see the triangle is made up of two small front paw prints on the in side and two large hind prints on the outside.



Rabbit scat and deer scat are similar, but rabbit scat is a lighter shade of brown. Also deer scat is oval shaped but rabbit scat is smaller and rounder. The average rabbit poops about 200-300 times a day.

Deer

Deer tracks are usually the easiest to find because their hard hooves leave better impressions than the soft paws of other animals. Look for heart shaped prints. The point of the heart points in the direction of travel.



Found in clusters, a deer scat pellet has a dimple on one end and a point on the opposite end. A **deer bed** is a place where a deer likes to rest; look for an oval depression in the ground where leaves or grass are matted down.

Skunk

Every skunk track has five toes and five long claws on each paw. The skunk has longer claws on the front paws to use in digging up roots and insects.



Skunk scat is a rough tubular shape about the size of cat poop. You may be able to see seeds or bits of insects embedded in the scat. One of the most obvious signs that a skunk has been nearby is the odor of the spray.

Snake

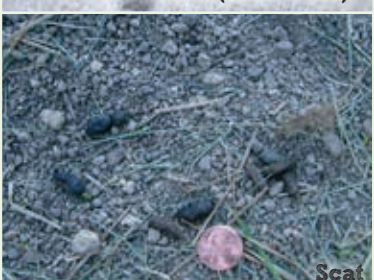
Like most snakes, garter snakes have 'S' shaped tracks and can fit through small spaces. Look for tracks in loose soil or sand.



Garter snakes have long thin bodies and enjoy rocky hot climates. Look for them sunbathing on rocks. Without legs, snakes move their body with an 'S' shaped motion. Garter snakes also have long, slimy, white and brown scat.

Squirrel

Ground squirrels have four toes on the smaller front paws and five toes on the larger hind paws. The tracks are similar rabbit tracks.



Ground squirrels live on or under the ground in burrows. The scat resembles small, dark pills. A trail of squirrel tracks resembles those of a rabbit, with the smaller front paws positioned inside the larger hind prints.

Coyote

Coyote tracks are approximately 2.5 inches long, capped with claw marks and are found in pairs. Their toes are closer together and not as wide as the toes of dog tracks.



Coyotes are **opportunistic eaters**, meaning they'll eat almost anything, so their scat can take many forms. In general coyote scat is long, with a rope-like twist and pointed ends.