

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



Eaten Berries

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 bears flatten thickets of berry bushes in search of the best berries. Can you find something an animal has eaten?

Snake Proof

Finding a snake track is difficult, but occasionally we find other traces of their presence. Snakes shed their old skin as they grow larger. As a snake grows, it forms a new skin under the old one. When the new skin is ready, the snake slithers out of its old skin, leaving the shed behind.

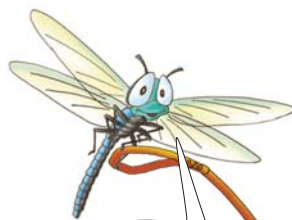


Snake Shed

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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 the look of the scat, I think a coyote 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 types of tracks and traces animals leave behind.



WARNING:

Raccoon scat may contain the eggs of raccoon roundworm, which can be fatal to humans. If you find scat, DO NOT handle it.

Raccoon

Raccoon tracks have five toes on their front and rear paws and resemble miniature human-baby hand prints.



Because raccoons are **omnivores** (they eat both plants and animals), their scat can vary in size, shape and color. As a rule of thumb, if you can't identify the scat, treat it as raccoon scat and **DO NOT** disturb it.

White-Tailed 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.

Wild Turkey

Can you count to three? Wild turkeys can. Look for three toed tracks that look like arrows. The arrow points in the opposite direction that the turkey was walking.



Wild turkey scat is usually large and tubular with a slight curve on one end. However, their scats can vary in appearance and sometimes look like formless blobs. As male turkeys strut around, they often drag their wing tips on the ground leaving scrapes. Scrapes are also found where turkeys search for food.

Beaver

Beaver tracks can be hard to find because they drag their tail, obscuring the prints. Their front feet are five-toed and small while their hind feet are triangle-shaped, webbed, and more than twice the size of the front.



Beavers often leave their scat in the water, so it is less likely to see. The best place to find beaver scat is around an area where they have been working. Find a chewed stump and look around the area for what looks like pellets of sawdust.

Bobcat

Cat tracks have four toes on both the front and back feet. Because cats have **retractable claws** (claws that draw back in to their paws), claw marks are usually not present in bobcat tracks.



Containing the hair and bones from their prey, bobcat scat is segmented and round on the ends. Although bobcats have retractable claws which helps keep them sharp, they sometimes sharpen their claws by scratching the trunk of a tree.

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.