

# 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

## 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.

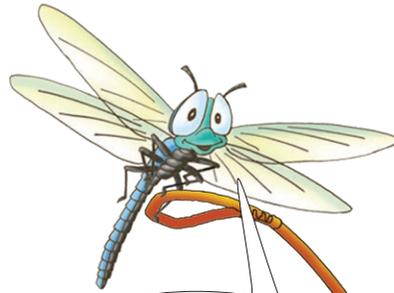


Snake Shed

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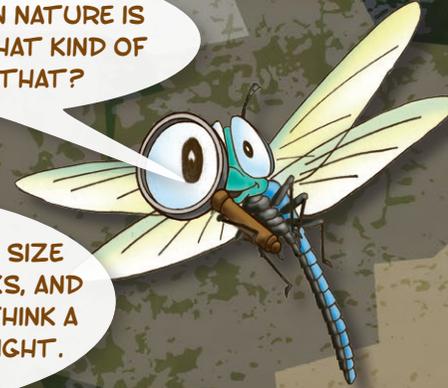


Kids in Parks Founding Partners



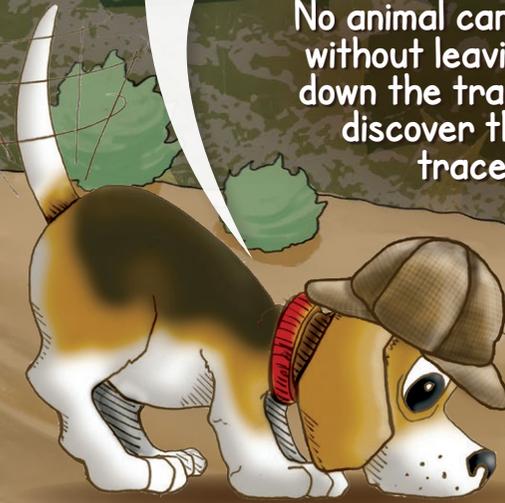
# Tracks & Traces

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:** Animal scat may contain parasites, which can be harmful 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.



Track (Left/Front)



Scat



Tim Williams



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.

## 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.



Track



Scat



Bed

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.



Track



Scat



Scrape

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.

## Mink

Mink tracks have five toes on both front and hind paws. They spend a lot of time hunting by the water, so tracks can often be found in mud along the shore.



Tracks



Scat



Muskrat Den

Mink scat can be found in easily seen places such as on top of rocks or logs. It is long and twisted with pointed ends. It looks similar to coyote scat, but much smaller. Mink sometimes dig their own dens, but often just live in abandoned dens built by muskrats or beavers.

## Red Squirrel

Squirrel tracks have four toes on the front paws and five toes on the hind paws. The claws are usually visible on the tips of the toes. The tracks can be arranged like a walk or a long hop.



Tracks



Scat



Food Debris

Squirrel scat typically consists of small oval pellets. It can be found on the ground or even in trees. Also look for piles of debris from squirrels feeding, called middens.

## 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.



Track



Scat



Den and Scat

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.