

POCKET Nature Journal

Mud Season Animal Tracking



Mud Season Tracking

We LOVE mud! It can provide terrific tracking conditions. Let's go on a scavenger hunt to find mammal prints in the mud.

What is a PRINT?

An impression left by one foot

What is a TRACK?

A pattern of footprints

When you find a print, study it closely. Count the toes.

- Do you see nail prints?
- How big is the print?
- What is the habitat?

Toe Count:

2 toes: deer or moose

4 toes: bobcat, coyote, fox, or a pet dog

5 toes: raccoon, beaver, porcupine, bear, skunk, opossum, otter, fisher, mink, weasel

Eastern Coyote

Canis latrans

Habitat: Fields to woods

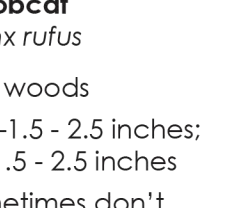
Print size: width—2.5 - 3.5 inches; length—1.5 - 2.7 inches

Toes: 4 toes visible in print, pointed nails of lead toes usually point inward

Note: X visible in middle of print between pads (same for fox, which is smaller)



Red Fox (above)
Coyote (Right)



Bobcat

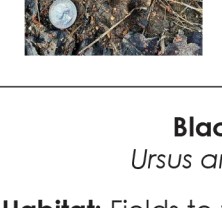
Lynx rufus

Habitat: Fields to woods

Print size: width—1.5 - 2.5 inches; length—1.5 - 2.5 inches

Toes: 4, nails sometimes don't show in print

Note: C visible between toes and heel pad; rounder than coyote print



Black Bear

Ursus americanus

Habitat: Fields to forest

Print size: front width—3.3 - 6 inches; front length—3.5 - 8 inches; hind width—3.5 - 6 inches; hind length—5 - 8.5 inches

Toes: 5, nails on front feet extend further than hind

Note: Large toe is located on outside of foot



Activity

Create your own mini field guide of mammals in your neck of the woods
(Hint: Fold a blank piece of paper in the same manner as this journal)

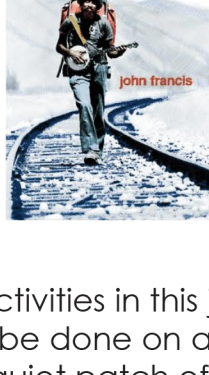
- Take a photo or sketch the print
- Describe the habitat
- Include common name (and scientific)
- Measure the print (width and length)
- Count the number of toes

Draw a Print or Track you found today:

Nature Quote:

John Francis, *the Planetwalker*

“As you walk, look around, assess where you are, reflect on where you have been, and dream of where you are going. Every moment of the present contains the seeds of opportunity for change. Your life is an adventure. Live it fully.”



The activities in this journal can be done on almost any quiet patch of earth in our area.



Land Trusts are member driven non-profits working for you in our communities. Please consider supporting these organizations.