

# Tracking Down Wildlife!

Subjects: Science, Creative Arts

Objective(s): Students will match different animals to their various tracks and make track identification booklets.

## **Material Needs:**

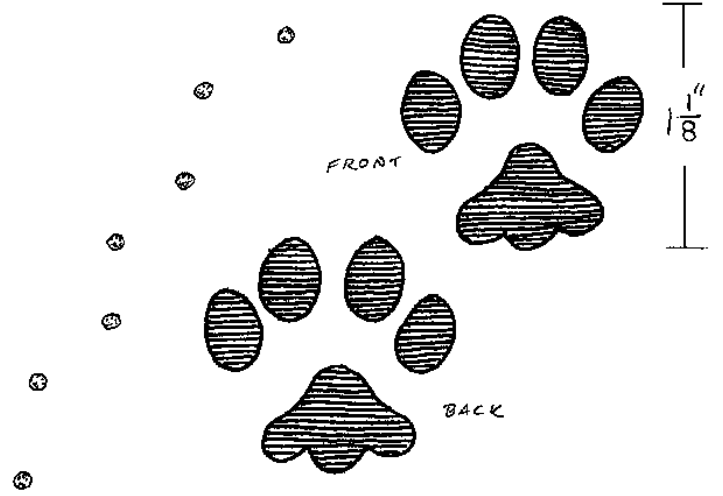
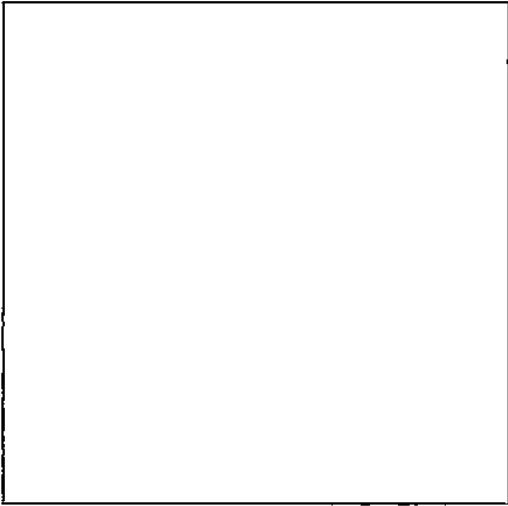
Student handout - animal tracks

Assorted mammal field guides such as Peterson's, Audubon's, Golden Guides, etc.  
(There is even a Peterson Field Guide to Animal Tracks)

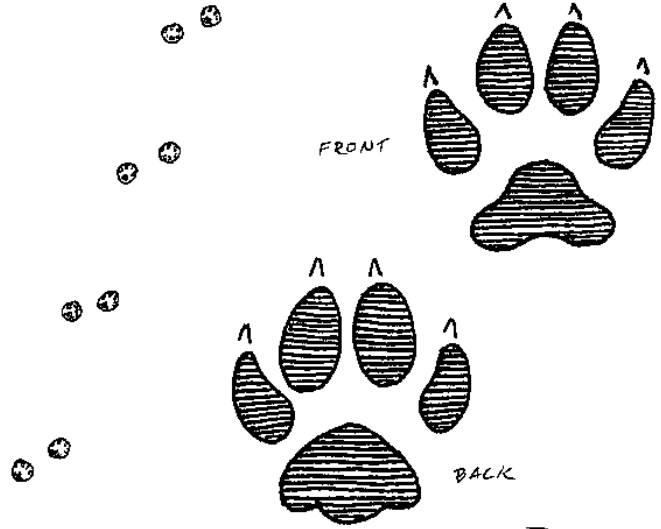
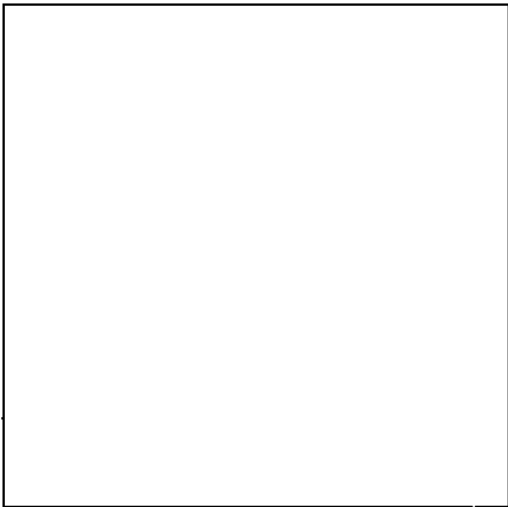
## **Activity/Instruction:**

1. Explain that sometimes tracks left behind by animals are the only signs we have that those animals passed through an area. Each animal has a distinctive track. With practice, we can tell what kind of animal made each track and even whether or not that animal was running or walking.
2. Give each student a copy of the "Animal Tracks" handout.
3. Go over why certain tracks look the way they do. Can tracks tell us something about the animal that made them? Do animals that dig in the ground for food have feet shaped differently than other animals? How can you tell the difference between cat and dog tracks? Does the size of the track tell us anything about the size of the animal? What differences can the students find between the tracks on their handout?
4. Introduce the students to the concept of mammal field guides (books). Show them the kind of information that can be found in field guides, and show them some examples of different tracks.
5. Have each student cut his or her handout into strips. Each animal's track should be on a separate piece of paper.
6. Have each student research and add additional signs on their strips that each animal might leave behind, such as scat, tree rubbings, which way the animal is going, how much distance is between the tracks when the animal is walking/running, nest type, chewing patterns, patterns of tooth marks left on nuts, etc. Students may want to draw (or cut & paste) a picture of each animal onto its appropriate track strip.
7. Staple their strips together to form an identification booklet for tracks. They can use these to help identify tracks found around the school or home!

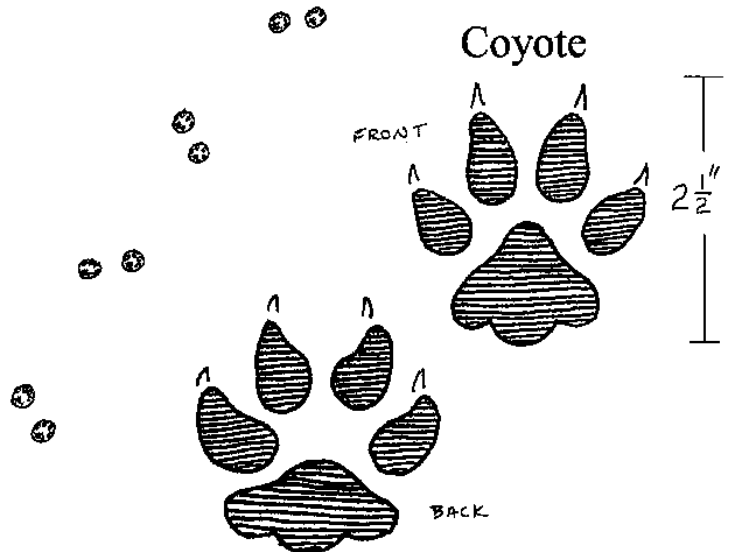
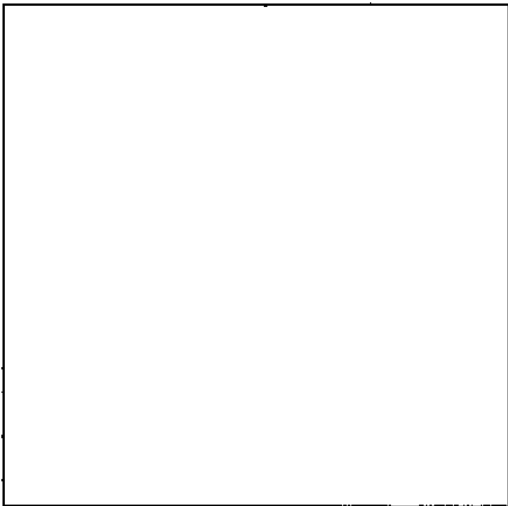
† Adapted from "Mounds State Park Field Trip Guides for Educators & Group Leaders," 1998.

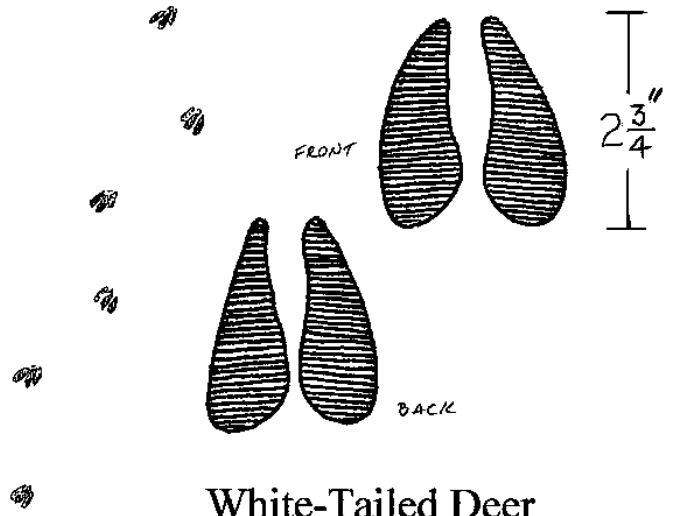
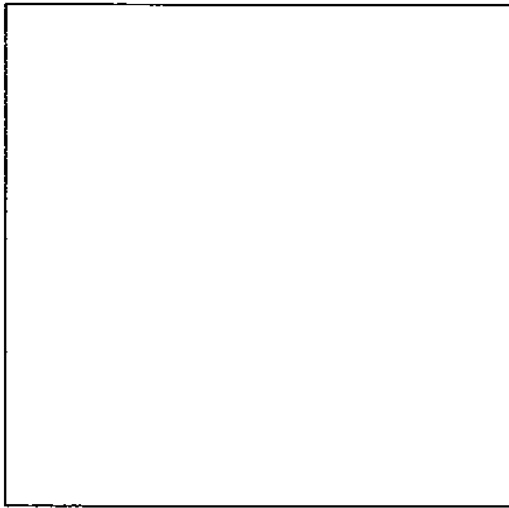


House Cat

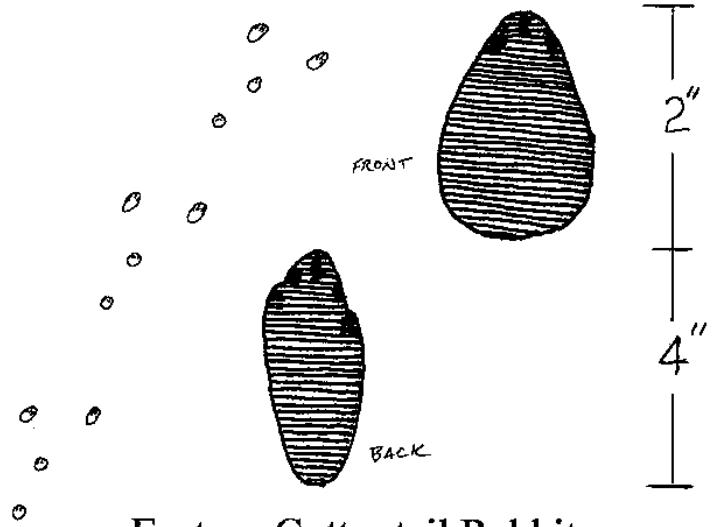
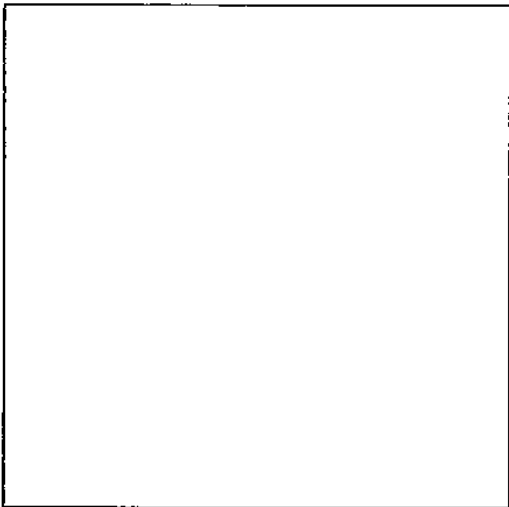


Dog

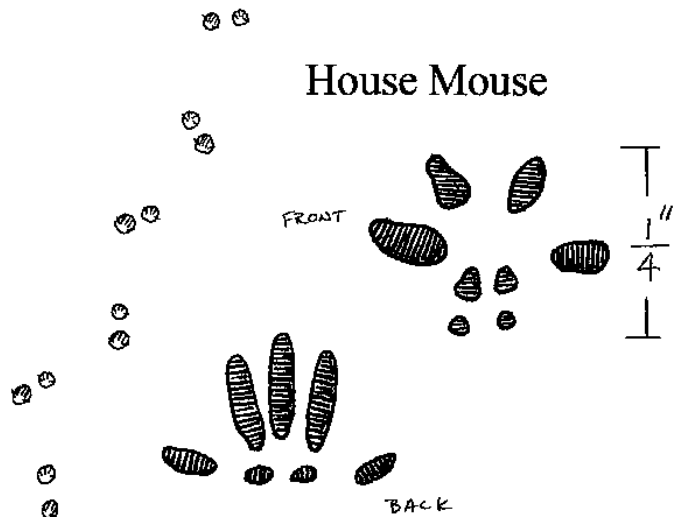
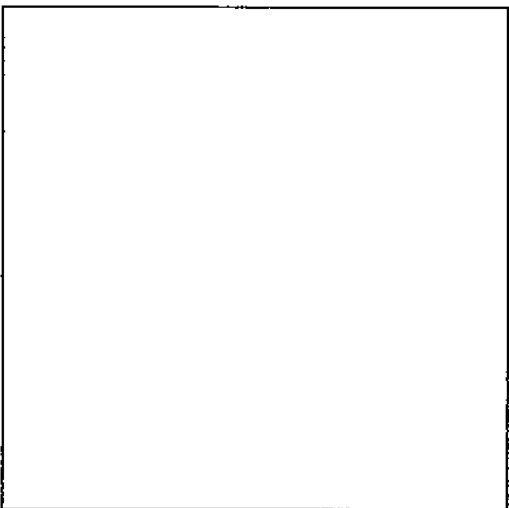




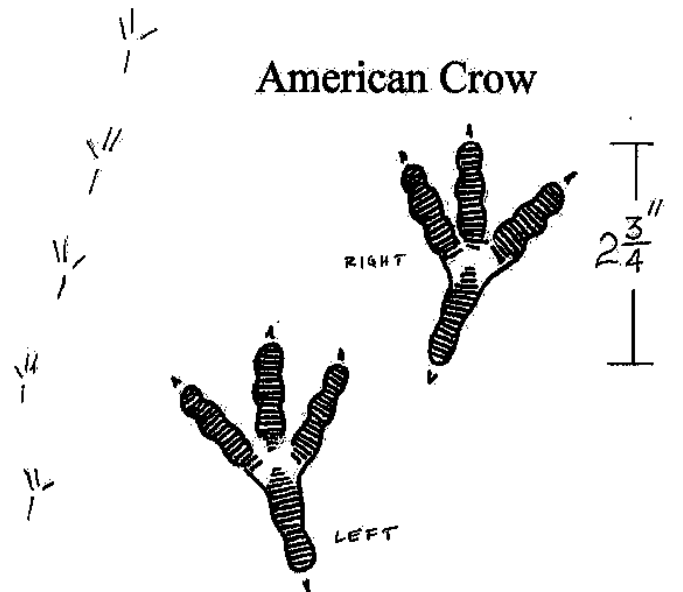
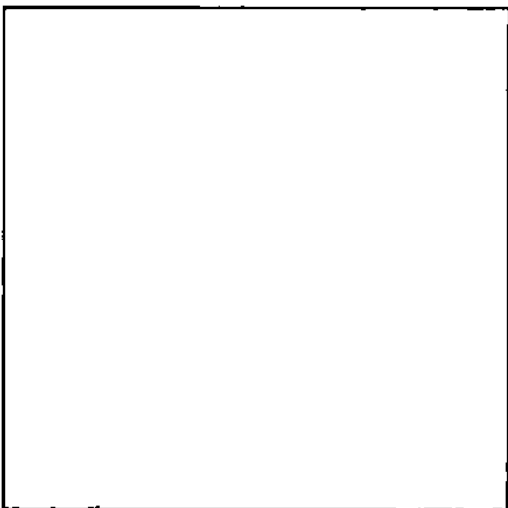
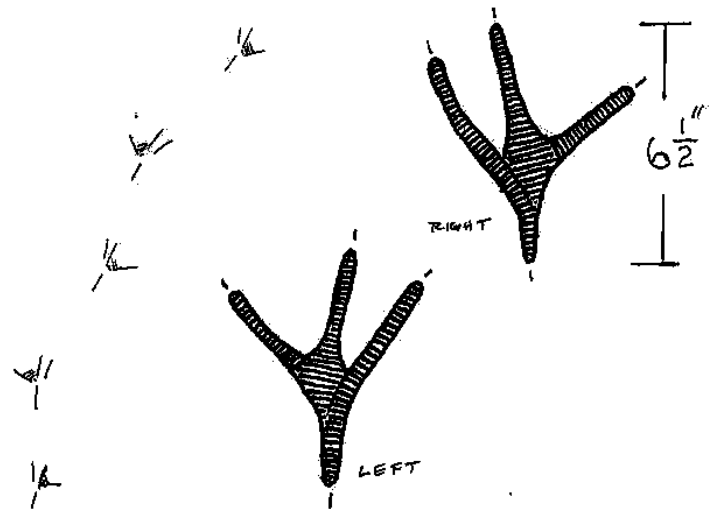
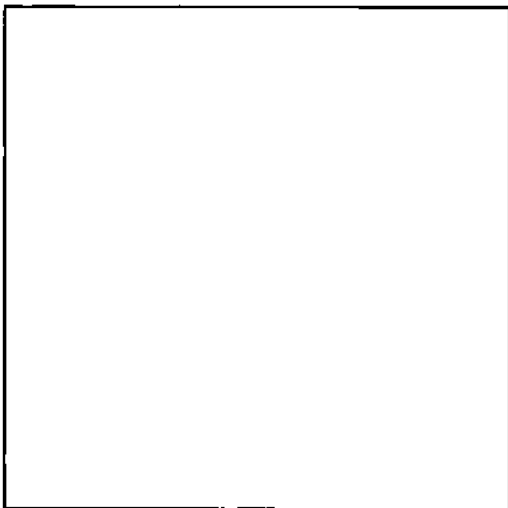
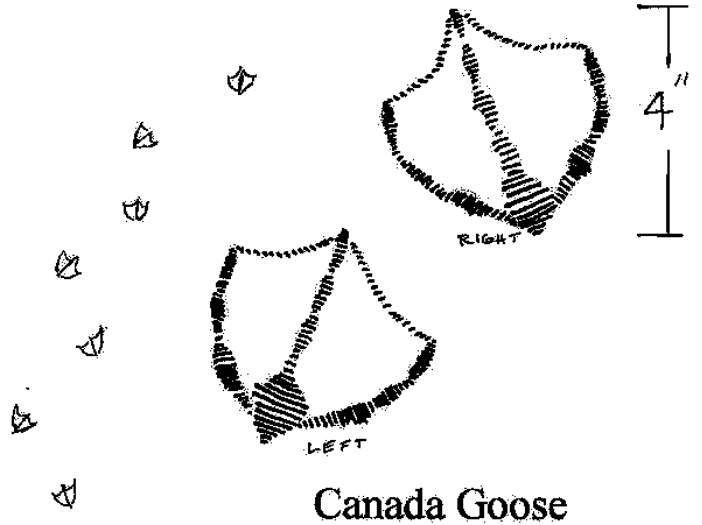
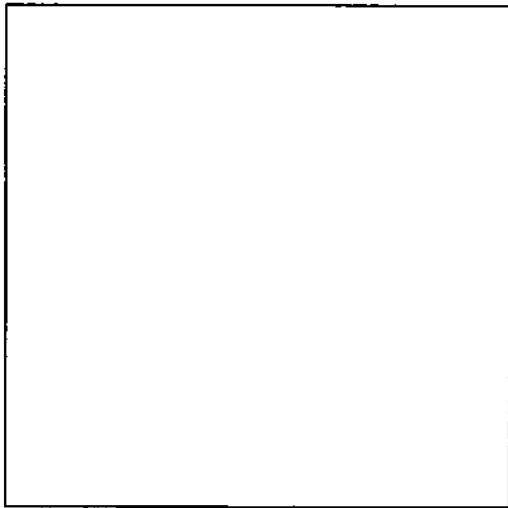
White-Tailed Deer

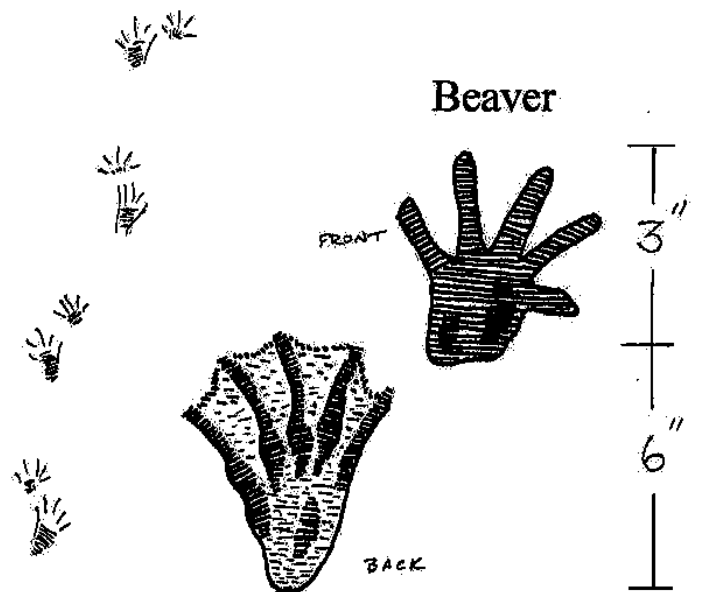
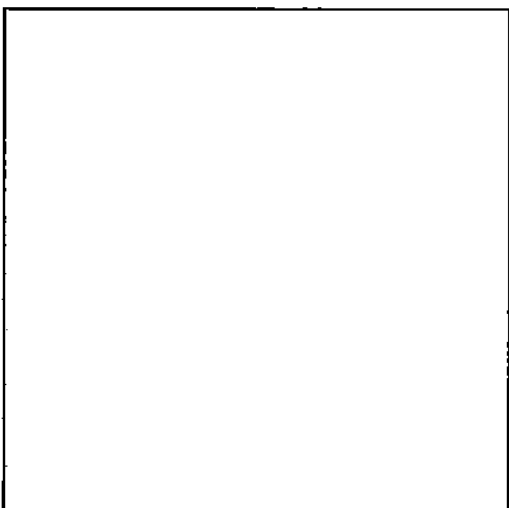
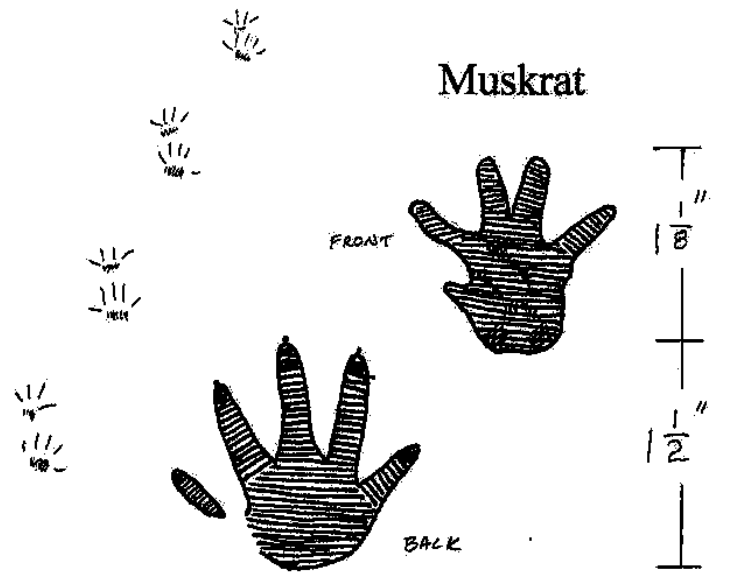
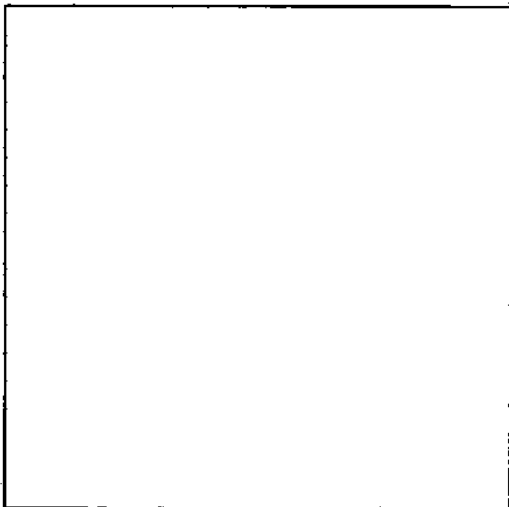
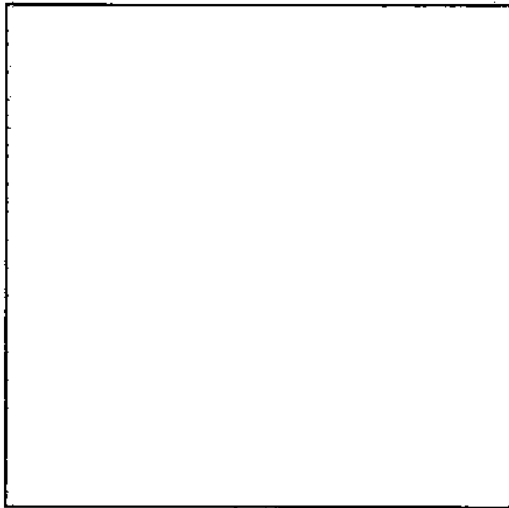


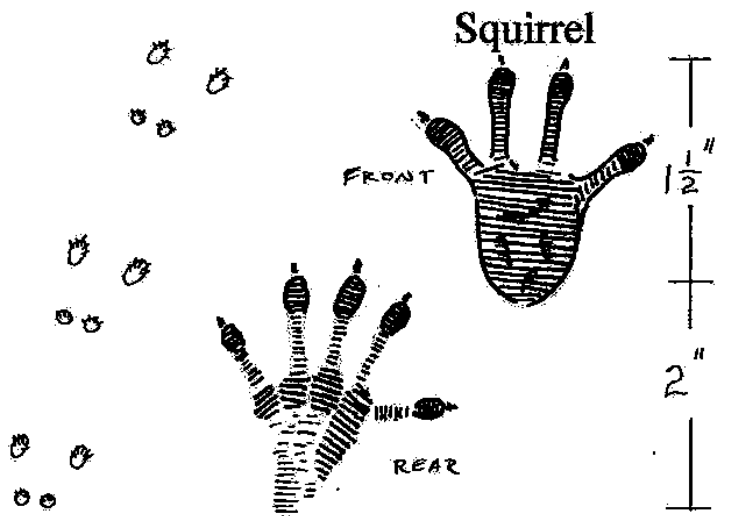
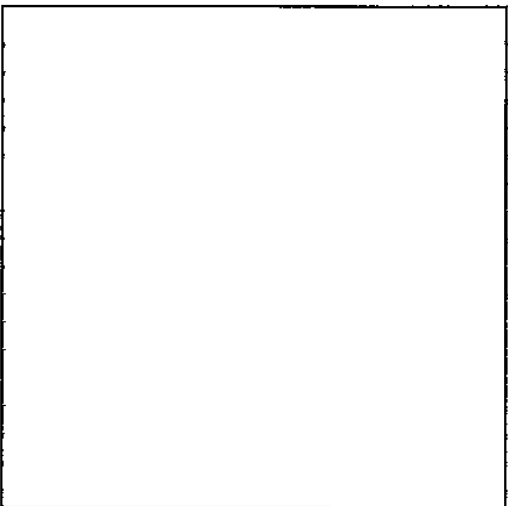
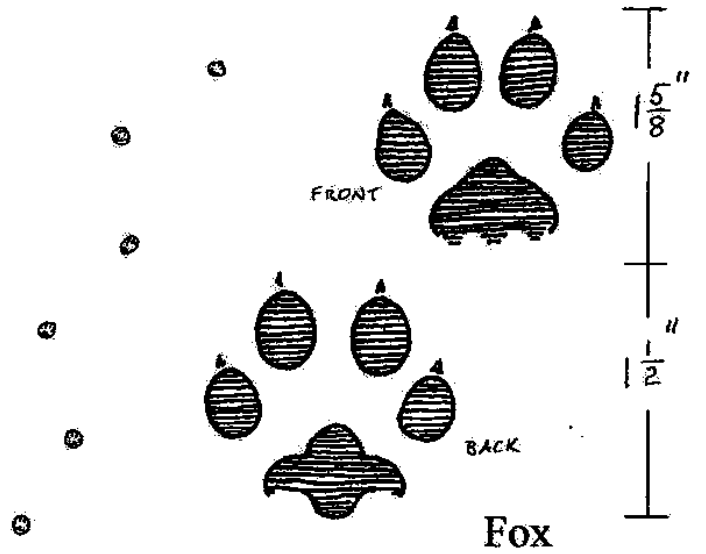
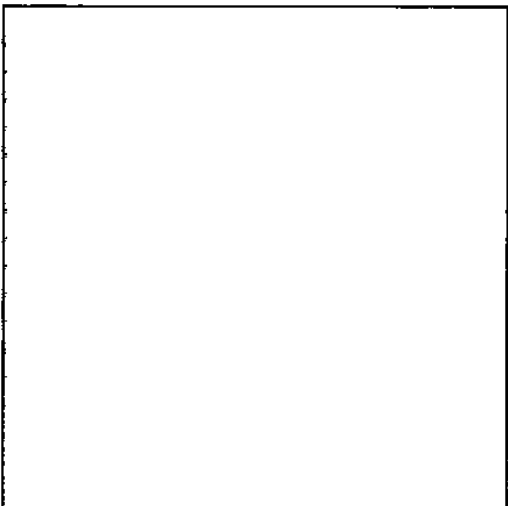
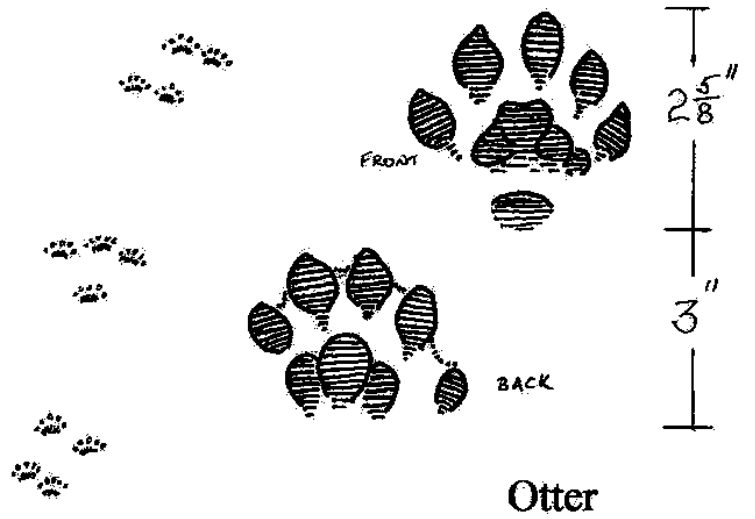
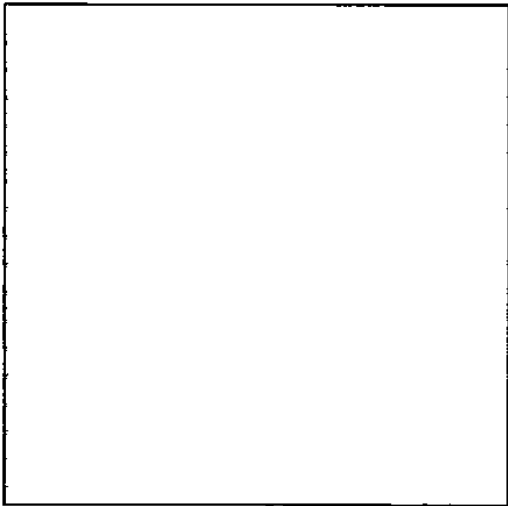
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

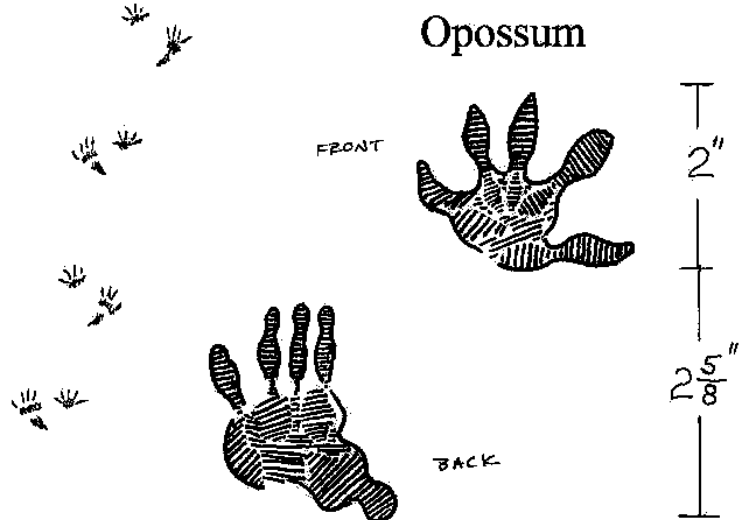
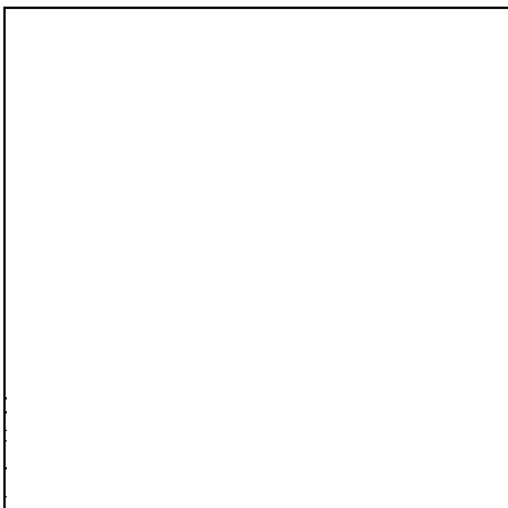
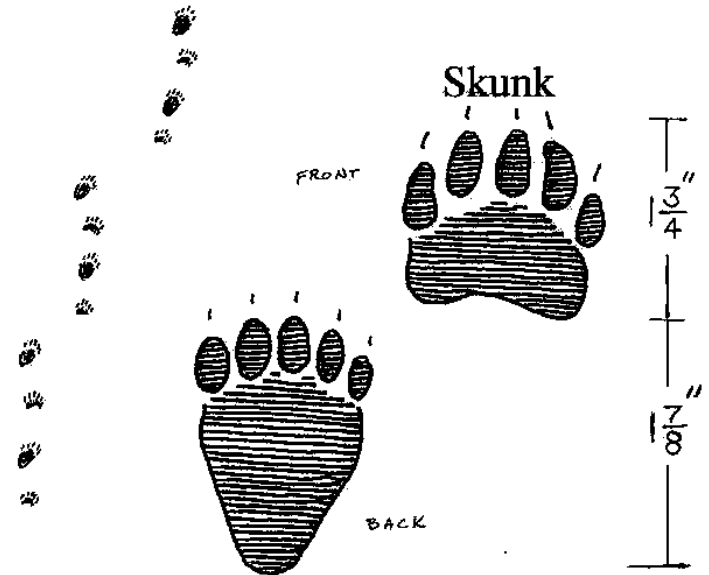
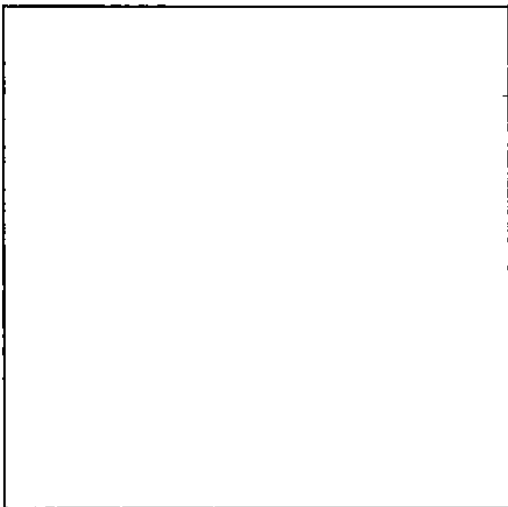
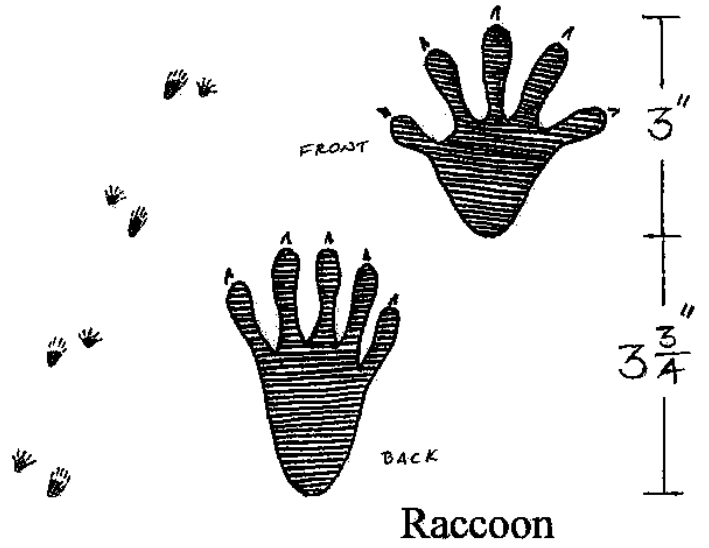
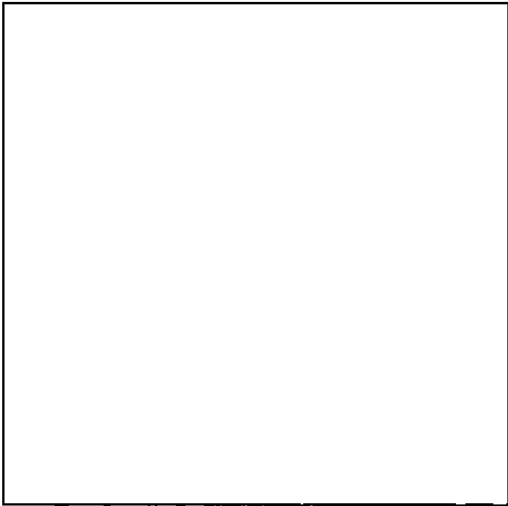


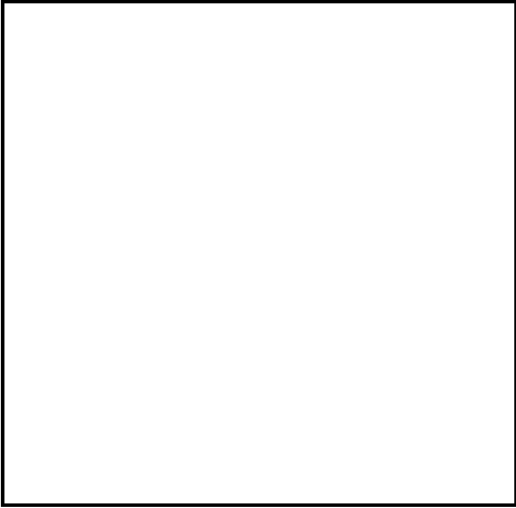
House Mouse





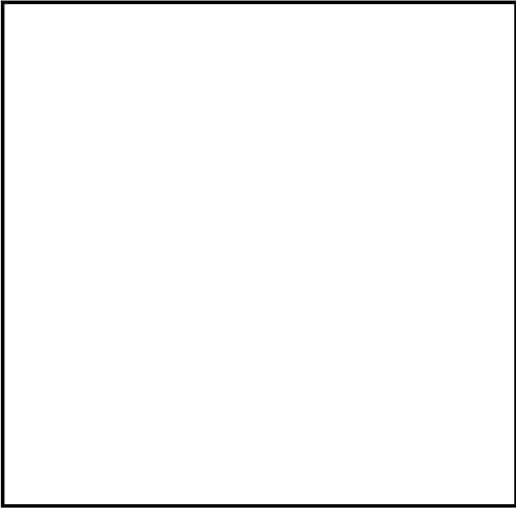






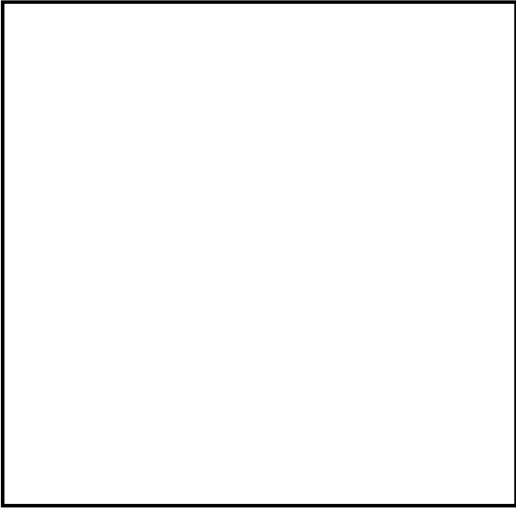
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