

Native America

Bring It Home: Animal Tracks



Native Americans view animal tracks as shadow prints on our lives left by the spirit of the animal. Animals teach us many things when we pay attention. For example, the turtle teaches us to stand with both feet firmly on the ground as we connect to Mother Earth. It shows us how we can protect ourselves – and that's it is okay to withdraw sometimes. The turtle also shows us to take things slow and easy. All things will happen in good time.

Animal tracks can tell their own a story such as where an animal has been and where it's going. Tell your own critter tales by creating animal tracks and seeking evidence of animals all around you.

Materials:

- Adhesive moleskin (found in the foot care section of the drug store)
- blocks of wood (about 2x2x1)
- Ink pen
- Field guide to animals
- Scissors
- Stamp pad

Get Started:

1. Find a book or online resource for animal track images (see below).
2. With an ink pen, draw the outline of your animal tracks on the paper side of the moleskin.
3. Cut out the shapes, then peel off the paper backing.
4. Stick the shapes onto a small block of wood.
5. Press your stamp on the stamp pad and get busy making tracks.

Keep it Going

Try making a set of tracks that tell a story. You could show one animal following another, or space tracks farther apart to show an animal running. A cluster of tracks in a small area could show that the animal had found food. Share the story of your animal's adventure.



Look at human and animal feet. (You can try visiting a pet store or zoo, or your pet). Look at pictures too, and consider these questions.

- How many toes are there?
- What does the bottom surface of the foot look like? Is it bumpy? Scaly? Smooth? Flat? Arched? What shapes do you see?
- When the creature walks, what parts of its feet touch the ground? Does the foot have nails? Hooves? Claws?

Live in a city? Think of other opportunities to track real animals:

- Cat foot prints on automobiles
- Scratch marks left on trees by cats and squirrels
- Prints left in the snow and sand (e.g., at the beach or playground)
- Nut shells discarded by squirrels
- Evidence that leaves have been eaten by insects, snails, slugs, or other animals

Resources for learning more about animal tracks:

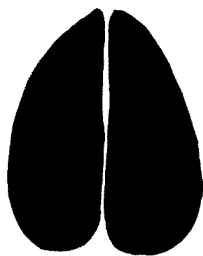
Big Tracks, Little Tracks: Following Animal Prints by Millicent E. Selsam and Marlene Hill Donnelly.

Tracks, Scats and Signs (Take Along Guides) by Leslie Dendy

<http://bear-tracker.com/>

<http://nativeamericanencyclopedia.com/identifying-animal-tracks>

The largest urban population of Ojibwi reside in Chicago and traces of the language can be found throughout the city. Below are a few animal tracks listed in English and Ojibwa.



English: Moose

Ojibwi: *Mooz*



Turtle

Mshijkenh



Hind Foot

Racoon

Esban

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