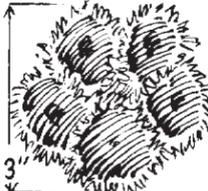
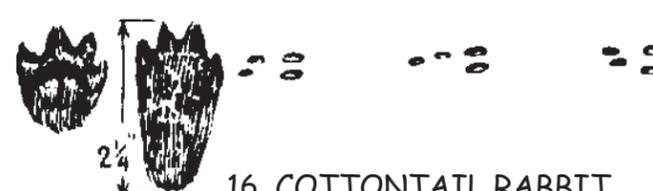
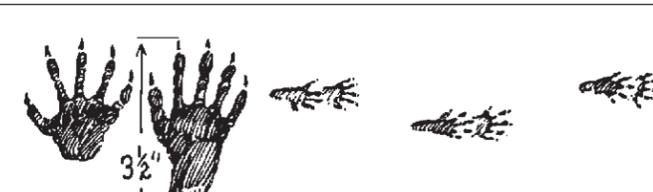
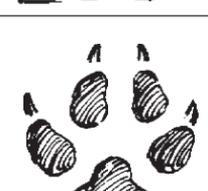
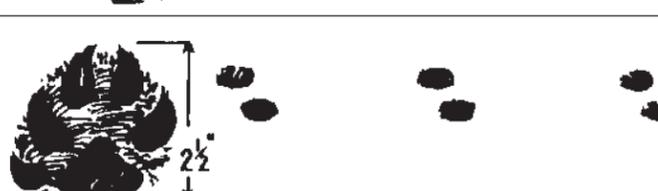
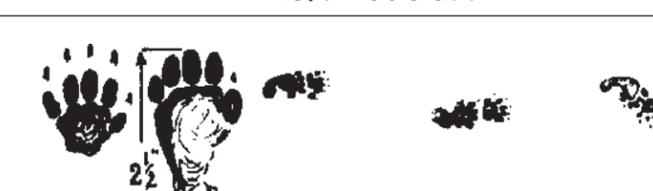
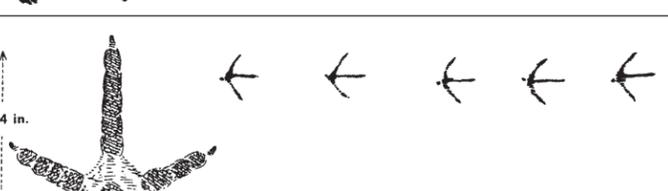
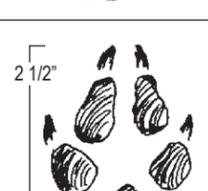
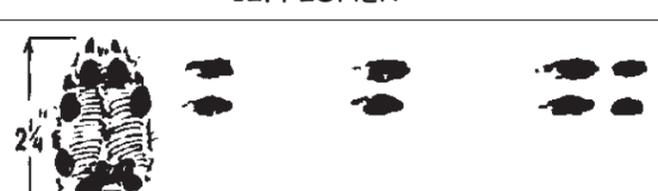
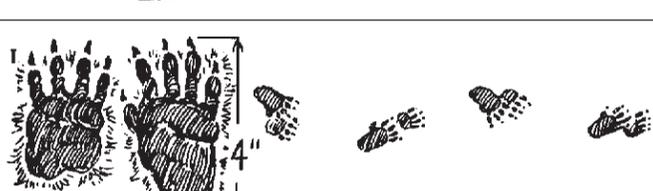
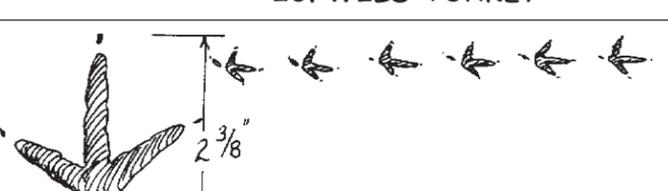
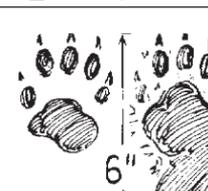
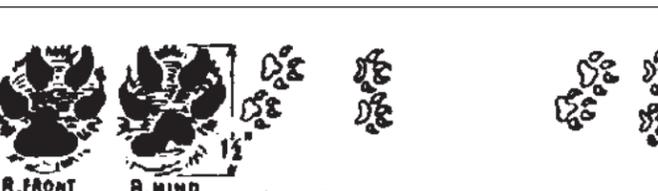
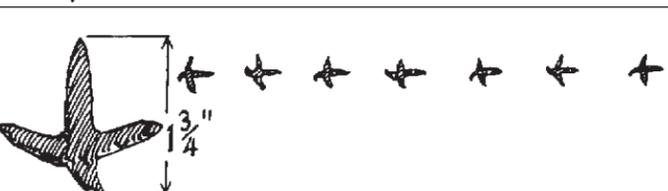




MAINE ANIMAL TRACKS



(Direction of travel of all tracks is to the right)

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
|  <p>1. CANADA LYNX</p> |  <p>8. GRAY SQUIRREL</p> |  <p>15. BEAVER</p> |  <p>22. OTTER</p> |
|  <p>2. BOBCAT</p> |  <p>9. RED SQUIRREL</p> |  <p>16. COTTONTAIL RABBIT</p> |  <p>23. MUSKRAT</p> |
|  <p>3. HOUSE CAT</p> |  <p>10. CHIPMUNK</p> |  <p>17. SNOWSHOE RABBIT</p> |  <p>24. WHITETAIL DEER</p> |
|  <p>4. RED FOX</p> |  <p>11. WEASEL</p> |  <p>18. RACCOON</p> |  <p>25. MOOSE</p> |
|  <p>5. DOG</p> |  <p>12. FISHER</p> |  <p>19. SKUNK</p> |  <p>26. WILD TURKEY</p> |
|  <p>6. COYOTE</p> |  <p>13. MARTEN</p> |  <p>20. PORCUPINE</p> |  <p>27. PHEASANT</p> |
|  <p>7. BLACK BEAR</p> |  <p>14. MINK</p> |  <p>21. WOODCHUCK</p> |  <p>28. RUFFED GROUSE</p> |

Play Animal Signs Bingo!

Cut out each square below. Glue squares on a sheet of paper. Glue 4 squares across and 4 squares down - just like they are here, but in any order you like. Title your card "Animal Signs Bingo".

Using your bingo card, explore your school yard or backyard for animal signs.

If you get 4 across, 4 down, or all 4 corners - **You've got Bingo!**

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Anthill  | Half eaten fruit  | Nibbled branch  | Bumps on a leaf  |
| Web  | Hole in a tree  | Bird nest  | Mound of dirt  |
| Hole in the ground  | Nibbled plant  | Scat  | Pieces of eggshell  |
| Feather  | Free Square | Bird singing  | Holes in a leaf  |

Whose Scat is That?

All animals must eat to survive. After digesting their food, they rid their bodies of waste by leaving behind droppings, called scat. Scat is a sign that gives us clues about local animals.

Herbivores (plant eaters), such as deer and rabbits, leave piles of small, round droppings.

Carnivores (meat-eaters) leave scat piles that are larger, in clumps or cords, and may contain hair and fur. Coyote and bear scat often contain plant material and berries.

Raptors like hawks and owls regurgitate pellets of fur and bone.

Don't be afraid to take a closer look to find out whose scat is that?



The ability to interpret animal tracks and traces takes practice. Here are some tips to help you hone your powers of observation and instincts as a nature detective.

Tracks can tell a story about where the animal travelled from and where its now going. It gives us clues about where the animal makes its home

Hints to identifying a track:

- ✓ Does the track show claws?
- ✓ How many digits?
- ✓ What is the overall shape of the track?
- ✓ Measure the **Stride**: distance from heel of one foot to heel of the other foot



- ✓ Measure the **Straddle**: the width of the track pattern between left and right heels



- ✓ What is the **Direction** of the track
- ✓ Type of substrate (soil, mud, sand, snow) in which the track was made
- ✓ Identify the **Habitat** in which the track was observed
- ✓ If you **photograph** the track, put an object of a known size or length next to the track (a pocket knife, pen, quarter, pack of gum) to give size reference to the track in the photograph

- Then, if you can identify the gait by the appearance of the trail, i.e., trotting, bounding, galloping, etc., you are already on your way to identifying the maker!

- Canines, felines, and members of the deer family generally walk or trot. The trail looks like an almost perfectly straight line of prints, because the animal places its hind foot into the print just made by the front foot. The tracks should look like this:



- Members of the weasel family generally bound, a gait in which they place both forefeet together on the ground, then swing their hind feet into nearly the same prints. The trail made by a weasel would look like this:



- The gallop is typical of most rabbits, hares, squirrels, and mice. These animals touch down with their front feet, and then follow through with their hind legs landing in front of the forefeet. The action looks like that of "leapfrog," and the trail would look like this:



- Wide-bodied, heavy animals such as bear, raccoon, skunk, muskrat, beaver, opossum, and porcupine tend to lumber or waddle by placing each foot in its own distinctive spot. Their tracks would look like this:



Make A Plaster Cast

Track casts of many animals are now available from commercial supply houses that deal in scientific and natural history equipment models, but many people prefer to make their own. The standard procedure is outlined below and should be varied according to air temperature and the amount of time you have.

Find a sharp, clean-cut footprint of an animal in mud, sand, or snow and stand a cardboard collar around it. Mix plaster of Paris and water until just thin enough to pour, and fill the track to the top of the cardboard collar. Sink a couple of small twigs lengthwise into the plaster to help hold it all together. If the temperature is below freezing,

mist the track with a water spray bottle so it freezes and hardens before you fill it with the plaster. Allow the plaster to stand about fifteen minutes to harden, then pick the plaster up, collar and all, and wrap it carefully in newspaper to prevent damage while it is still slightly soft. When it is thoroughly dry and hard, brush off any sand or mud that may be clinging to the track, and you will have a raised cast of the foot print.

To make the reverse, grease the first cast, fit a cardboard collar around it, and fill with more plaster of Paris. The second cast will show the sunken impression of the animal's foot just as it originally appeared in the mud, sand, or snow.