

Anderson Parks Animal Tracks Packet



Anderson
Park District

This workbook belongs to:



Anderson Park District

Dear Anderson Park Fans,

We invite you to explore our backyard with the Family Outdoor Adventure Animal Tracks Packet. The goal of this workbook is to encourage children and families to get outside together and explore your Anderson Parks. Finding tracks in the snow is a fun way to see what animals have been scurrying around. Hopefully, our area will have some snow this winter! If we don't, discover other ways to identify what animals have been visiting your parks. Mud prints are interesting, also.

In this packet you will find a variety of activities focused on animals that can be seen in our local area during the winter or year-round. While these are appropriate for ages 4-8 years old, everyone can enjoy trekking through the snow or exploring outside. The activities are designed to engage your child in learning about animals in our local parks while having fun, using your imagination and being active.

We hope you can explore as a family, especially since younger children may need assistance completing some of the activities. A map of all the Anderson Parks is included; we encourage you to visit a park that is new to you. If you are not able to visit our parks, many of these activities can also be completed at home in your own backyard. Don't forget to document your adventure through pictures and share them with us on social media, @AndersonParkDistrict.

Your Friends at the Anderson Park District



Track Matching

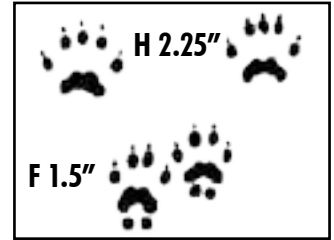
Match the animal with its tracks.
(The tracks are not to scale.)



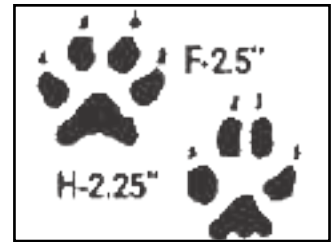
White-tailed deer



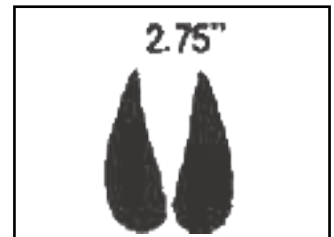
Coyote



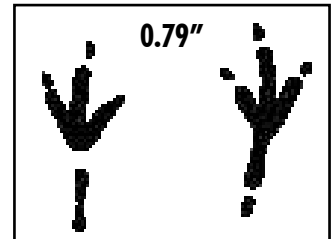
Sparrow



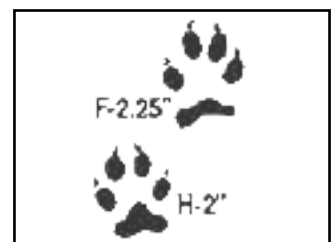
Red Fox



Gray Squirrel



Wild Turkey



Track Cast Activity

If you find a track in the mud, try this activity with the help of an adult. Check out this link for illustrations to help you do it: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-kids/games-and-activities/activities/animal-tracks/>

Materials:

- A small bowl
- A circle of cardboard put together with paper clips or tape, cup with the bottom cut off or the bottom of a plastic bottle large enough to surround the track
- Plaster of Paris
- Water
- Old or plastic spoon

Steps:

1. Put the circle of cardboard, cup or bottom of bottle over the track, making sure there are no gaps between the circle and the ground.
2. Mix the plaster with the water in a small bowl according to the manufacturer's instructions.
3. Pour the plaster into the circle over your track.
4. Leave it for 10-15 minutes as specified by the instructions for the plaster.
5. When the plaster is dry, remove your circle and you should have the shape of the animal track sticking out from the plaster.
6. You can take your cast home. Be sure to not leave any mess behind and clean up everything that you brought.
7. Your cast may be painted to help it stand out more.
8. Enjoy using a field guide to identify the track.

What kind of animal made the track that you found?

Track Tracing

Trace the outline of these tracks.
These tracks are not drawn to scale.



Deer



Duck



Hind

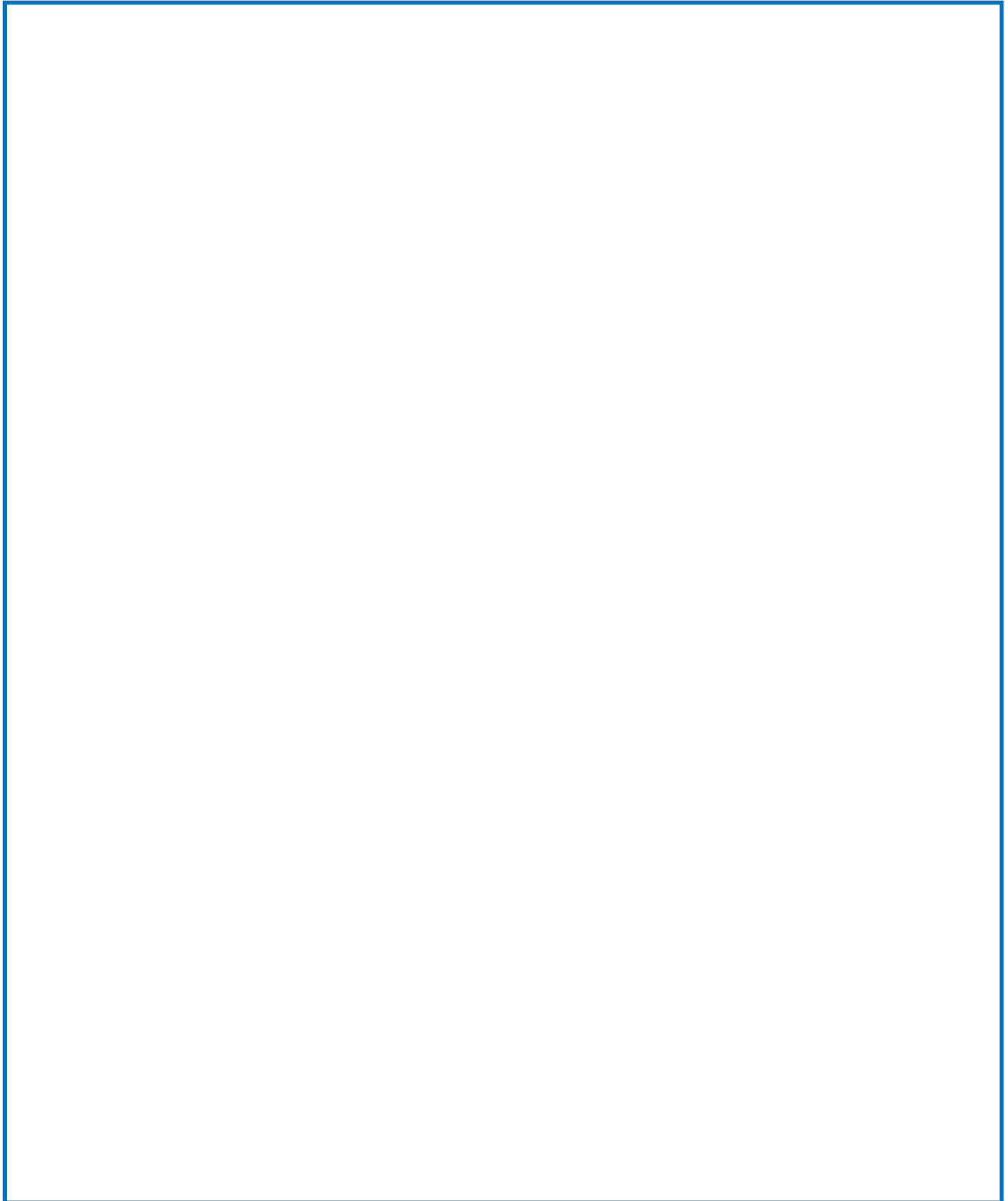
Raccoon



Front

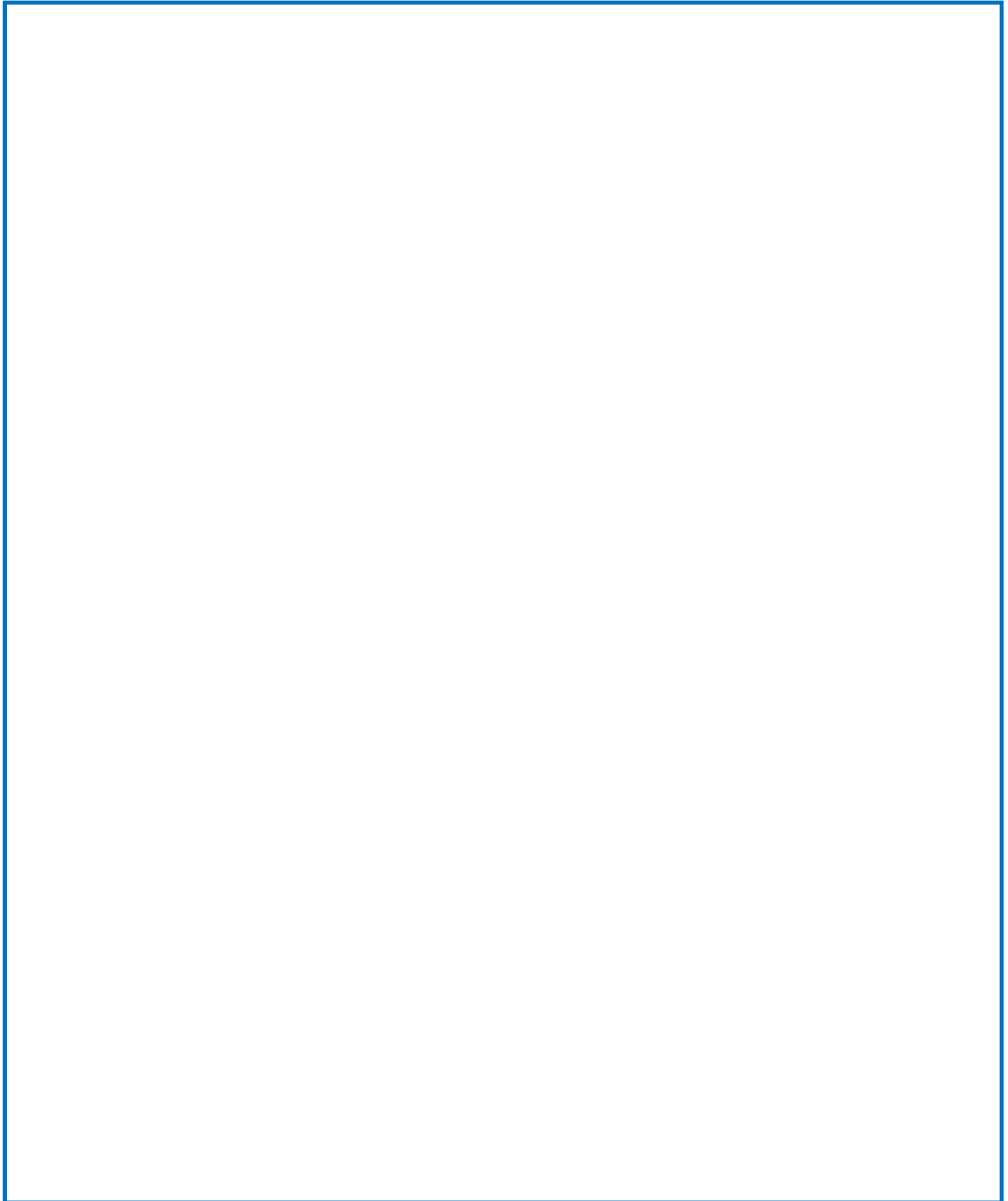
Track Tracing

Draw around your hand.



Track Tracing

Draw around your foot.



Track Tracing Comparison

How do your hand and foot tracks compare to the deer track?

Are they shaped the same or different?

How do your hand and foot tracks compare to the duck track?

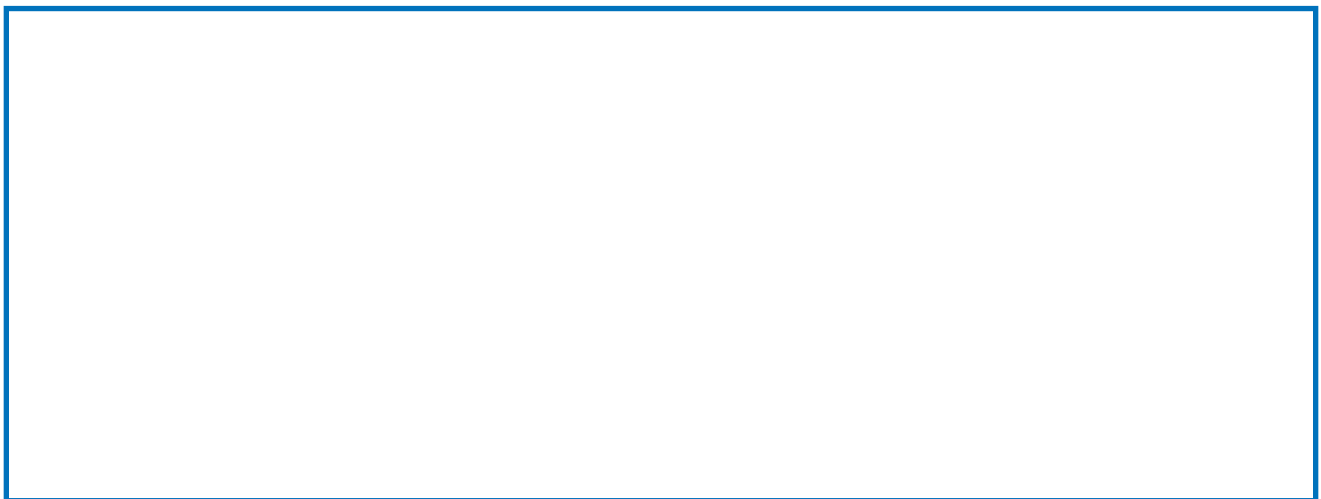
Do you have webbed hands or feet? Why do you think the duck has webbed feet?

How do your hand and foot tracks compare to the raccoon tracks?

Which animal tracks are the most similar to yours?

Why do you think they are similar?

Draw a picture of the animal that has tracks similar to yours.



Word Search

Find these words in the puzzle.

BIRD

BOUND

CLAW

MAMMAL

HOOF

MUD

SNOW

STRIDE

TAIL

WEBBED

TRAIL

TRACK

M A S G P P P C Q X S V L R E
B G D Z J Y Q F N B V G A D X
N L M U D U X E D X U W I G E
E F I R Q C C N D W I R S E D
P T P A J W M P X H T P W L T
F J G U T A T Z Q S U Z Y E F
B W H R Q L R P V Y K B U J H
D F O O H C A A G B F O Q B X
M E T C H V C D F F R H A A W
U Q B R E C K D D K L P H O U
E I W B A R T A Z I A G N L B
C B G J E I D V H E M S W I H
B O U N D W L D G J M A R P D
X Z I J A I J H V N A D Z B S
L D J X X S S V Q J M N G A K

Handprint/Footprint Activity

Make your own handprint or footprint using this easy salt dough recipe.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of all purpose flour (not self-rising)
- 1 cup of salt
- 1.5 cups warm water

Steps:

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl and mix well until it starts to form a dough.
2. Take the dough out of the bowl and knead for at least 10 minutes. If the dough seems dry, add a little more water and knead. The dough should be smooth and easy to push so that you can make your print.
3. Roll out the dough so that it is between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick.
4. Press your hand or foot into the dough.
5. If you would like to have it nice and round, place a bowl over it and cut around the edge of a bowl with a knife. Feel free to be creative and use a cookie cutter if the print is small enough to fit in it.
6. If you have more prints to make, roll out the remaining dough and repeat steps 3-5.
7. Let the print air dry for a day.
8. After the print has air-dried for a day, bake on a baking sheet at 250 degrees F for 1-2 hours. Watch the print; when it looks dry and solid, carefully flip it over and continue to bake. If the print is still doughy, try baking another hour. If after this time it is still doughy, let it finish air drying for a few more days, flipping as necessary. If it is too puffy, you may have to roll out thinner dough and try again. (Go back to step 3 if this happens.)
9. If you intend to keep the print for a keepsake, feel free to paint or decorate with glue and glitter once it is fully dry.
10. Seal with Mod Podge® or a clear glaze spray to prevent from cracking in the future.

Compare your handprint and/or footprint to the animal tracks you have seen. Is your print bigger or smaller than the animal prints you have seen? How are the shapes different? Are they alike in any way?

Track Stencils-Instructions

Use the following two pages from Growing Up Wild: Exploring Nature with Young Children to create sidewalk stencils. Pay attention to the trail width and stride/bound measurements to create realistic trails. No sidewalk chalk? No problem-try this recipe for DIY Sidewalk Chalk Paint adapted from Argo© Corn Starch <https://www.argofoodservice.com/recipe/DIY-Homemade-Sidewalk-Chalk-Paint>:

Ingredients/Materials Needed:

- 3 cups corn starch
- 2-4 dashes food coloring, various colors
- 3 cups water, add more or less for desired consistency
- 4-6 bowls, or a 6-cup muffin pan makes a great paint tray
- Paint brushes-1" or larger

Directions:

This recipe can be made with smaller amounts too, using equal parts of corn starch and water. Using a large mixing bowl, add the water to the cornstarch and mix well until clumps are gone. Divide equal amounts into your separate bowls, add a few drops of food coloring to each bowl to create your colors, mixing well.

While painting you will want to keep your colors looking vibrant; use your paint brush to give the paint a stir as the corn starch will settle on the bottom.

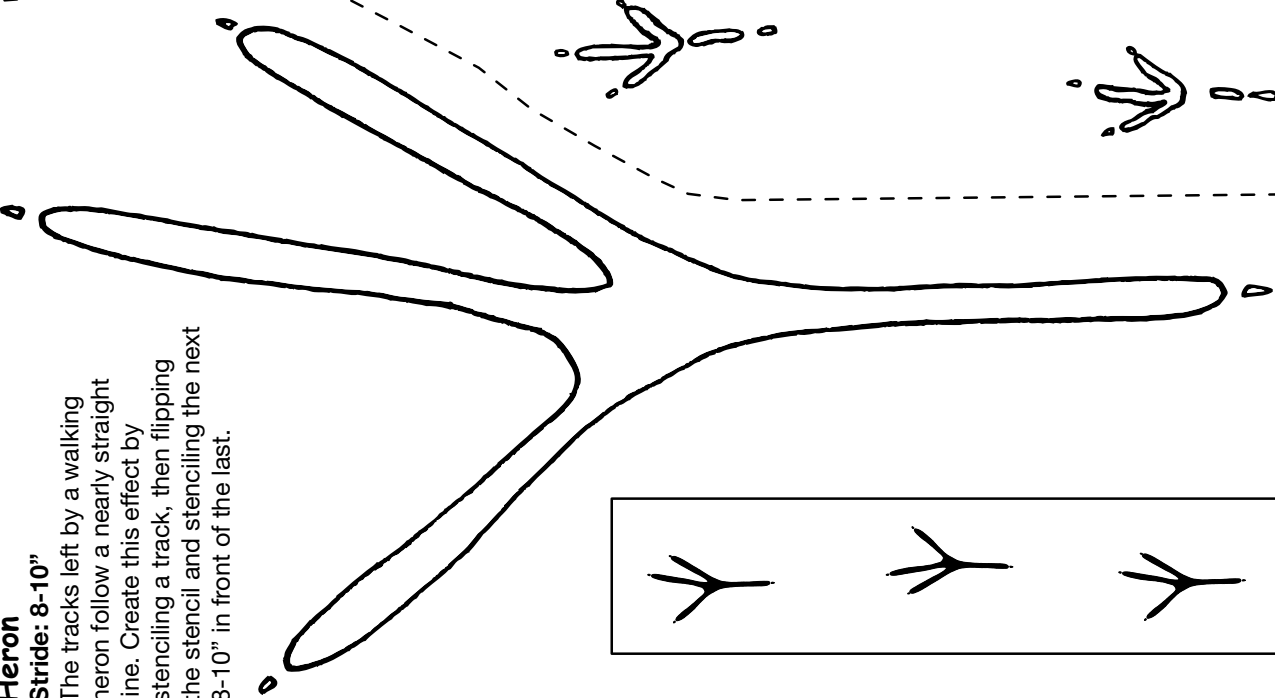
The colors will look more brilliant as the paint dries. The paint works great on all types of sidewalks and driveways. Clean-up is a breeze; the paint washes away easily with water, or let the rain take care of it. Non-toxic and safe for gardens.

Storage: can be stored in jars with tight lids for a few days. Shake well when ready to use again.

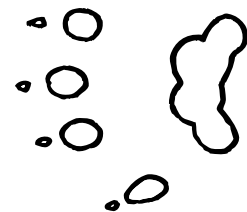
Tracks!

Directions: Create **Animal Track Stencils** using the images below. Make a photocopy of each page. Cut out each set of tracks to make a separate stencil. You will likely want to cut off the text to simplify for student use. Copy each set of tracks you wish to use onto card stock. Laminate for durability, if desired.


Heron
Stride: 8-10"
The tracks left by a walking heron follow a nearly straight line. Create this effect by stenciling a track, then flipping the stencil and stenciling the next 8-10" in front of the last.



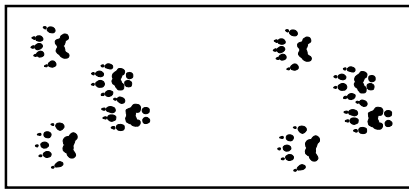
Hind Foot




Front Foot

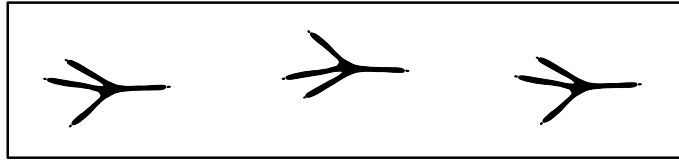



Squirrel
Stride (or Bound): 6-30"
Squirrels typically bound when on the ground with both of their hind feet landing in front of their front feet. This stencil already depicts a typical trail width. Create a longer trail of tracks by repeating the pattern.



Sparrow
Stride (or Hop): 2-6"
Sparrows typically hop when on the ground with both feet landing at the same time, side by side. This stencil already depicts a typical stride and trail width. Create a longer set of tracks by repeating the pattern.



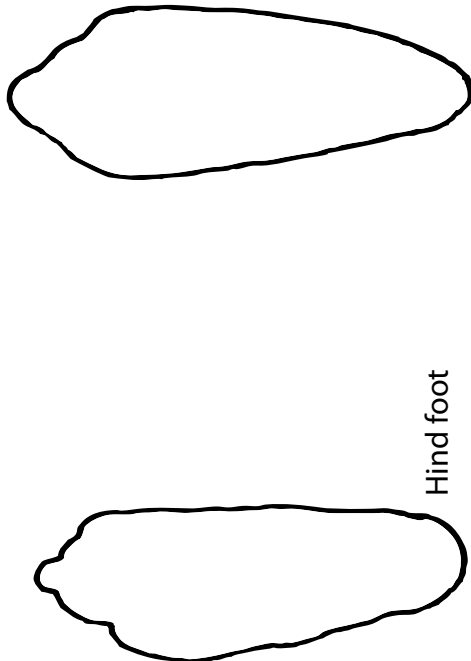



Tracks! (page 2)

Rabbit

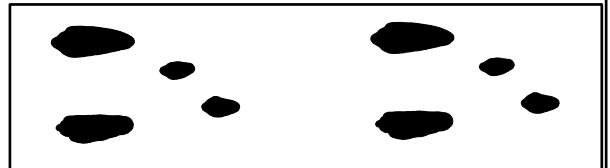
Stride (or Bound): 5-32"

Rabbits typically bound when on the ground with their hind feet landing in front of their front feet. This stencil already depicts a typical trail width. Create a longer trail of tracks by repeating the pattern.



Hind foot

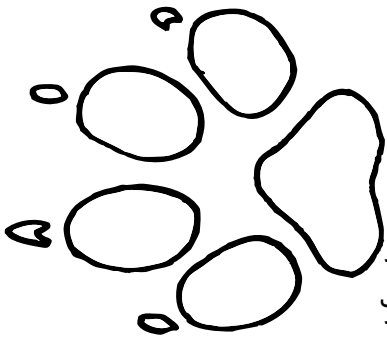
Front foot



Dog (above right)

Stride: varies with breed

Trail Width: varies with breed
Walking dogs and cats have similar trail patterns with tracks of back feet generally overlapping with tracks of front feet. Dog tracks are more highly variable in size and are most easily distinguished from cat tracks by the presence of claw marks.



Front foot

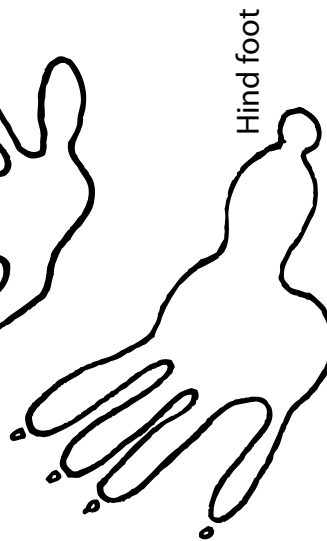
Cat (below right)

Stride: 6-8"

Trail Width: 2-4.75"



Front foot



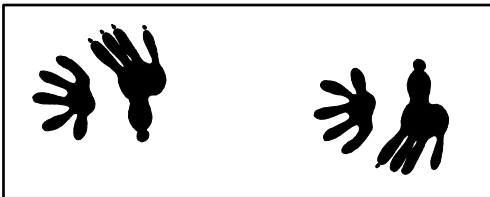
Hind foot

Opossum

Stride: 6-10"

Trail Width: 4-5"

An opossum's walking trail appears as a nearly single file line of tracks. (The width between outer toes should not exceed 5 inches.) Create this effect by stenciling a set of tracks, then flipping the stencil and stenciling the next set 6-10" in front and slightly to the right or left of the last.



Hind foot

Front foot

Hind foot

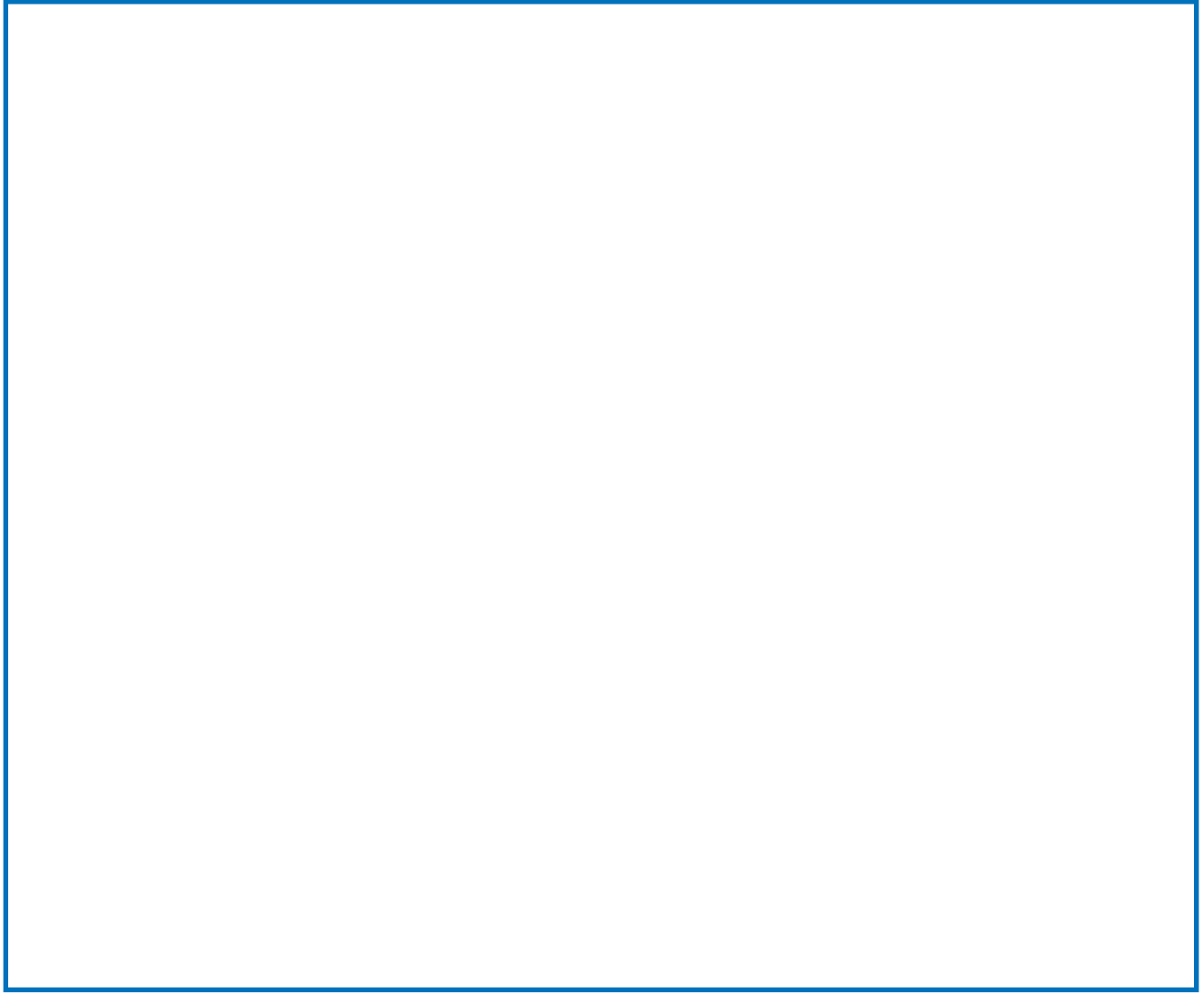
Reference Page

These references may help you complete some of the activities in this packet and help identify tracks that you may find:

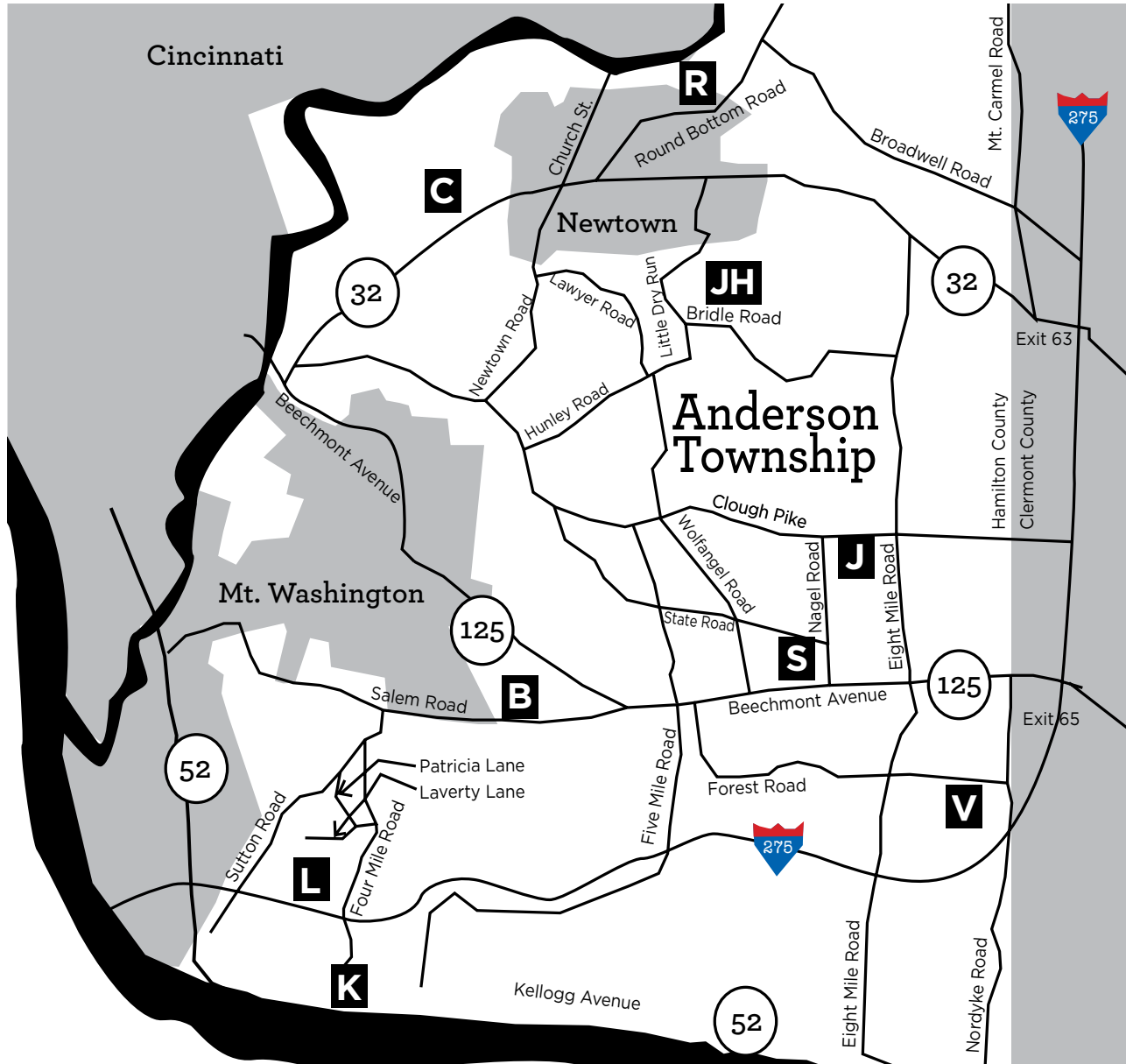
- Use these photos from The Old Farmer's Almanac page (<https://www.almanac.com/content/animal-track-identification>) to help you identify tracks that you may find in the snow or mud. (The tracks are not to scale. Paintings by Erick Ingraham.)
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources Mammals of Ohio Field Guide: <https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/wildlife/backyard-wildlife/Mammals%20of%20Ohio%20Field%20Guide%20pub344.pdf>

Journal

Draw and write about your favorite part of this Family Outdoor Adventure.



Anderson Park District



- | | |
|---|---|
| B Beech Acres Park
6910 Salem Road | K Kellogg Park and Dog Field
6701 Kellogg Ave. |
| Anderson Parks RecPlex
6915 Beechmont Ave. | L Laverty Park
839 Laverty Lane |
| C Clear Creek Park
6200 Batavia Road (S.R. 32) | R Riverside Park
3969 Round Bottom Road |
| JH W. M. Johnson Hills Park
7950 Bridle Road | S State and Nagel Park
8031 State Road |
| J Juilfs Park
8249 Clough Pike | V Veterans Park
8531 Forest Road |
| Juilfs Park (south parking lot)
8200 Patton Ave. | |