

# Observing and Recording Animal Tracks

## Materials Needed:

- Scavenger Hunt Sheets
- Outdoor space with snow
- Blank paper (optional)
- Pencils/Pens (optional)
- Animal Tracks Field Guide (optional)



## Step 1: Discussion

With your students, discuss and brainstorm:

1. **Where can wildlife be found in wintertime?**
  - Some animals hibernate, migrate, or they can be seen around in winter too!
2. **How can we tell if an animal was in our yard or schoolyard?**
  - Look for their scat, or their footprints. Animals will leave tracks when they walk in the snow.
3. **What kind of animals do you think have been on our schoolyard?**

## Step 2: Exploration

Armed with the Animal Tracks Scavenger Hunts and writing utensils, invite students to explore the outdoor space and see if they find any kind of animal tracks. Does it look like one on the paper? Does it look different? If it look different, have them draw it on the back of the page or take a picture to figure out which animal it's from later!

## Step 3: Create a field guide with your observations

Using a combination of the scavenger hunt, a field guide, or the internet, have students draw out the tracks they saw and the animals that made them. Where do these animals usually live? Are they in Manitoba year long? What do they like to eat? Why were they probably in your schoolyard?

This can be done on a blank page or using the “My Findings” page!

## Some additional information about the animals included on the scavenger hunt:

**Squirrel:** Some squirrels, like ground squirrels hibernate through winter, while tree squirrels will be more active. Squirrels that do not hibernate will stash food in locations called caches that they can return to during winter. See if any can be found in or around your schoolyard.

**Rabbit:** Rabbit tracks are relatively common in wintertime and will look like 2 small circular tracks vertical like buttons followed by the larger hind legs side by side.

**Great Horned Owl:** It is unlikely to find an owl wing track, however it is a great learning point. These owls dive down to grab prey and leave imprints of their wings in the snow in the process. Ask your students to create one in the snow!

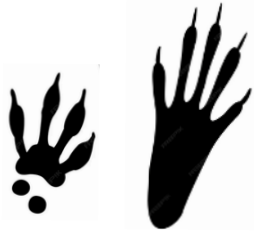
**White-tailed deer:** It's common to see deer tracks that look like they are dragging their feet. This is so that it's easier for other deer in the herd to make their way through the snow while using less energy.

**Domestic dog:** This one is most common to see outdoors, keep in mind the size will vary greatly depending on breed. Ask students if they believe any tracks found are from a small dog breed or large breed.

**Coyote:** These look very similar to a domestic dog's tracks. Ask students what the differences are. Look up a fox's print, how are they all different? How are they similar?



# Animal Tracks of MB



Squirrel



Rabbit



Great  
Horned Owl



White-  
tailed Deer



Domestic  
Dog



Coyote





# My Findings

**Drawing of the Track**

**Who left it?**
