

Title: ANIMAL TRACKS

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Grade Level: 3-6

Concepts: 2. Ecosystem

Disciplines: 1. Science
2. Math
3. Language Arts

Objective:

The students will be able to tell about and record observations and measurements made of the tracks for at least three different animals.

Rationale:

We can learn much about nature by the kind of animal life present.- Since animals often hide when intruded upon, we can only know of their presence by the tracks they leave.

Directions:

Break the class into teams of four. Each team will then look for different tracks in a designated area. A wet area or seashore is best. You may want to make plaster casts of some of the tracks.

Casts of Animal Tracks*

Find a sharp, clean-cut footprint of an animal in mud or sand; 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 collar. Allow the plaster to stand about fifteen minutes to harden, then pick the plaster up, collar and all, and wrap carefully in newspaper to prevent rubbing while it is still slightly soft. Then thoroughly dry and hard, brush off any sand or mud which may be clinging to the track and you will have a negative or raised cast of the footprint. To make the positive, grease the negative cast, fit a cardboard collar around it and fill with more plaster of Paris. This second cast will be the positive, showing the sunken impression of the animal's foot just as it appeared in the mud or sand. Look carefully for different animal tracks. Be careful not to destroy any that you find. You may find tracks of birds (pelicans, boobys, bananaquits, gulls), or of animals (dogs, cats, mongooses, deer, rats, mice, goats, cow).

*From Audubon Aids: Animals and How They Live,
Casts of Animal Tracks

E. T.

ANIMAL TRACKS

Name:

WORKSHEET

Answer these questions on your sheet for each track you find. Look for at least three different tracks

Questions to Answer	Animal #1	Animal #2	Animal #3
1. How long is the track? 2. How wide is the track? 3. How many toes on a fore foot? 4. How many toes on a hind foot? 5. Is the track old or new? 6. Draw a sketch of the track.			
For each group of tracks you find answer these questions. 7. What direction was the animal traveling? 8. Was the animal walking or running? 9. What other signs of the animal are there? 10. What are the feet adapted for? (climbing, grasping, running) 11. What kind of food would this animal eat? 12. What is the name of this animal?			