

Track that Scat!

RIF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATORS

STEAM-THEMED: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ART, MATH

SCIENCE

TRACKOLOGISTS

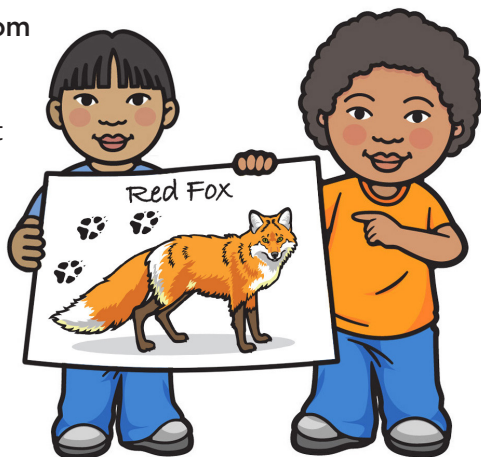
Materials: clipboards, paper, pencils, magnifying glasses (optional)

To create a field guide, fold paper into six sections. Label the sections: tracks, scat, sounds, homes, body material (fur, feathers, skin, bones), other. Remind students NOT to touch; go outside and look for clues in each category to identify animals around the area. Sketch and/or take notes, and compare findings.

TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE IN YOUR BACKYARD

Log on to www.enature.com

and enter the local zip code to find out what animals are indigenous to the area. Have student groups pick an animal from the list to research. Each group should prepare a slide show or poster to share what they learned about their animal's habitat, eating habits, and activities, noting when and where it might most likely be spotted.



ENGINEERING

TRAP THOSE TRACKS!

Materials: large piece of cardboard, flour, peanut butter

Place the cardboard in an area outside away from the school building where you think an animal might be. Dust the cardboard with flour, drop a small blob of peanut butter in the center, and leave out overnight. Have students check for tracks the next day, try to identify the animal, and look for scat nearby.

ART

IT'S A MYSTERY

Materials per student:
2 sheets of paper, scissors, crayons or markers, stapler

On sheet one, draw an animal of your choice. On sheet two, draw the habitat in which you might find your animal. Be sure to include clues such as animal tracks, scat, and homes that would help someone to identify the animal. Staple your habitat picture on top of the animal picture, leaving the bottom free to flip. Let other students guess which animal lives in the habitat; then lift the first page to check their answers. Which clues were the most helpful? Which animals were hardest to guess?

MATH

PAW PRINT PATTERNS

Materials: sponges, scissors, paint, paper

Cut sponges into animal print shapes. Dip sponges into paint and create paw print patterns on the paper. When dry, have students label their patterns.



WHICH ONE IS BIGFOOT?

Use this problem with pairs or small groups: You and a friend are walking in the woods. You discover several animal tracks: opossum, raccoon, deer, and fox. How many ways can you measure and rank their sizes? Which print has the largest area? Which is longest? Which is smallest? How does the size of the print relate to the size of the animal? Make a chart to record your findings and discuss with the class. Animal Track cards can be downloaded at:

www.hobbyfarms.com/crafts-and-nature/animal-track-id-cards.aspx

