

Phenology Friday Week 3: Animal Tracks

If you've been following our Phenology Friday, series you have learned by now phenology is the study of seasonal changes in plants and animals. If you are new, welcome! Each Friday we share with you a plant, animal or something relevant and then challenge you to head outside to search for and observe the topic of the week.

Week 1: The Robin

Week 2: The Western Meadowlark

This week: Animal Tracks

Our ancestors used many skills to survive. One of their skills was animal tracking. Back then it was crucial to find and hunt animals to use for food, clothing, and tools.

Tracking is identifying an animal by the footprints the animal left on the ground, by its scat, and by the environment surrounding those footprints. By identifying the animal in question, a person can know whether to pursue the animal or evade it.

This week, I would like to challenge you all before the snow melts to go out outside. We will be looking for animal tracks. Spring has come, and many animals and birds have emerged.

I found these tracks out on the side walk. Can you guess what hopping animal made them?



Need help? Check out this handy pocket guide:
https://af.nd.gov/sites/default/files/publications/tracks_signs_of_nd_wildlife.pdf

Or watch this video for additional guidance:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBrrr-RUUaM&t=61s>

Then head out and find your own!

Share with us what you find!

Tag your photos with @unitedtribestech or add your observations in the comments:

1. Where did you observe the tracks?
2. How many feet and toes are there?
3. What was the habit like around where you took your observations?
4. What was the most interesting thing you observed when searching?
5. What cultural stories or knowledge have you learned about the animals that made the tracks? Watch this video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HHp1G9ywHU>) to listen to a story about the coyote and the fox.

Any questions or photos you want to share? Suggestions?

Email me! I'd love to hear from you.

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