Animal Tracking
JOURNAL

Buffalo Soldiers
Heritage and Outreach Program

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Life's better outside.®

Animal Track Stamps

This animal track belongs to a:

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Animal Sign Observation Guide

WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND RECORD

1. TRACK PATTERNS

Diagonal: Front and opposite back foot move together. Deer, cats and dogs make these types.

Bounder: Push off with their front feet and the back feet land close to where the front feet were. Weasels make these tracks.

Gallopers: Push off with their back feet and land with their front feet. Rabbits move like this.

Amblers: Move both the front and back feet together. Bears and beavers move like this.

2. TRACK CHARACTERISTICS

Are they round pads or hooves? Are there claw marks?

Are they small or large? Are they shallow or deep? Remember the size and depth are good indicators of the size of the animal!

3. SCAT PATTERNS

Round, pellet-like or "pie-like": Usually result from diets high in plants. These animals are called herbivores. Animals like deer, rabbits and squirrels make these scats.

Long and twisted: Usually the result of diets high in animal protein. These animals are called carnivores. Wolves, coyotes, bears and bobcats make these. BEWARE if danger!

4. OTHER SIGNS

Signs of chewing or piles of food

Nesting – Do not ever disturb!

Sights, sounds, smells

Animal Observation Rules

BE SMART AND RESPONSIBLE

1. Watch, write, draw, have fun!
2. Always let park rangers know you are hiking. Be sure to go on a guided tour as well.
3. Never disturb or pet any animal in the wild. They are wild animals and react to fear.
4. Never disturb any nest or food piles. Animals are very defensive about these places.
5. Never take any plant or scat material from the park. Animal scat can also carry disease.
6. Take pictures to help record your findings. Don't use flash photography as this might disturb and frighten many animals.

leave no trace

CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS

Animal Observation Journal

Today's Date: _____

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For more information about State Parks or observing animals in nature, visit **www.texasstateparks.org**

State Parks are a great place to learn about animals and their habitats.

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Buffalo Soldiers Heritage and Outreach Program

4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

(512) 389-8572

buffalosoldiers@tpwd.state.tx.us

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