



# Animal Tracking

## JOURNAL

Buffalo Soldiers  
Heritage and Outreach Program



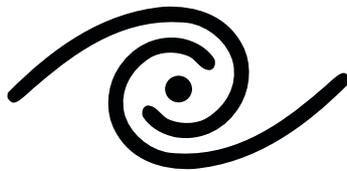
Life's better outside.®



# Animal Observation Rules

## BE SMART AND RESPONSIBLE

1. Watch, write, draw, have fun!
2. Always let park rangers know where you are hiking.  
Be sure to go on a guided tour as well.
3. Never disturb or pet any animals in the wild.  
They are wild animals and are frightened by humans.
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 Tracking Kit

## WHAT TO BRING ON A HIKE

- Notebook
  - Pencil or Pen
  - Small Ruler
  - Camera
  - Map
  - Magnifying Glass
  - Field Guide of Tracks
  - Water
- 
1. Remember to always tell the Park Ranger when you are going on hikes.
  2. Leave what you find for others.
  3. Never touch or directly interact with animals.
  4. Remember the rule of thumb.

# Animal Sign Observation Guide

## WHAT TO OBSERVE AND RECORD

### 1. TRACK PATTERNS

**Diagonal:** Opposite front and back feet move together. Deer, cats and dogs move like this.

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

**Amblers:** The front and back paw on each side move together. Bears move like this.

**Bounder:** Push off with their front feet and the back feet land close to where the front feet were. Weasels move like this.

### 2. TRACK CHARACTERISTICS

Do they have **pads** or **hooves**? How many **toes** do they have? Are **claws** visible? Does the print show **webbing**?

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. They are called herbivores.

**Long and twisted:** Usually the result of diets high in animal protein. They are called carnivores. BEWARE of danger!

### 4. WHERE DID YOU FIND THE TRACKS?

Was it near **water**, **food sources**, or **nests**?

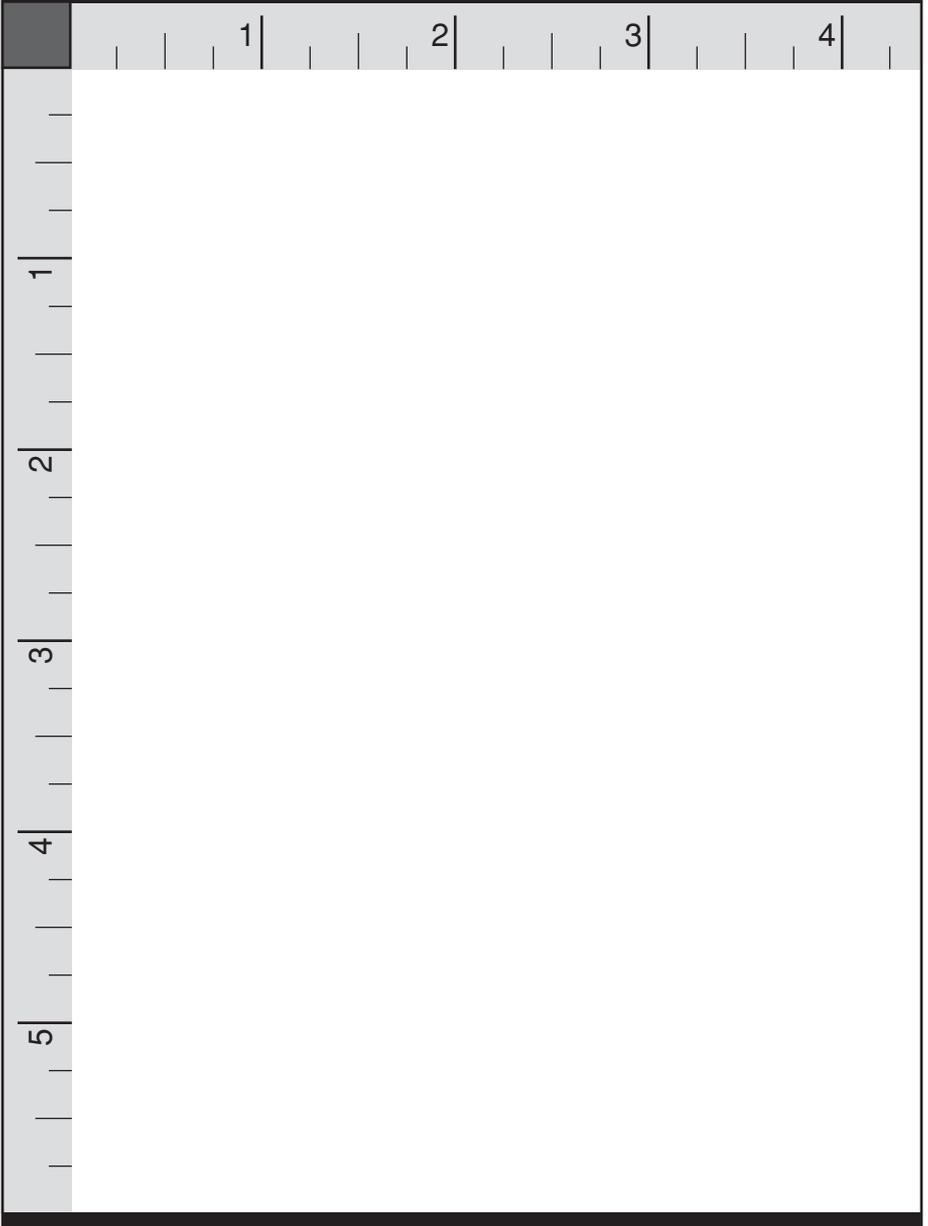
### 5. OTHER SIGNS

**Signs of chewing or piles of food**

**Nesting** – Do not ever disturb!

**Sights, sounds, smells**

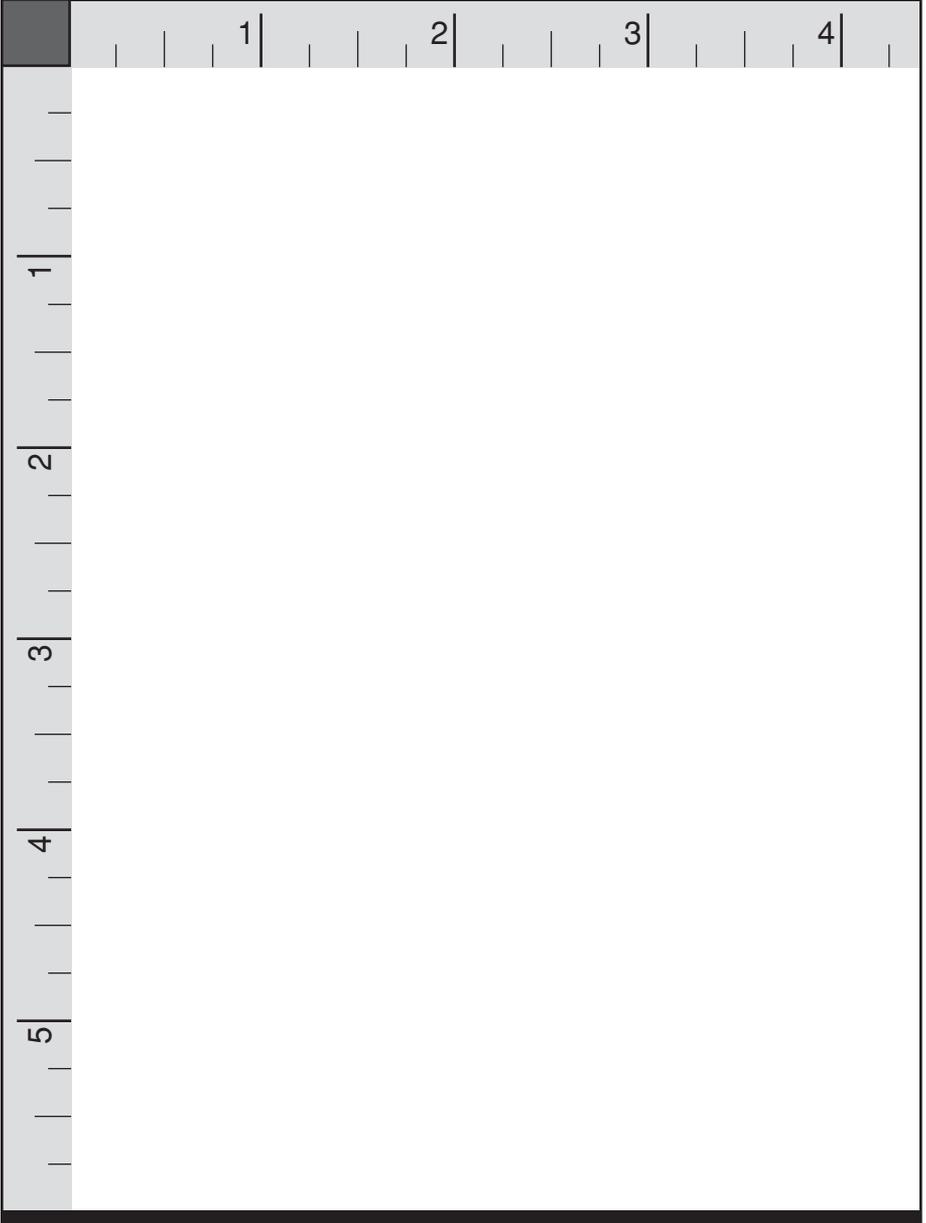
# Animal Track Stamps



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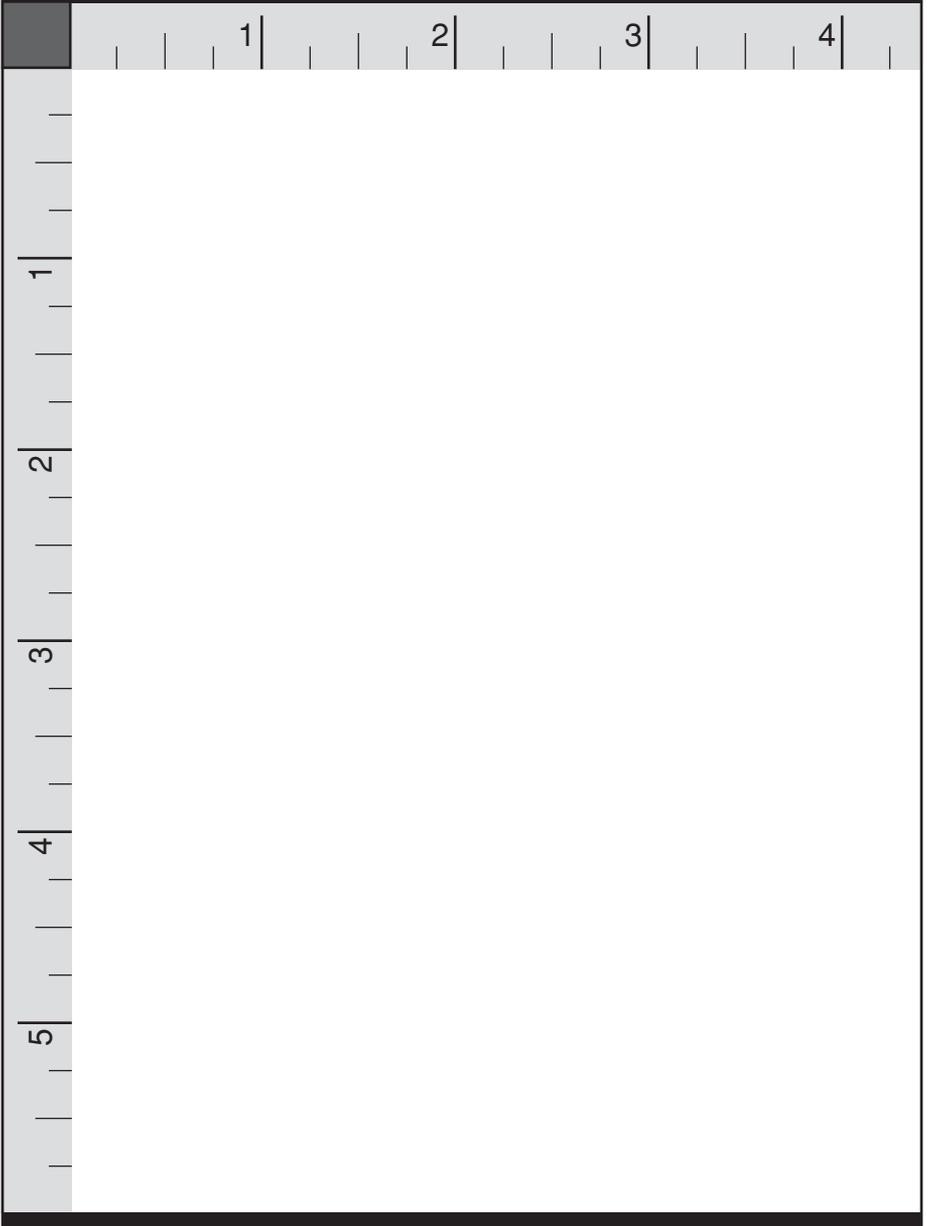
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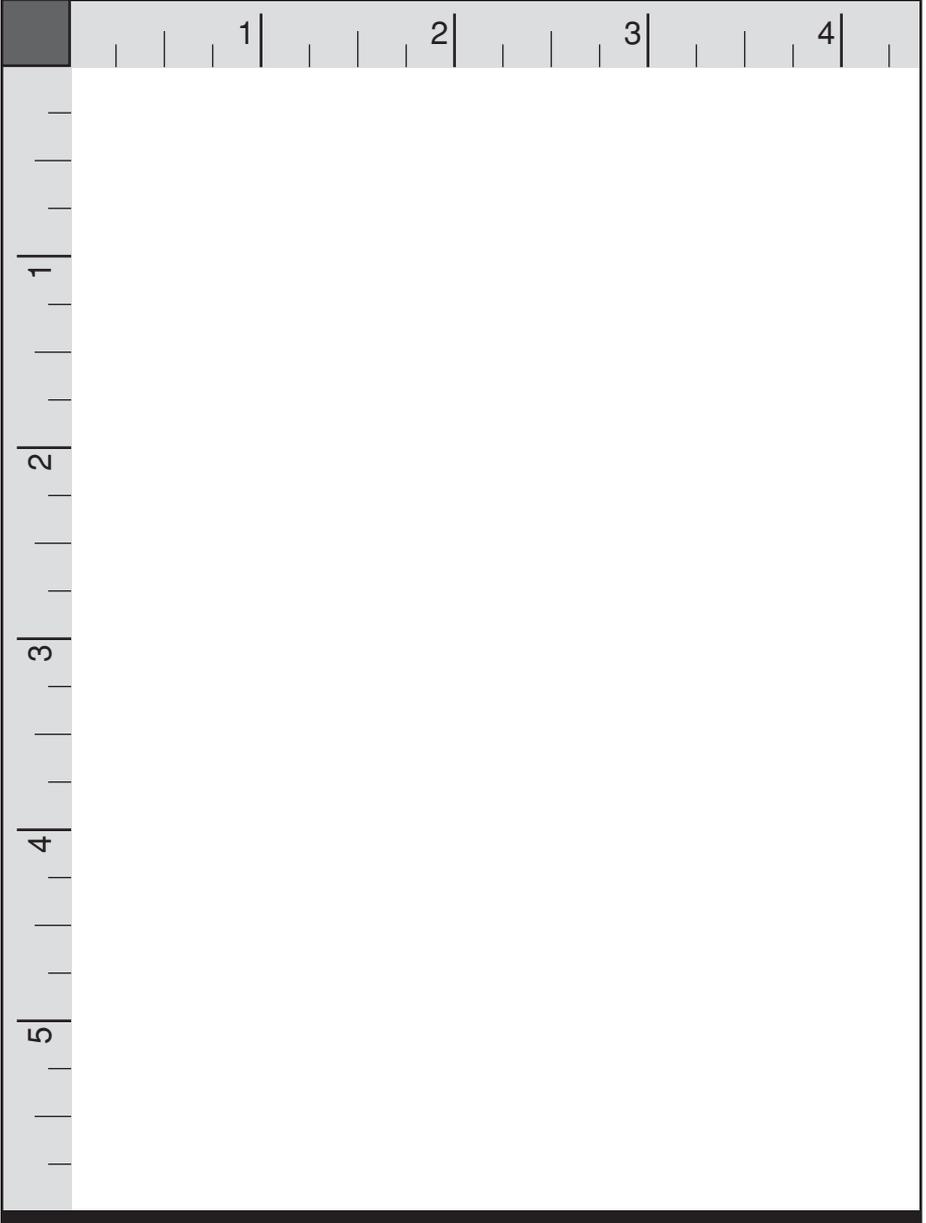
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# Animal Track Stamps



This animal track belongs to a:

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# Animal Observation Journal

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For more information about State Parks  
or observing animals in nature, visit  
**[www.texasstateparks.org](http://www.texasstateparks.org)**

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



**Life's better outside.®**

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