

# ANIMAL Autographs

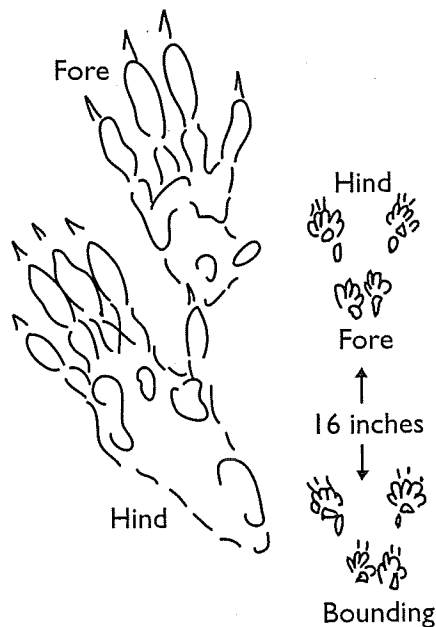
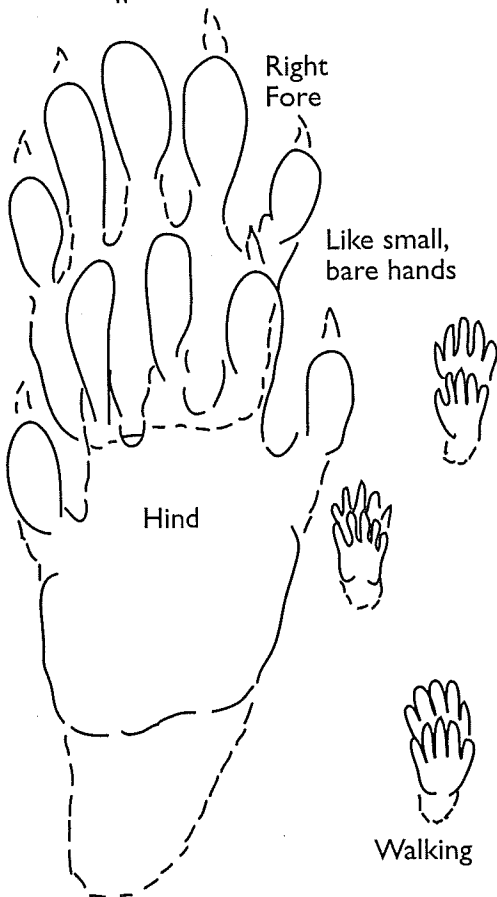
**M**ANY REFERENCE BOOKS CONTAIN SKETCHES OF ANIMAL TRACKS, but tracks in the field rarely look like those found in texts. Dust can make an animal track look one way, and sand or mud another. An unrushed animal has one way of walking. The autograph his feet leave when in a hurry is quite different.

This field guide takes all of these differences into account. It originally was created to aid department biologists with yearly surveys along Missouri streams to determine furbearer populations. These illustrations of animal tracks—or autographs—are drawn to the size of average adults. Young animals' tracks are slightly smaller.

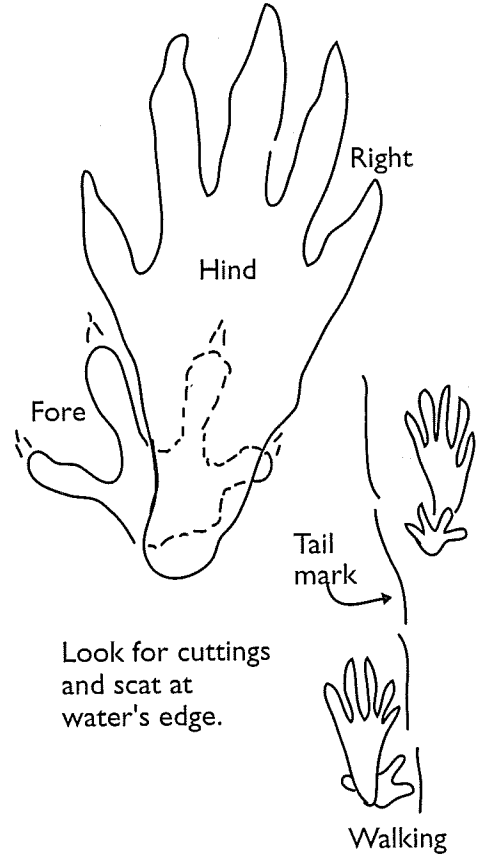
The solid lines represent those parts of a track which usually are evident. Dotted lines indicate parts which don't show under normal conditions. They are truly animal autographs.



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

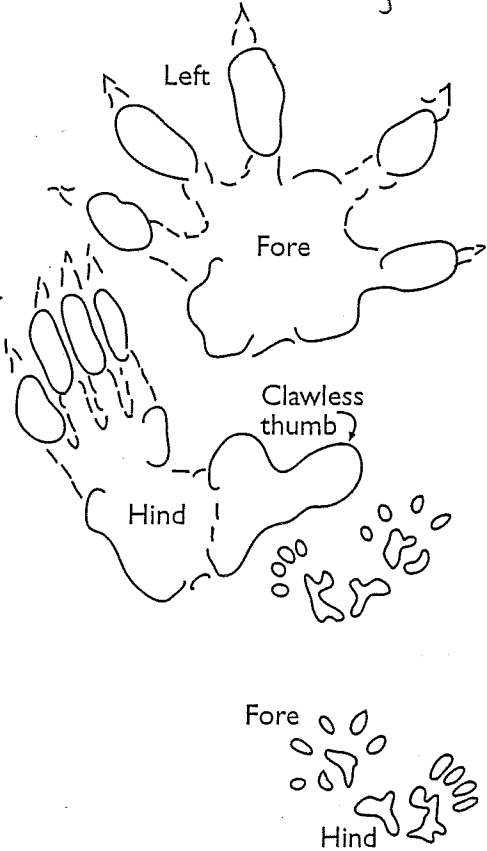


Gray Squirrel similar, but smaller

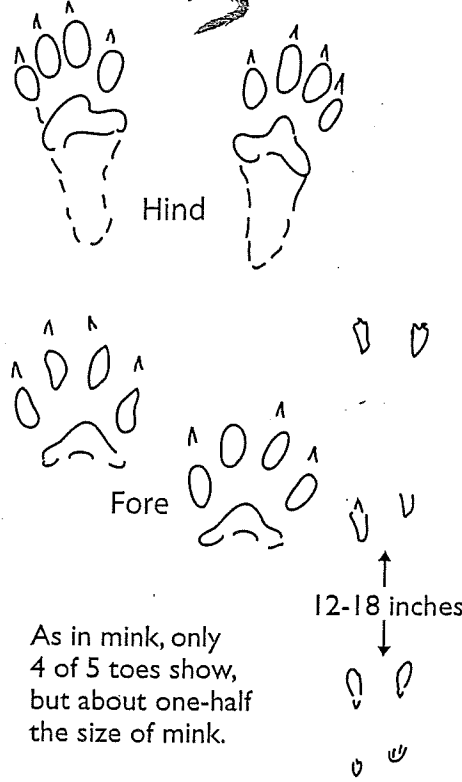


Look for cuttings and scat at water's edge.

OPOSSUM

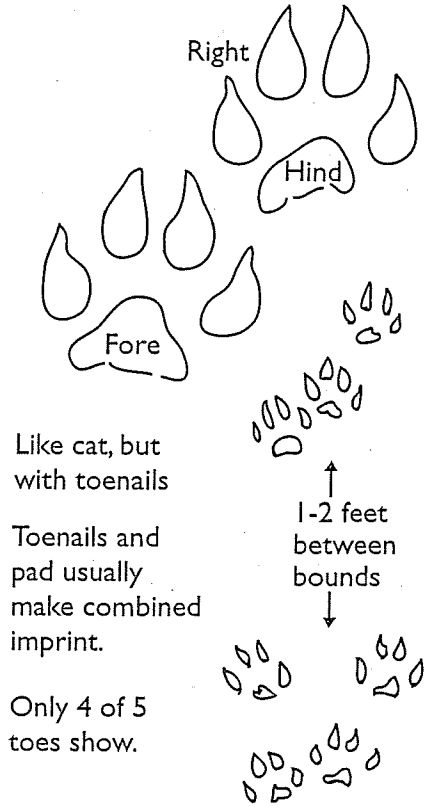


WEASEL



As in mink, only 4 of 5 toes show, but about one-half the size of mink.

MINK

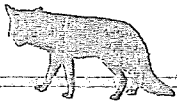


Like cat, but with toenails

Toenails and pad usually make combined imprint.

Only 4 of 5 toes show.

RED FOX



Weight: 8-14 lbs.

Foot hair may show in pad marks.

Barlike imprint

9-16 inches



GRAY FOX

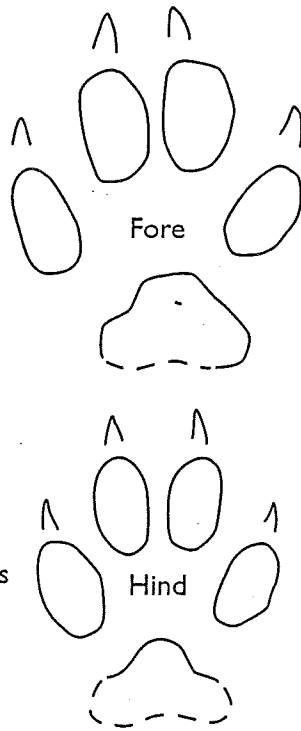


Weight: 7-12 lbs.

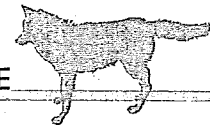
Walking

8-15 inches

Similar to summer coyote pups



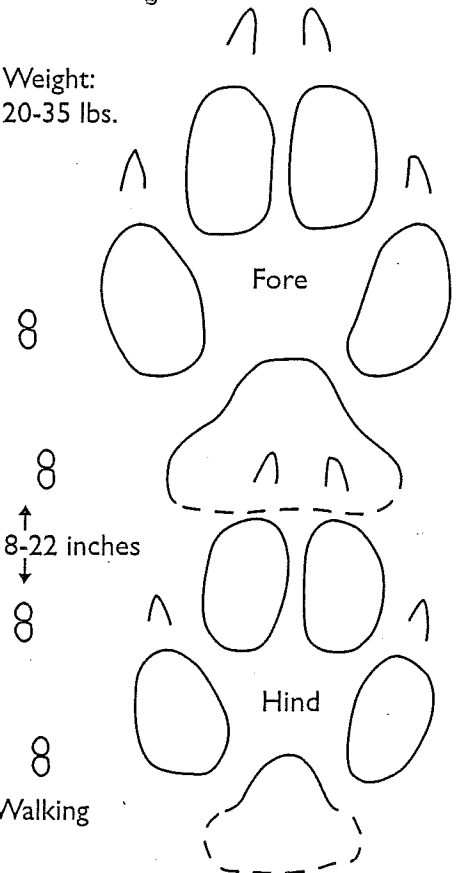
COYOTE



Weight: 20-35 lbs.

18-22 inches

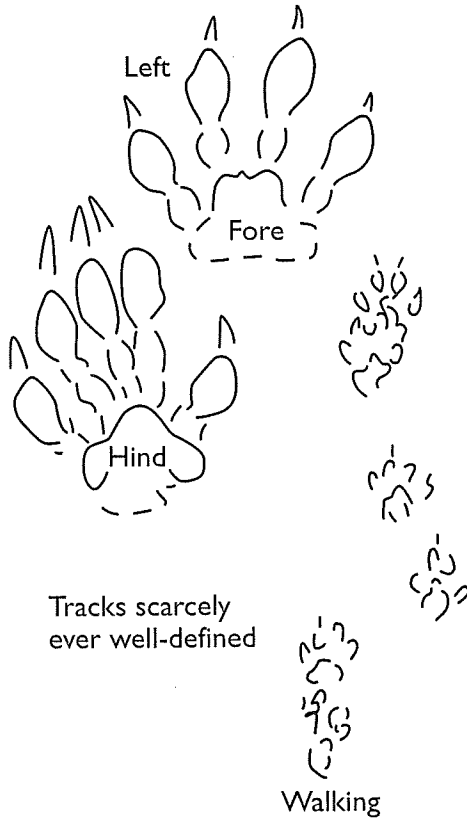
Walking



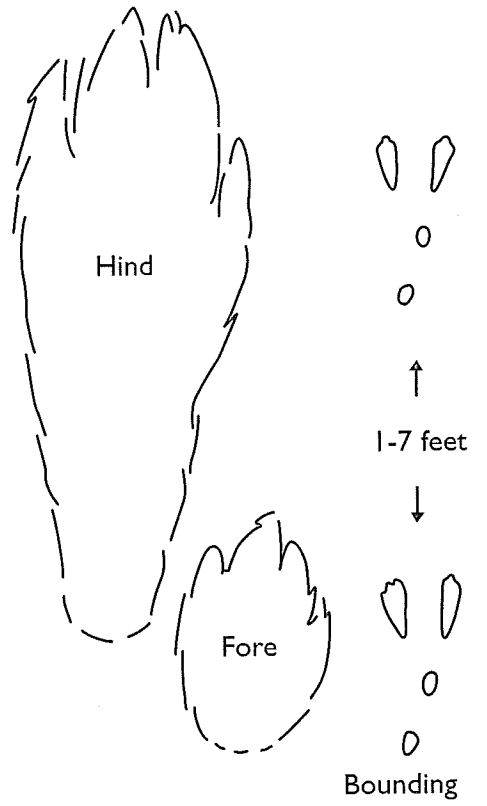
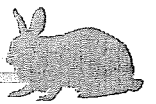
STRIPED SKUNK



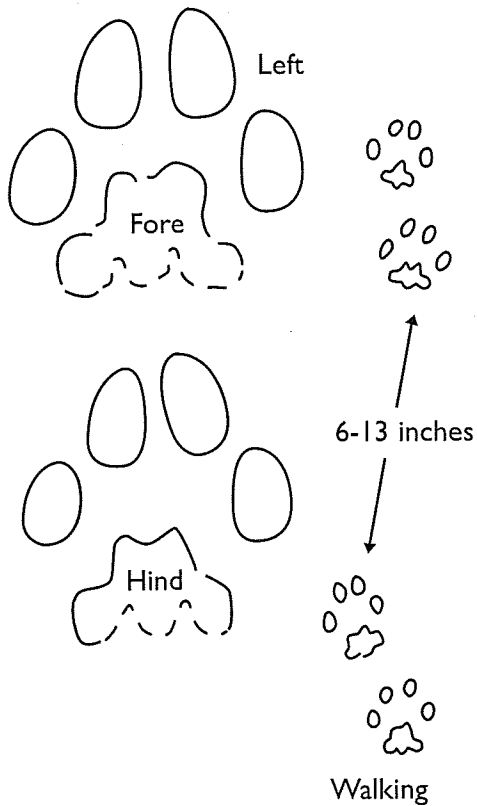
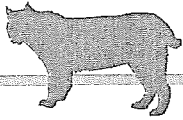
WOODCHUCK



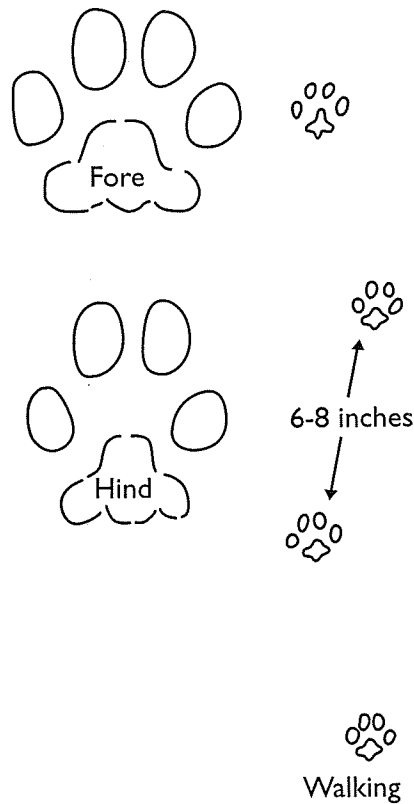
COTTONTAIL RABBIT



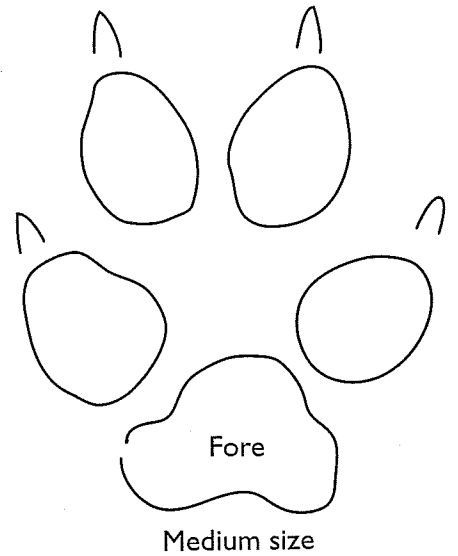
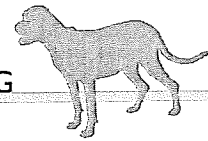
BOBCCAT



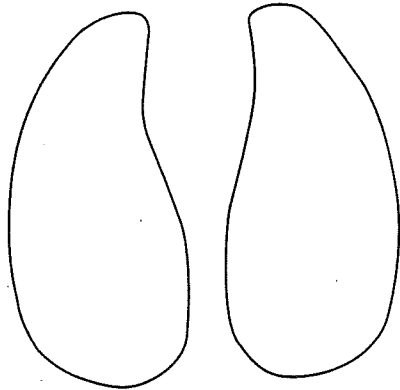
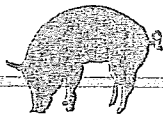
HOUSE CAT



DOG

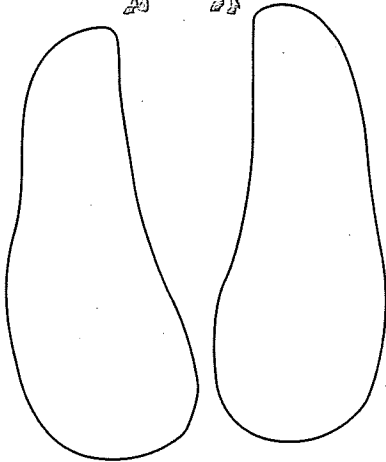
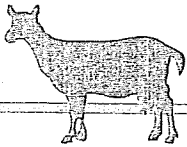


COMMON PIG



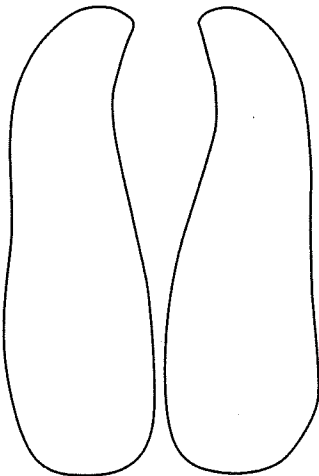
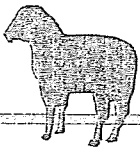
Fore foot  
Toes blunt

GOAT



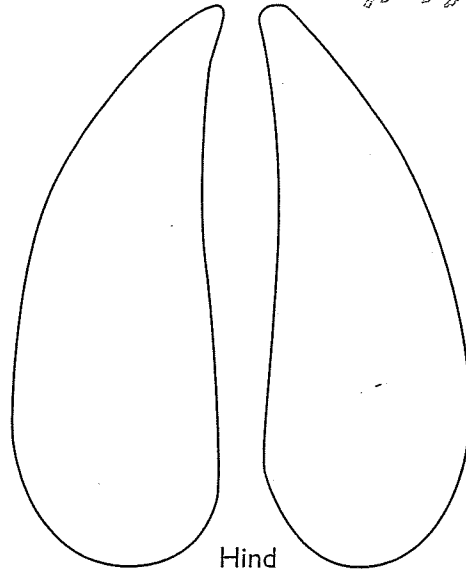
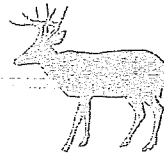
Fore foot

SHEEP



Hind foot

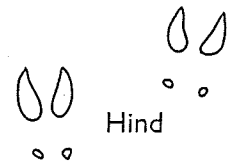
WHITE-TAILED DEER



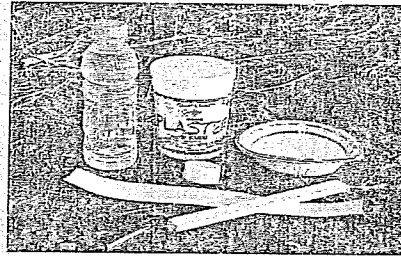
Hind

Toes spread and  
dew claws may  
show when  
bounding on  
mud or snow.

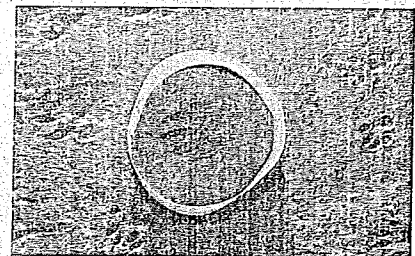
10 to 15 feet  
between bounds



HOW TO MAKE A CAST OF AN ANIMAL AUTOGRAPH



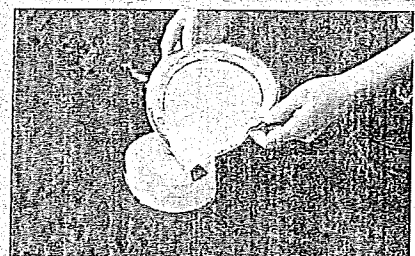
SUPPLIES—Common plaster or plaster of Paris, water, mixing bowl and paper strips



STEP 1—Form the paper strips and place them over the track.



STEP 2—Mix the plaster and water together.



STEP 3—Pour into the form one inch of the plaster-water mix.



STEP 4—Remove paper strip from cast.



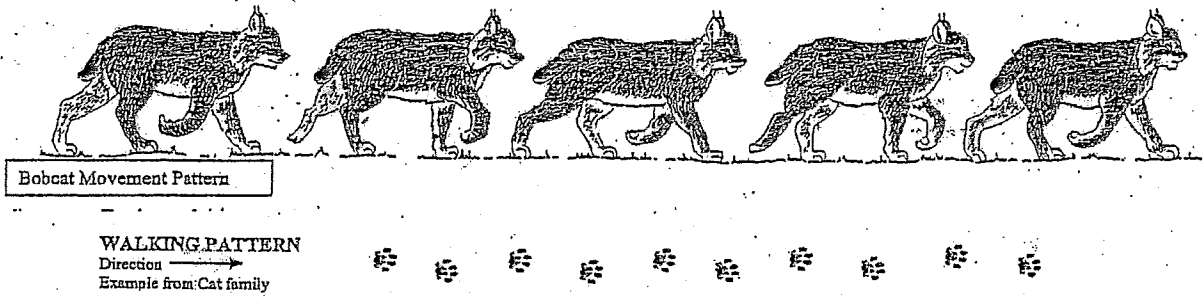
BONUS—Paint the track and background contrasting colors.

## Animal Gait Information

### Walkers

Walkers have long legs and large heads. They walk in direct register, where the hind foot is placed exactly where the front foot was, so only the hind prints show.

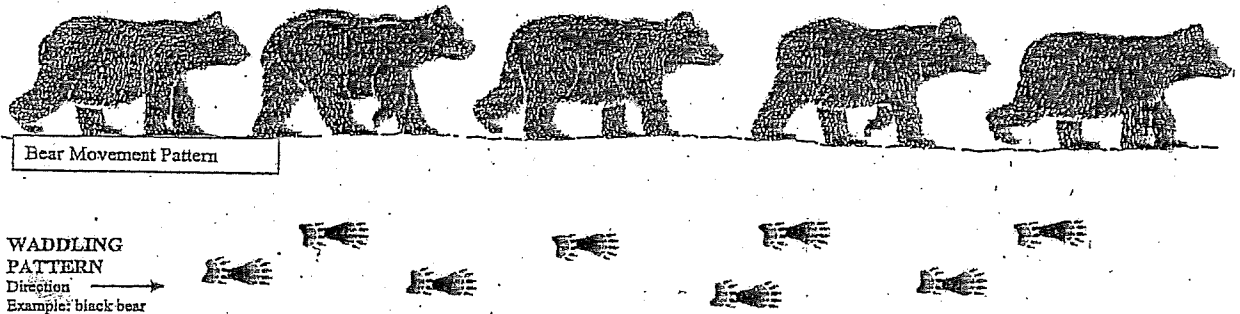
- Deer
- Bison
- Elk
- Cat
- Bobcat
- Dog
- Fox
- Coyote
- Wolf



### Waddlers

Waddlers have heavy bodies and short legs. To waddle, they move both feet on one side of their body, one at a time, and then shift their weight to move the feet on the other side. Usually the hind foot is placed in front of the fore foot.

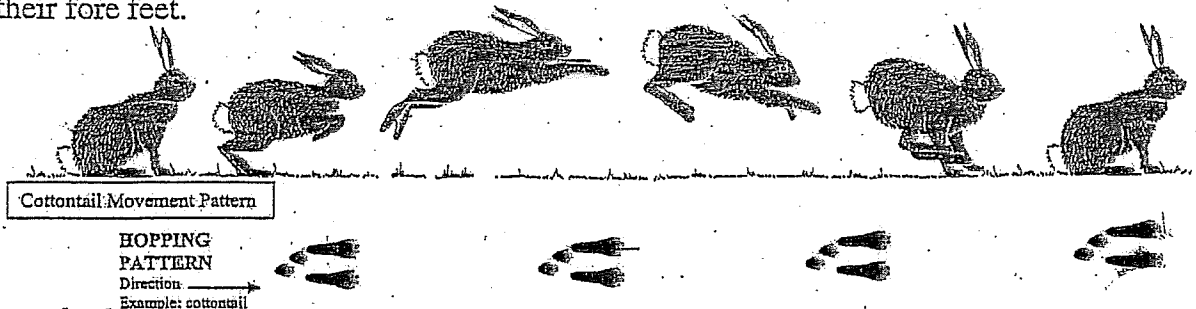
- Raccoon
- Skunk
- Opossum
- Woodchuck
- Muskrat
- Beaver
- Bear



### Hoppers

Hoppers hind feet are much longer than their front feet. They jump by pushing off their hind feet, landing on their front feet, and swinging their back feet to the front. They leave sets of four tracks with their hind feet ahead of their fore feet.

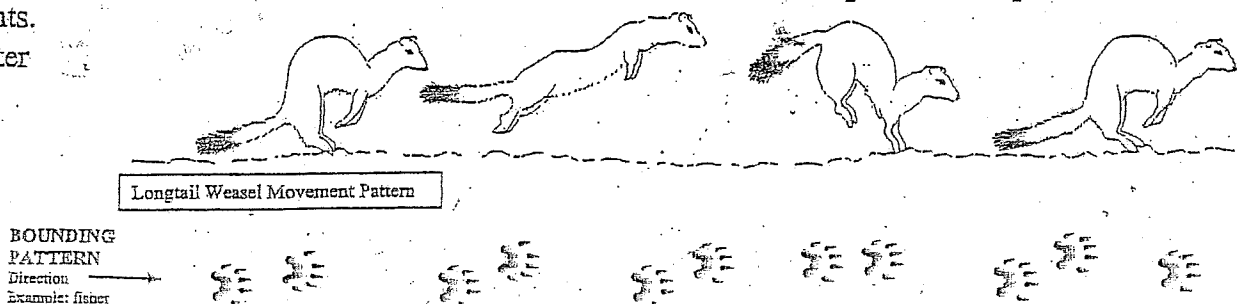
- Rabbit
- Squirrel
- Chipmunk
- Mouse

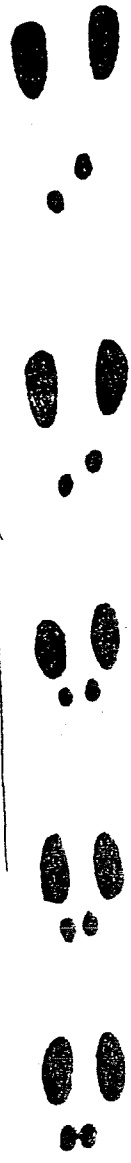


### Sounders

Sounders have long, narrow bodies and short legs and they move like accordions. First they crouch and jump off their hind feet. They are fully stretched in the air. When they land, one front foot lands before the other, then both front feet lift up, allowing the back feet to take their place. Their prints are mostly hind prints.

- River otter
- Weasel
- Mink





Galloping



Bounding



Waddling



Walking/trotting