



# Observing Wildlife Sign



## Your observations count!

Many easements have the protection of wildlife habitat as one of the purposes for protecting the land. Though you are not required to conduct a wildlife inventory, you might want to get familiar with some common wildlife sign to share with easement landowners and create a record of the values each property holds.



Types of wildlife sign:  
 Tracks  
 Rubbings  
 Scat  
 Dens or lodges  
 Browsing or food remnants



Beaver activity can significantly change a landscape. In nearly all easements, beaver activity is allowed and even encouraged. Make note of any flooding or draining of wetlands that you notice from year to year, and the extent of beaver browse on the adjacent forest landscape. At left, beaver tracks.



Moose sign:  
 Above is an example of a moose rub, where a moose scraped the bark from a red maple to get at the sap flowing in the tree. At right, a moose track is shown—larger than a deer track, but similar in shape.

## A few common tracks: visible in mud or snow



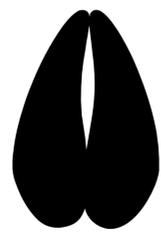
Coyote tracks  
 4 toes, claws visible, tracks are usually traveling in a straight line.



Raccoon tracks  
 4 toes in front, 5 toes in back, often found near streams, where raccoons eat fish.



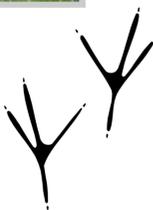
Black Bear  
 Black bear tracks are unmistakable because they are the largest tracks you will find in this area. They are often accompanied by large, round scat containing remnants of berries, and claw marks on trees.



Deer tracks  
 Classic cloven hoof, in various sizes, often found on a 'trail' created by regular traffic by a herd.



Great Blue Heron  
 Herons often nest in wetlands that have been flooded out by beavers, leaving standing snags. Groups of heron nests, called "rookeries", are not common in this state and are worth noting. Heron tracks at right.



Snags  
 Many species of birds and rodents nest or den in standing dead trees, called 'snags'. Make note if you see one in use!



Wild turkey  
 Turkeys are increasingly common in southwestern New Hampshire. Turkeys travel in flocks, and nest on the ground (above) in the spring. Turkey prints are shown at left.

