



DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE

MASSWILDLIFE

Tracking

Narrowing the field of identification

- ◆ Think about what kind of animal lives in the area based on an assessment of the habitat.
- ◆ In what direction is the animal traveling? How do you know?
- ◆ Does the print have small triangular marks in front of it?
- ◆ 4/4 - Four toes on front and four toes on hind feet = dog family, cat family, rabbit family or hare family
- ◆ 4/5 - Four toes on front and five toes on hind = rodents (mice, voles, chipmunks, squirrels, woodchucks, porcupine, muskrat)
- ◆ 5/5 - Five toes on front and five on hind = weasel family (mink, fisher, weasels, otter), skunk, bear, opossum, raccoon, shrew, beaver
- ◆ Two-toe track = deer & moose
- ◆ Walker or Trotter – cats, dogs, and hoofed animals
Usually only leave a hind track when walking since they place their back feet directly where their front foot has been resulting in a straight-line track
- ◆ Waddler – bear skunk, porcupine, opossum, beaver, raccoon, muskrats, woodchucks (heavy body, short legs)
Hind leg often oversteps front foot so track consists of both smaller front foot and their larger hind foot
- ◆ Hoppers – mouse, red squirrel, gray squirrel, chipmunk, lagomorphs, shrews, voles, (large hind feet longer than front feet)
Sets of tracks with hind feet ahead of their front feet
- ◆ Bounders – weasel family (long narrow bodies and short legs)
Move like an accordion with tracks mostly hind prints registering directly on the front track

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