

Activity: “Urban animal tracking”

Target Audience: Everyone

Time to play: 40 minutes

Difficulty level: Moderate

Required Materials: 20 printable animal tracks. Guide books/identification tools.

Overview

This game is a scavenger hunt designed to teach animal track identification, reference book use and develop the student’s awareness of charismatic mega-fauna common to the northeast region. Optionally, “Urban animal tracking” may be used in conjunction with photographs of endangered animals in order to develop a general understanding of which animals are the most threatened. Once a foundation of knowledge about these animals are established this activity can function as either a starting point for dialogue or a lead in to another related activity.

How to play:

- Hide the tracks and photographs in plain view throughout the playing area before the game begins. There are many options for choosing a playing area; this game may even be played inside if it is raining or if there is no outside space available. The only requirement is that the playing area is large (a field, many rooms in a building... etc)
- Participants may either work individually or in teams, facilitator’s decision.
- Identification resources (field guides etc...) should be kept in a central location under supervision of the facilitator. The facilitator may assist the participants in identifying the tracks/artifacts by asking leading questions.
- Once the scavenger hunt begins, participants seek out the tracks and photographs, bringing no more than one artifact at a time to the resource hub.
- Only three guesses are permitted per artifact.
- If the artifact is not successfully identified or if the participant chooses, the artifact is returned to the original location by the participant before they may seek a new artifact.
- To account for a variety of skills and abilities the scoring for this game is as such:
 - 1 point for identifying the type of animal (I.e. reptile, amphibian, mammal, fish)
 - 1 point for describing the animal’s primary food source.
 - 2 points for naming the species.

Optional Post-game dialogue

- Talk about and identify animals that the participants were not able to identify during the game and also discuss endangered animals and why it is important to protect them (Current/potential ecosystem and consumer services, biodiversity etc...).



Christopher J. Poulin
Outreach Assistant
Region 5, External Affairs