



# Nature Activity

## Animal Track Game

### What is a track?

An animal track is an imprint left behind on a ground surface by an animal walking across it. Animal tracks can be used by hunters to track their prey or by naturalists to identify animals living in a certain area. Animal tracks help us understand how individuals and populations move around us.

### What can tracks tell us about the animal?

- The health
- The sex
- Size
- When they were heading
- How fast they were traveling

### Where to look for tracks:

- Mud, snow, and sand
- Hiking trails
- Around bodies of water
- Forest edges
- Travel routes – animals like to find the quickest way to get from place A to place B

### What are other animal signs?

- Scat - shape, size, and contents
- Rubbings – an animal rubbing up against an object
- Hair and feathers
- Chews – where a plant has been bitten off
- Scratching – an animal using their claws to dig for food

### Observations:

What animal tracks look similar?

What animal tracks or signs have you seen?

### PNW Animal Tracks

American Beaver



Mountain Goat



Mountain Lion



Raccoon



Black Bear



Striped Skunk



Coyote



Red Fox



Bobcat



River Otter



American Pika



Yellow Bellied Marmot



Red Squirrel



White-tailed Jackrabbit



## Playing the Animal Track Game

(Can be played alone, or in groups of 2 or more)

1. One player holds the game from underneath using their two thumbs and two index fingers as “pinchers”.
2. Practice and become comfortable with moving your fingers to move the game as follows.

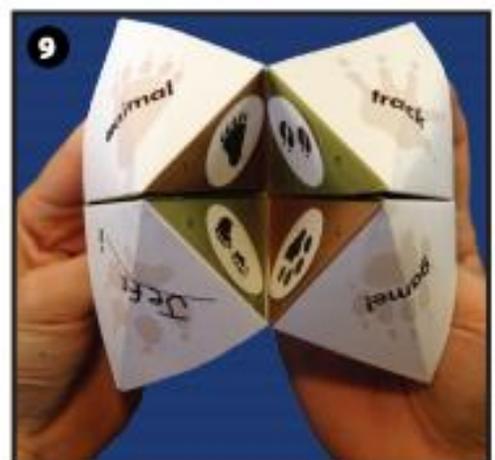
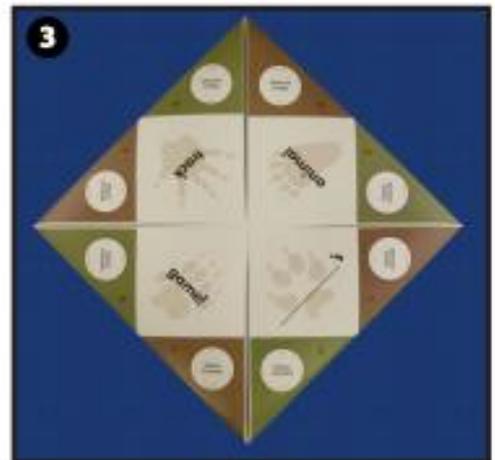
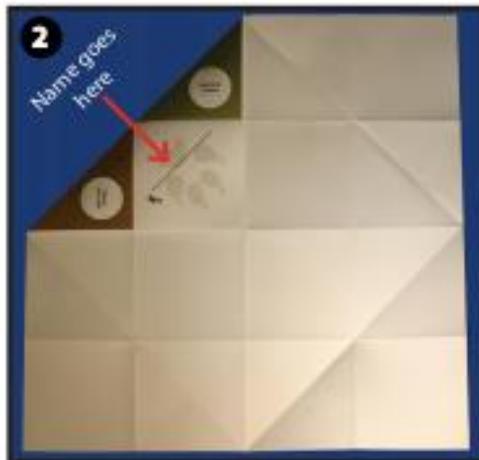
### Moving the game up and down:

- First, pressing your two index fingers together and your two thumbs together, move your index fingers away from your body while your thumbs move toward your body.
- Next, bring your thumbs and index fingers back to the middle so that your thumbs and index fingers are touching and all 4 fingers come together.

### Moving the game side to side:

- While pinching your left thumb/index finger together and your right thumb/index finger together, move the fingertips of your right hand to the right and left hand to the left to create an opening in the center.
  - Return your thumbs and index fingers back to the middle so that all 4 fingers come together.
  - As you repeat this motion, 4 animal tracks will be visible when you move your fingers up and down, and 4 different animal tracks will be visible when you move your fingers to the sides.
3. To start the game, open the game side to side and ask your partner (or yourself if playing alone) to pick one of the 4 numbers that is visible. Then, count to that number, opening the game in a new direction with each number that you count. Repeat the process one more time as you count once again.
  4. After having asked your partner to provide you with these two numbers and moving the game the appropriate number of times, stop and freeze with your hands in their final position. Then, ask your partner for one more number from those that are visible. Once they select that number, ask them to identify the track that is next to that number. To find out if they are correct, lift the flap and reveal the picture and name of the animal that is hiding under the track. If they are correct, they get a point. Now, switch roles and it's your turn to try and identify the track. Repeat the steps listed above and see if you can score a point. The first person to reach 5 points wins. Make sure that everyone has had the same number of turns prior to ending the game. If the game ends in a tie, you can either end the game with multiple winners or continue to play rounds until one player wins.

## Instructions: How to Fold the Animal Track Game



### Step by Step Instructions (Numbers below match photo numbers)

#### Getting Started

- Distribute one game sheet and one sticker sheet to each child.
- Sticker Sheet: Each of the 12 animals has two stickers. One sticker has a picture and name of the animal and the other has a picture of its track. Sticker pairs have letters (A-L) to tie each pair together. Each child selects 8 of the 12 animals for their game.

1. Write name in space provided. Turn sheet over so white side is up.
2. Fold 4 corners to center.
3. Four corners successfully folded.
4. Turn folded sheet over.
5. Place 1st animal sticker on the "ANIMAL NAME & PICTURE" circle next to the number "1" (see red arrow in 5 above).
6. Fold this flap to the center. Apply matching track sticker to the "TRACK STICKER" circle next to the number "1" to complete this pair. Remember, each animal and

its matching track are labeled with the same letter.

7. Repeat for numbers 2-8. After completing all stickers, your game should look similar to picture #7 with animal pictures hidden under their own track.
8. With the game as displayed in picture 7, fold it in half. Open it flat again and fold it in half in the other direction.
9. Place thumbs and index fingers under the white flaps.

**You're ready to play!**

*Game play instructions are on the back.*