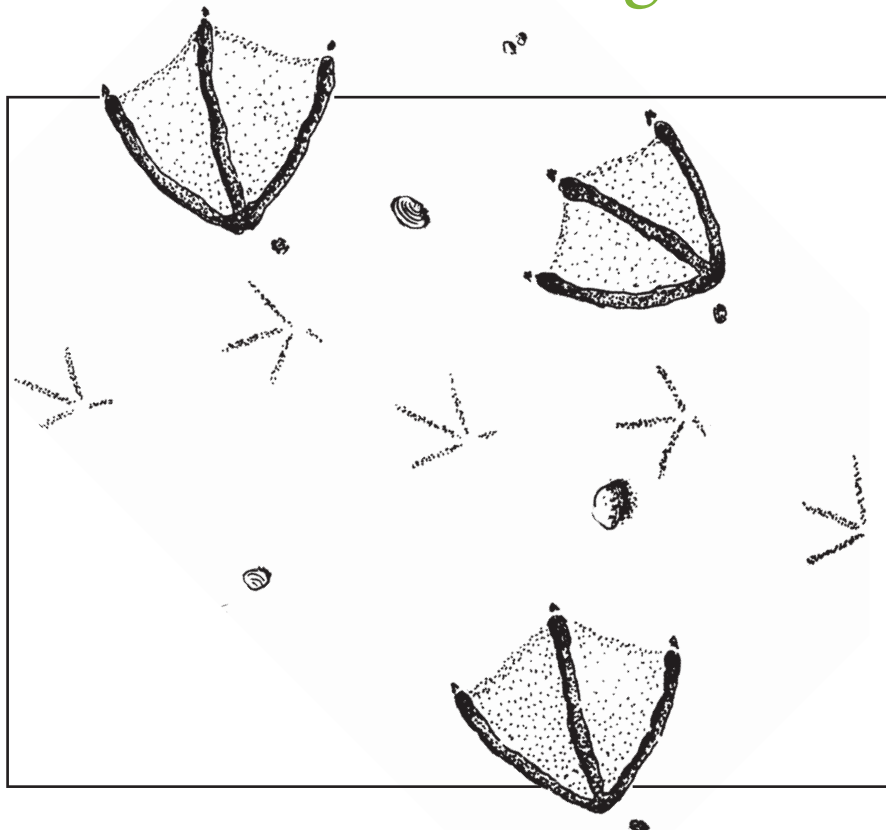


Wetland Animal Signs



Section 4 Wetland Activities OUTDOOR WETLAND INVESTIGATIONS

Grade Level: 2-5

NGSS: K-LS1-1., 2-LS4-1, 5-ESS3-1.

Subjects: Science

Skills: Observing, inferring

Duration: 15-30 minutes

Group Size: 2

Setting: Outdoors

Objectives:

Students will look for and compare different types of animal signs found in the wetland area.

Complementary Activities:

Tracks in the Mud

Materials:

Clip boards and writing paper, or field journals, pencils or pens for each student; measuring tape or meter stick; "Wetlands Animal Tracks Science Card" (following).

Procedure:

1. IN ADVANCE, choose safe sites along the wetland area where signs of mammals or birds are easy to find.
2. Depending on the grade level, guide the students through the activity, or send them out to follow the instructions on the science card.
3. In class, share student observations, drawings and diagrams.

Curriculum Connections:

(See Appendix for full citations)

Animal Tracks of Alaska (Stall, 1993)

Animal Tracks of Alaska (Sheldon and Hartson, 1999).



Wetland Animal Signs

1. Write "Wetland Animal Signs" at the top of a page in your field journal.
2. Do you see any animal signs? Look for tracks, holes and dens, droppings, gnawed twigs and hair. Muddy places (like the edge of a pond) are good places to find tracks. Write down what you find in your field journal.
3. Does it look like anybody came for a drink to the wetland recently?
4. Find a track and try to figure out who it belongs to. Is the track bigger or smaller than your hand? How many toes does it have? Are the feet webbed? Can you see any claw marks? Can you tell any differences between front and back feet? How far apart is it between each track?
5. Measure the length and width of the track. If you do not have a measuring tape, estimate it using your knuckles: the distance between the two knuckles on your index finger is roughly an inch.
6. Draw a picture of the animal track in your field journal. Include the measurements you made for the length and width.
7. Walk through the mud yourself and see what tracks you leave. Can you tell your tracks apart from those of other kids in your group?
8. Ask a friend to walk around in the mud for a few minutes while your eyes are closed. Then open your eyes and see if you can tell where your friend went by looking at his or her tracks.

