

inSTALLations

November 2009

Creature Feature **Elusive Animals**

We often see squirrels, songbirds and hawks as we walk, but there are even more animals that we don't see. How do we know animals are here if we don't often see them?



We find coyote scat and sometimes hear them calling in the evening or early morning. Footprints in the snow also alert us to their presence.



River otters get caught on film when we set up our remote cameras. We sometimes see their tracks on the frozen river.

The work of beavers is evident around Six Island Pond and near the Meadow Mouse Shortcut. They leave their toothy signature on every tree they cut down.

We hear Barred Owls calling to establish their territories and communicate with their mates. We sometimes find owl pellets under trees.



As you explore the trails, tune in to the signs animals leave behind and you will 'see' more of the wildlife around you.

Signs Left Behind

One of the best ways to find elusive animals is to look for the signs they leave behind.

When looking at animal tracks, count the number of toes, measure the stride (length between prints) and straddle (width between prints) and measure the individual print to determine what kind of animal made the track.



Scat is an excellent indicator of an animal's presence as well as the presence of its prey if it is a carnivore. Exercise caution when examining scat as some types (especially raccoon) can be hazardous to us.

Look carefully at plants. Broken twigs and trampled vegetation may indicate a path or bed. Nibbled twigs may show you a favorite location for breakfast.



Visit the Visitor Center Trailer for program information.