

# Snow trackers



This month, let's take advantage of the snow and learn how to identify animal tracks.

## Activity 1 Hunting for Tracks

Put on your winter clothes and your detective hats, we're on an adventure to find tracks!

Tricks for the best chance to find tracks:

- Best time to look for tracks is right after a snowfall.
- Walk slowly and pay very close attention to the ground. Some tracks are very small and hard to see.
- Walk in single file. Stepping on tracks will ruin them, and then no one will be able to see.
- Try to be as quiet as possible for the best chance of actually seeing an animal and not just its tracks! Remember, wildlife is scared off easily by humans, so be quiet and you might come across something even more exciting than footprints!



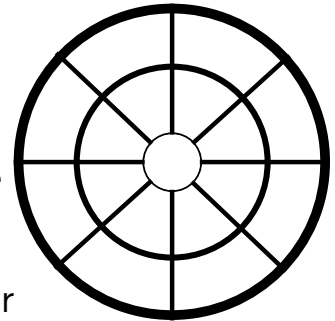
Once you've found a track:

- Stop and talk about what might have left them.
- Compare the tracks to your ID guide.
- Use a ruler to measure the track.
- Make your best guess!

## Activity 2 Lynx and Snowshoe Hare Tag

Inspired by the US Forest Service Snow Ranger Activity Guide

Both Lynx and Snowshoe Hare have "snowshoe" like feet that help them stay on the top of the snowpack. The Snowshoe Hare is prey for the Lynx. Animals in winter will travel the same paths over and over, creating "runs" through the snow to make travel more energy efficient.



**Step 1:** Have your group follow the leader and stomp out the grid pattern in the snow. Make it more interesting and have them walk and crawl like different animals.

**Step 2:** Pick a "Lynx" to tag, everyone else are the "Hares". You can use a soft long item like a pool noodle to extend smaller kid's reach.

**Step 3:** The Lynx has to chase the hares but everyone **has to stay inside the paths** as animals in winter follow the same paths in order to preserve energy.

Once a hare is tagged it becomes a lynx. The center is a "free" area where tired hares can rest for 30 seconds. The lynx can't guard the "free" area.

Game ends when everyone is exhausted

Note: make sure to make the center circle large enough for a number of hares to rest.