

Let's Go Wildlife Tracking in Our Yard!

This winter, bundle up the whole family to see which creatures are using your yard. Every time there is a fresh snow, get the family outside before anyone steps in it. Discuss what you find over a piping-hot beverage.

Put up 50-watt maximum* red, motion-detector lights for those dark, cold, snowy nights and see who can get to the window first when it turns on. Most wildlife does not see red, but you can see them!

Explore tracks in books, like the *Stokes Guide to Animal Tracking and Behavior* available through bookstores, Amazon www.amazon.com/Stokes-Guide-Animal-Tracking-Behavior/dp/0316817341 and libraries.

The Stokes' guide shows footprints drawn to scale. Take the book outside and compare the size of the footprints. Who can tell which ones are dog or cat footprints?



*Important: Keep the watts low so no birds are attracted. Turn them off during fall and spring migration seasons. The snow will reflect the light and make it very bright.

Take this quiz together from ODNR: www.dnr.state.oh.us/Portals/9/pdf/pub128.pdf. Compare your answers against the answers upside down on the bottom of page two.

←Photo of my backyard tracks

Set aside an hour to look for wildlife signs together, such as den entrances, food remains or disturbed areas, like tunnels through snow. Don't disturb wildlife or feed mammals (keep birdseed off of the ground). Point out what you find. Keep a journal and draw what you see.

Find information at your library and on the internet. Use binoculars to see the wildlife and try taking photos through the window.

Get Certified: Putting up National Wildlife Federation's Certified Wildlife Habitat sign helps others understand the purpose of the yard and encourages them to help wildlife too. See how easy and fun it is on our website: www.backyardhabitat.info.

Lessons learned? If you're interested in learning more, go to www.backyardhabitat.info. There is a link on the home page to click and sign up to receive our 'Nature Scoop' email. Let's work together to help wildlife, one yard at a time.