

The Prairie That Nature Built Animal Tracking Project

There is a lot of life on the prairie, although sometimes it's hard to spot. Animals can camouflage themselves in a variety of ways. And we can spot them by sitting quietly, looking closely and listening or by looking for their tracks. All animals leave tracks; birds, insects, even snakes. Tracks tell you a lot about the animals that live on the prairie as well as in your neighborhood.

Here's a fun way to preserve an animal's tracks!

Here's what you'll need:

Long strip of cardboard

Paper clips

Plaster of Paris

Water

Bowl for mixing your ingredients

Spoon

Water based paint



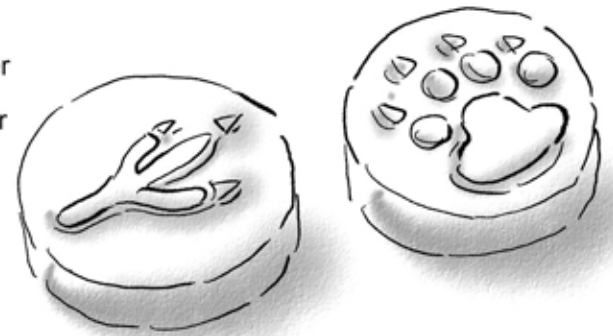
Step 1:
Find a muddy area where animals like to visit, maybe close to a stream. You can also make a muddy patch in your yard and bait it with some food.



Step 2:
Once you've found a clear track, make a collar of stiff cardboard to fit around it. Secure the ends with paper clips and push the collar into the mud around the track.



Step 3:
Mix the Plaster of Paris with water until it is pourable, but not too thin. Pour about an inch of plaster into the collar. Let it set before removing.



Step 4:
When you get the cast home let it harden completely. Then you can paint it.



And now that you know how to make a mold of a track, you can find more tracks to preserve!