



Fox Den
Photo by Loretta Kuse

Mammals

- List mammals that have been seen in the local area. Which ones are likely to be out in winter? What kind of habitat do they need? Which are predators and which are prey?
- A camera can help you keep a record of animals you may not see often or help you notice unusual things about the activities of animals you see often.
- Look at pictures some people get on trail cameras. Why and when might they be able to get these pictures?

Tracks and Burrows

- Look at your own tracks in the snow. How might someone be able to tell who walked in a particular place? How are tracks of people different and how are they alike? Do some people drag their feet between the places where they step? Are they in straight or crooked lines?
- Look for openings from the trails into the surrounding woods. Which ones are deer trails? What kinds of tracks do you see?
- Examine books about animal tracks. Look for bird and mammal tracks along the way. What tracks might you expect to see? Which tracks might not be

visible in winter? What can you tell about the size, or activity of the animal by looking at the tracks?

- Are there animal dens or burrows in which mammals might be living? What animals might come out in winter?
- Why do snowshoes help us walk better in winter? (Think about what you know about physics and the snowshoes.)
- Which parts of animals make prints in the snow? (Feet and tails)
- What can you tell about the speed at which an animal has traveled by looking at its tracks?
- If you see an animal, examine the tracks it leaves after it is gone.
- Look for places where an animal may have tunneled under the snow.
- Squirrels will sometimes live in hollow trees but sometimes they will build nests of leaves on tree branches. Look for nests about 20 feet up in deciduous trees. They are made of branches and leaves and lined with leaves and grass. Gray Squirrel nests are often about two feet across.

Gnawing and Rubbing

- Look for evidence of deer rubs and scrapes. How do deer use these to communicate? What do hunters learn from them? Use the Internet to learn more about why male deer rub their foreheads and antlers against the base of trees. How do rubs affect the trees?
- Learn what a plant looks like if a deer has chewed on it. Learn what a plant looks like if a rabbit has chewed on it. How are the chew marks different from those of mice, meadow voles or other animals?
- Notice the wires and guards around trees and bushes. What animals might they keep away?

Scat

- What scat is found along the trail? What kind of animals left the scat?