



Activity:

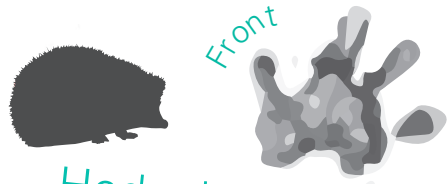
# Identify Footprints

The footprints shown on this guide are life size so you can compare them directly with the prints that you've collected to help you figure out which animals have visited your tunnel.

Look closely at the number and position of the toes and the shapes that each print is made of to help you. Good luck!



British Hedgehog Preservation Society



Front

Hedgehog

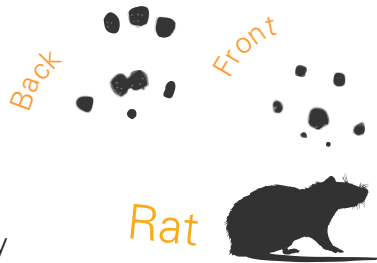
Back

Hedgehog footprints are really easy to identify. Most simply recognised by their **hand-like shape**, hedgehog prints often have a very clear 'thumb'; a single toe print which sticks out at a 45° angle to the rest. Adult hedgehogs leave prints **about the size of a 50p**.

Small rodents, like wood mice are regular visitors to footprint tunnels. Look out for lots of **very small footprints** made up of tiny round dots. Front paws are quite clearly made of **seven dots in a**



Small Rodent



Back

Front

Rat

Rat prints are a **similar shape to smaller rodents**, but they can be as large as hedgehog prints. Remember to look out for the distinctive front footprint made up of **seven very round dots**.

Badgers have a **very large print with five forward facing toes**. The central pad is very broad, usually as wide as all five of the toes. You often also see marks made by the badger's claws.



Badger

Cats leave very distinctive prints, four forward facing toes, with very little space between the toes and main footprint. At the heel of a cat print there is a clear downward curve. Dogs and foxes have an upward curve, this is a really useful way to help to tell them apart.

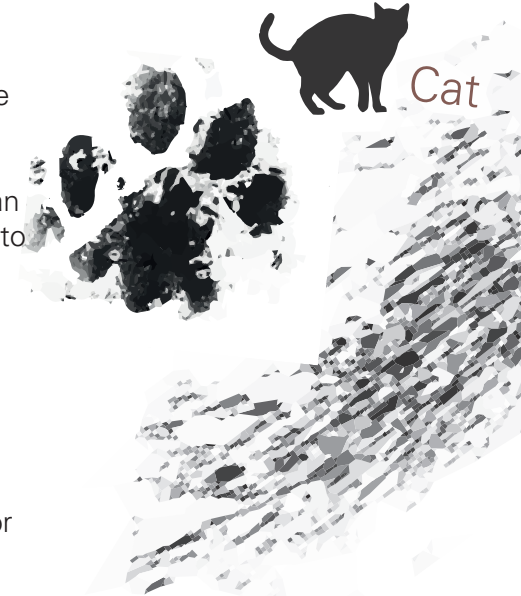


Cats often leave behind other marks on the paper, the swiipe of a long tail or furry paws dipped in ink leave dappled or sweeping prints like the tail print to the



Bird

Birds leave groups of **prints with three toes facing forward** and a **single print in the centre at the back**. They can be a variety of different sizes, ranging from small robin prints to the larger blackbird.

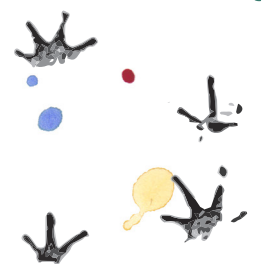


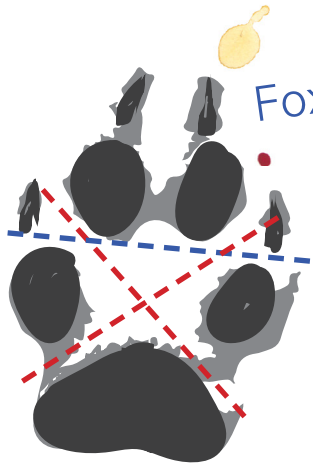
Cat

Newts leave **small, pointy, webbed prints** with up to **five toes visible in a 180° arc**. You can sometimes see round marks left by the tips of the toes.



Newt

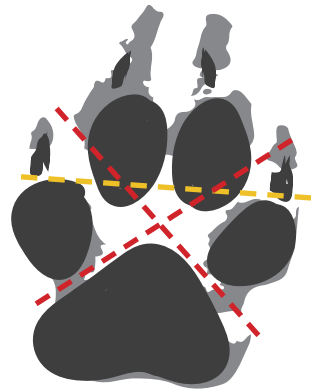




Fox



Foxes have an excellent sense of smell and so are fairly regular visitors to footprint tunnels. Their prints have **four forward facing toes**, often with **claw marks** above them. There is quite a large space between the fox's pad and the toes. If you have a fox print, you should be able to draw a straight line between the four toe prints, without any of the toes crossing the line; shown by the **blue dashed line** on the illustration.



Dog prints are similar to fox with **four forward facing toes** and often claw marks. There are some clear ways to tell the difference between the two: If you draw a straight line between the four toes of a dog footprint, the line will be crossed by the front two toes; as illustrated by the **yellow dashed line** opposite.



Dog

Another **useful trick to separate fox and dog prints** is to draw a cross in the space between the prints, shown with the **red dashed lines above**. In a fox print you can draw a cross without touching any of the print, however in the dog

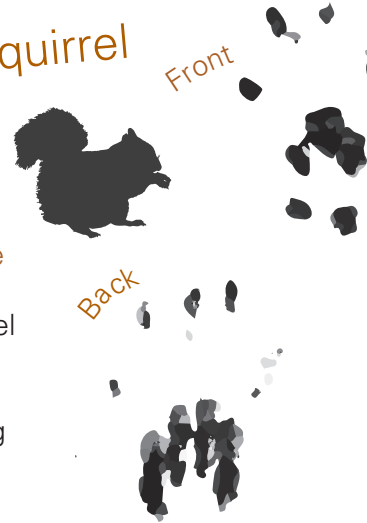


Common Toad

Toads leave peculiar prints, often described as 'spidery', their prints are a complex series of blotches arranged in **roughly star shaped groups**. You can imagine the toad sitting with feet together and **toes spreading out in either direction** as indicated by the **green lines opposite**.

Squirrel

Squirrel prints have a similar shape to other rodents, with a **symmetrical set of four or five round toe prints** visible above a **long foot pad**. Squirrel prints are noticeably **larger and longer than rat prints**, owing to their large, tree climbing feet.



Hedgehog



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### ID Tips

Looking at the size of prints compared to others can be a really useful way to help you to identify them. But remember that you might see prints from very big cats, very small dogs or perhaps very young animals like hoglets. Always look at the shape of the footprint as well as its size to help you figure out which animal left it.

### Found hedgehog prints?

Log your 'hog on a national map through Hedgehog Street: <https://bighedgehogmap.org/>.