

PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART

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This Month's Theme: Tracking

Nature Detectives

By Lori Krubsack, Santa Barbara Zoo

How can you figure out what an animal eats, where it sleeps, and where it's going ... all at once? Look at its tracks! An animal track is a mark left behind by a moving animal. Become a Nature Detective and determine which footprint track matches each animal.



Raccoon
Gull
Skunk
Coyote
Crow

You can even find animal tracks in your own backyard! How? Become a Nature Detective! Sprinkle flour on a cookie sheet. Put peanut butter and Cheerios in the middle of the flour. Next, place the cookie sheet outside before you go to bed. When you wake up in the morning, you'll be able to see what animals visited your tasty treats.

Whose track is this?
Visit the Santa Barbara Zoo to solve the mystery.



High-Tech Tracking

By Carol Peterson, Channel Islands National Park

Channel Islands National Park is using high-tech tracking to protect and restore native species.

The park's largest native land mammal is the island fox, a species found nowhere else in the world. Island fox numbers have decreased by 95% due to golden eagle predation. Most foxes have been captured for protection and breeding. Biologists are using radio collars to track some of the 75-100 island foxes still living in the wild. This helps them know where the animals are and if they are alive and well.

Bald eagles once lived on the park islands but died off due to DDT in the food chain. Now they are being brought back. These young eagles wear tracking "backpacks." The signals given off are tracked by satellites circling Earth.

Biologists know that not all bald eagles brought to the islands stay there. Follow one eagle's journey at www.iws.org— go to the "Interactive" menu and select "Track an Eagle."

Be sure to visit the island foxes and bald eagles at the Santa Barbara Zoo.



Biologist uses antenna to track island foxes (above, left). Catching food at night on San Miguel Island. Can you see the radio collar? (above, right) Young bald eagles will be tracked by visible wing tags and "backpacks" that give off signals (right). National Park Service photos by Geoff Cline and Tim Coonan.



By Janice Rorick, Santa Barbara Public Library System

Make tracks to your library for a summer of fun and adventure. The Santa Barbara Public Library System kicks off the 2004 Summer Reading Program "Track It Down at Your Library" at all branches on June 14. TEENS from grades 7-12 will want to join the Teen Reading Program "Reading Expedition!" also starting June 14th. Visit your local library for great books, fun programs, and lots of prizes too, all summer long! Check www.sbplibrary.org for titles, locations, and times of programs. See you for reading fun in the library during June, July, and August!

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