

Activity: Finding Forest Friends

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Major Emphasis: Animal Characteristics and Habitats

Major Curriculum Area: Science

Related Curriculum Areas:

- Refer to Outdoor Education Curriculum Matrix K-2
- Language Arts
- Art



Program Indicators:

1. The student will demonstrate an understanding that living things can be classified.
2. The student will demonstrate an understanding that living things are similar but unique.

Student Outcomes: The student will:

1. identify common animals of Anne Arundel County. **(DL3)**
2. use the senses of touch and sight to acquire knowledge of the characteristics and habitats of these animals. **(DL1,2)**
3. describe and classify the characteristics of these animals. **(DL2)**
4. construct a booklet displaying a variety of animal tracks. **(DL1,2)**

Readiness:

1. Introduce vocabulary:

names of animals to be used on trail			
mammals	reptiles	amphibians	birds
habitat	webbed feet	paws	teeth
claws	feathers	tail	tracks
scales	skin	fur	
2. Refer to kindergarten Unified Science Unit AAnimals.@
3. Show realistic pictures of the animals which will be used at the Outdoor Education Center.
4. Using literature and/or experience, introduce students to animals, their needs and their habitats.

Materials:

- animals: (Availability of animals is limited and subject to change.)
- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------|-----------------------|
| beaver | gray fox | opossum | red fox |
| black rat snake | gray squirrel | otter | red squirrel |
| Canada goose | hawk | owl | skunk |
| copperhead | mallard duck | rabbit | turtle |
| deer | mink | raccoon | woodchuck (groundhog) |
| frog | muskrat | | |

Trail Rules poster	Animal Interview sheet (Supplement A)
track stamps/ink pads	<u>Animal Collection Guidebook</u>
track story cards	animal pictures/characteristics word cards
crayons	animal picture booklets (provided by teacher)

Procedures:

Activity A: Trail Walk

1. Instructor should place animals on the desired trail. Some animals can be grouped for comparison (e.g., red and gray foxes). The other animals should be spread out enough so that only one can be seen at a time. Place animals in correct habitats as much as possible (e.g., otter near water).
2. Introduce the "Trail Rules" poster to the students:
 - a. Look and listen carefully.
 - b. No running. Watch for tree roots.
 - c. Touch the animal models back only. Do not touch the face, ears, feet or tail!
 - d. Leave living things in place.
 - e. Never touch a wild animal.
 - f. Do not touch the birds.
3. Ask students to give a silent signal, such as a hand on one's head, when an animal is sighted on the trail. In this way, everyone in the group will have the opportunity to search for and discover the animal.
4. Walk the trail with the students searching for animals. When all of the students have found an animal and have signaled this by placing hands on heads, the students should gather around the animal for discussion. The instructor will use the "Animal Interview" sheet and Animal Collection Guidebook as a basis for discussing the animals' characteristics and habitats. Refer to Supplement A.
5. Be sure to discuss any live animals or tracks observed.
6. After the trail walk, gather the students at a table and inform them that they are going to classify or group the animals they observed; in other words, animals that are similar to each other will be grouped together. Using pictures of the animals and word cards with the characteristics, students may classify animals in at least four different ways as described in the table below:

1. Body Covering	fur	feathers	skin	scales
2. Number of Legs	four	two	none	
3. Tails	furry	not furry	none	
4. Movement (advanced, animal may fit into more than one category)	swim	crawl, walk or run	fly	climb

Activity B: Animal Tracks Booklets

1. Instructor should set out booklets, crayons, track stamps and ink pads. Inform students that they will learn about animal tracks, the footprints our forest friends leave behind.
2. Allow the students to identify the animals in the animal picture booklet.
3. The instructor should identify the tracks on the stamps. Assist students in matching the animal tracks to the correct animal. Using the ink pads, allow the students to stamp the tracks on each page. Students may also color the animal pictures.
4. Use track story cards to promote thinking and problem solving skills.

Summary:

1. Review characteristics of animals seen.
2. Compare and contrast the animals. For example, the instructor might ask, "Which was the biggest animal we saw?" "Which was the softest?" "Which animals were brown?" "Which ones had webbed feet?" "Which ones had scales?" "Which ones had tails? Tails with no hair?" etc.
3. Ask students to describe the forest habitat.
4. Ask students to look for similarities and differences in the tracks.

Follow-up:

1. Color or finish coloring the pictures in the animal picture booklets.
2. Write a journal entry about the forest friends animals.
3. Make a mural of the forest habitat and the animals found there.
4. Sort and classify other animals by coverings, actions, or body parts.

Extension Activities:

1. Make puppets of the animals seen on the trail.
2. Sing appropriate songs and finger plays such as "Five Little Squirrels."
3. Look through magazines (Ranger Rick, National Wildlife, National Geographic) and cut out pictures to make a forest collage.
4. Eat foods for a snack that a forest friend would eat (e.g., nuts, berries, fruit).
5. Using a tunnel or box, ask students to pretend to burrow like a groundhog or another forest friend that lives in a burrow or den.
6. Students can gather nuts or seeds (from outdoors or in class) that forest friends would eat and then sort and count them.
7. Play "Follow the Leader" and have students imitate the ways various forest animals move.
8. Construct a classroom window feeder for observation of birds and squirrels.

10. Borrow molds from the Outdoor Education Center and make plaster tracks.
11. Decorate a paper grocery bag as a tree. Allow students to find items to make a nest for a squirrel. Make a paper bag squirrel puppet. Create a puppet show.
12. Borrow forest backdrop and puppets from the Outdoor Education Center to present a play about animals and their habitats.
13. Play Squirrels and Trees. Divide class into thirds. One third of the class will be squirrels. The other students join hands in pairs (London Bridge style) to make trees. The squirrels are instructed to find a tree. Each squirrel has to go into a tree (stand between the arms of the two students posing as a tree). The instructor will then say, Switch! All squirrels must find new trees. Repeat several times. Then replace one-half of each tree with a squirrel, allowing new students to become squirrels. Repeat several times. Replace the old half of each tree (all students who have not yet been squirrels) with a squirrel. Play again.

Teacher Resources:

Books:

- < *Animal Tracks, Dorros, Arthur, Scholastic, Inc.
- < *Whose Tracks are These?, Nail, Jim, Roberts Rinehart Publishers.
- < Squirrels, Wildsmith, Brian, Scholastic, Inc.
- < Animals and Where They Live, Feltwell, John, Dorling Kindersley.
- < Tracks in the Sand, Leedy, Loreen, Delacorte Press.
- < A House is a House for Me, Hoberman, Mary Ann, Viking Press.
- < Mole's Hill: A Woodland Tale, Ehlert, Lois, Harcourt, Brace & Co.
- < In the Tall, Tall Grass, Fleming, Denise, Henry Holt & Co.
- < Once There Was a Wood, Fleming, Denise, Henry Holt & Co.
- < Over in the Meadow, Jack Keats, Ezra, Scholastic, Inc.
- < Chipmunks, Kohn, Bernice, Prentice Hall.
- < I Am a Mouse and I Am a Bear, Risom, Ole.
- < Millie, Jennings, Linda, Sandvik Publishing Ltd.

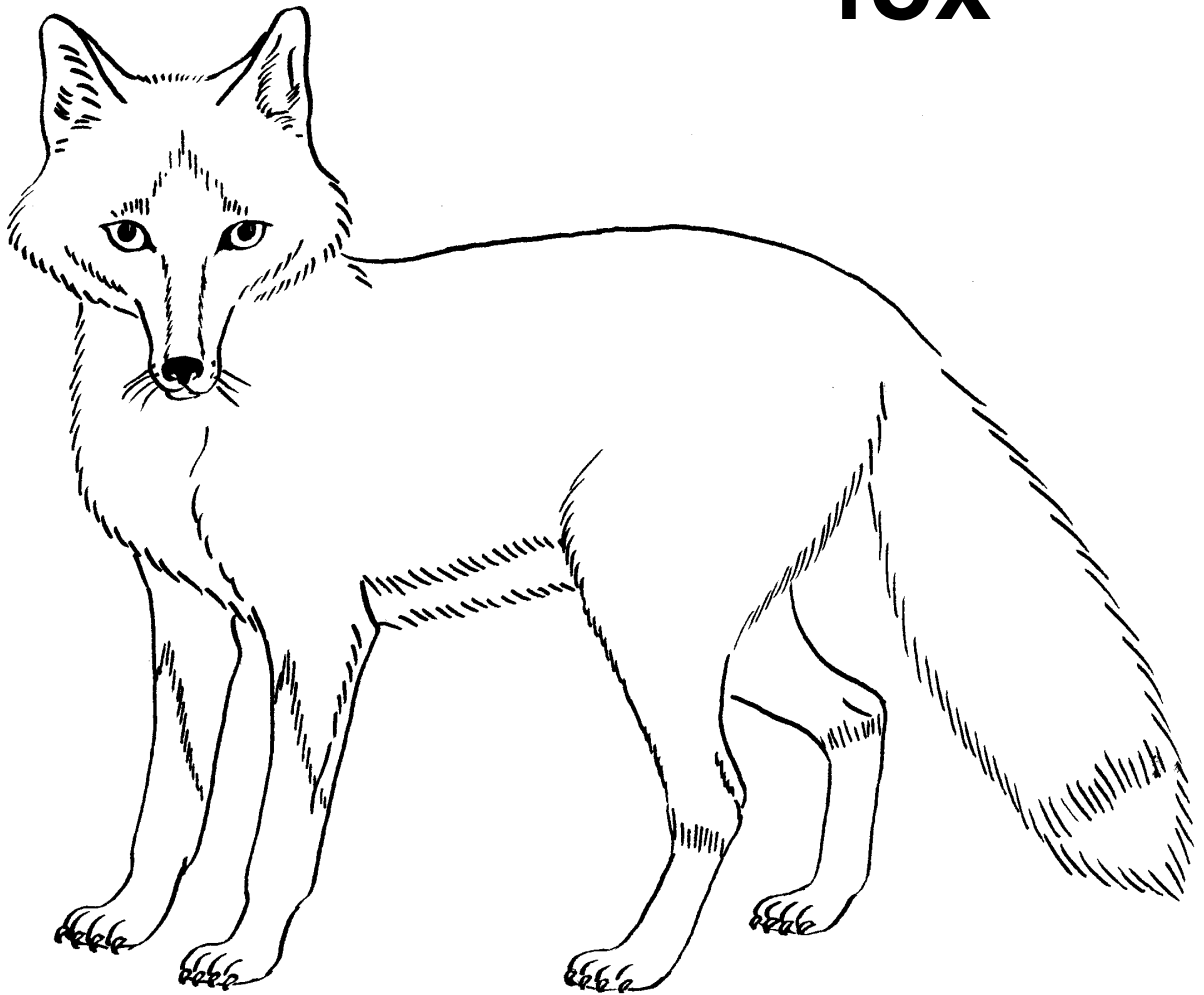
Supplementary Materials:

- < *Animal Collection Guidebook
- < *Ranger Rick's Nature Scope: Amazing Animals Parts I and II
- < Beavers, based on IMAX/OMNIMAX Motion Picture; A Stephen Low Film; Scholastic, Inc.

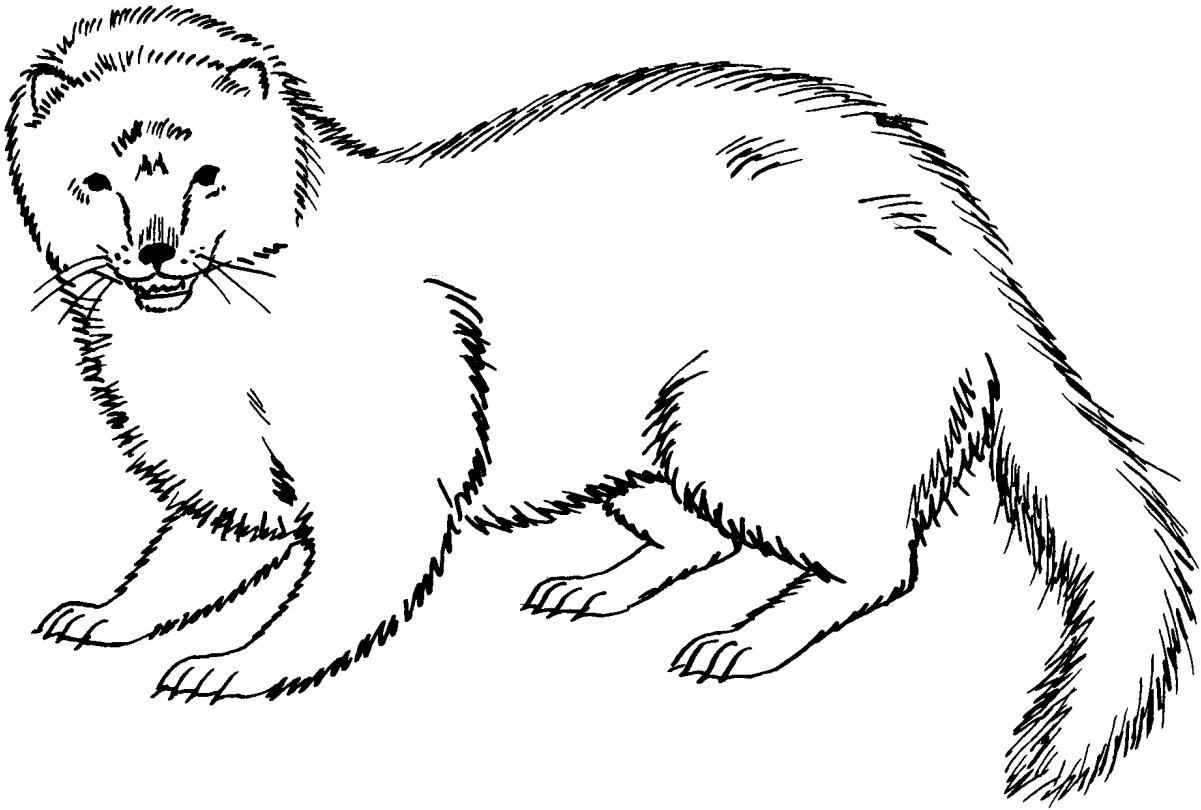
Animal Interview

1. What is my name?
2. What color am I? Do I have any color patterns?
3. Describe how I feel to the touch.
4. Do I have fur, feathers, scales or skin?
5. How many feet do I have? Do my feet have claws? Are my feet webbed?
6. Where is my tail? Is it long or short? What does it look like?
7. Do I live on land, water or both? How can you tell?
8. How do I move? Do I fly, walk, crawl or swim?
9. How am I the same as or different from the last animal?

fox



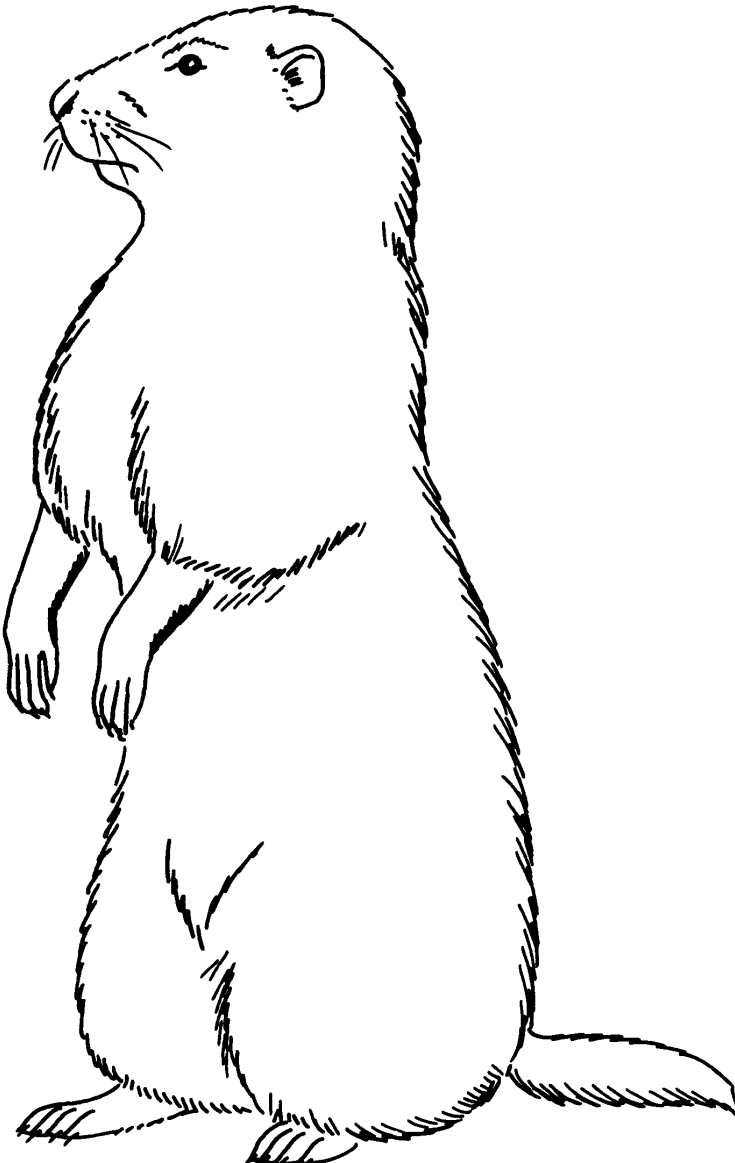
mink

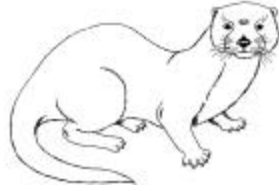


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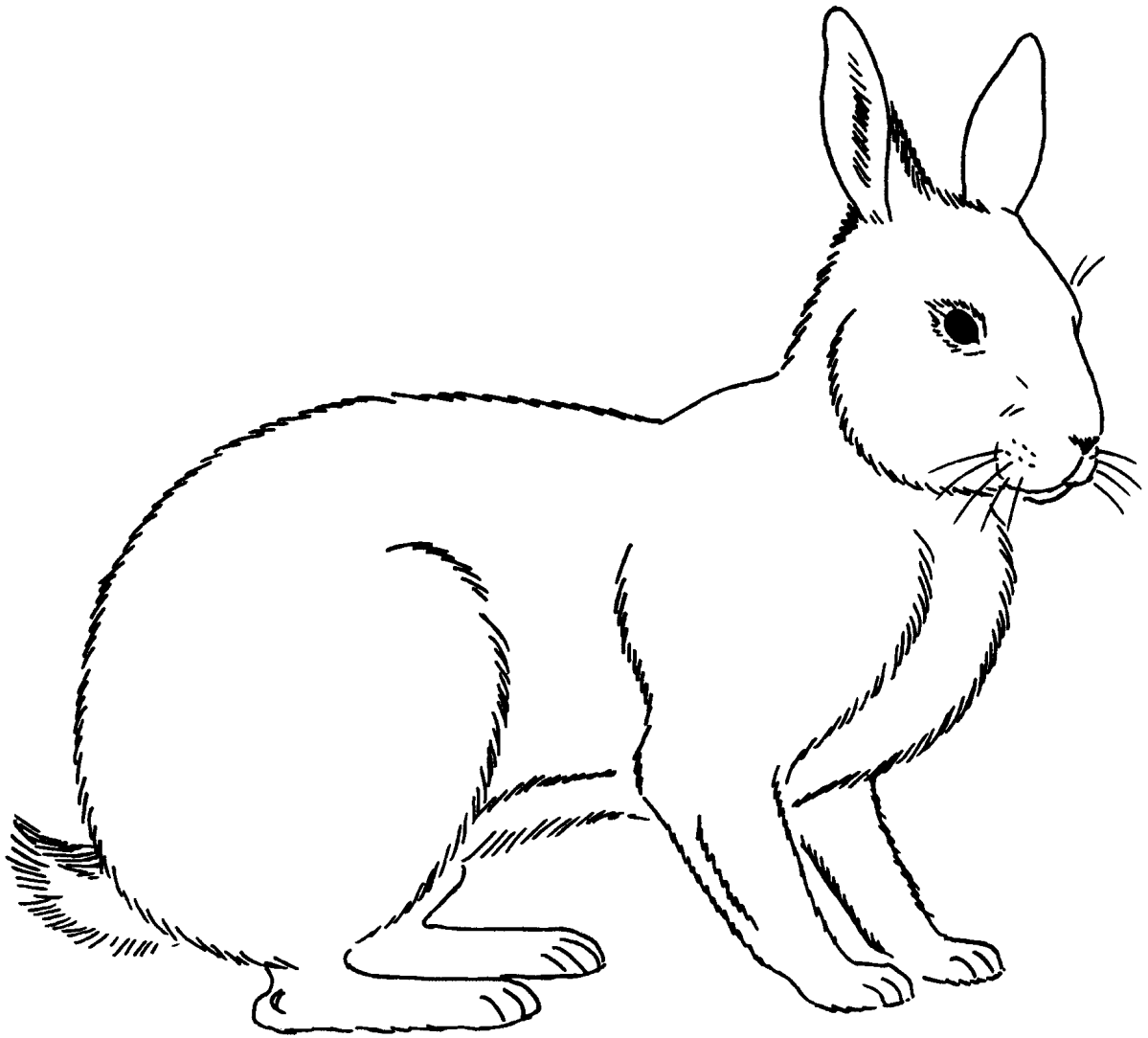


groundho

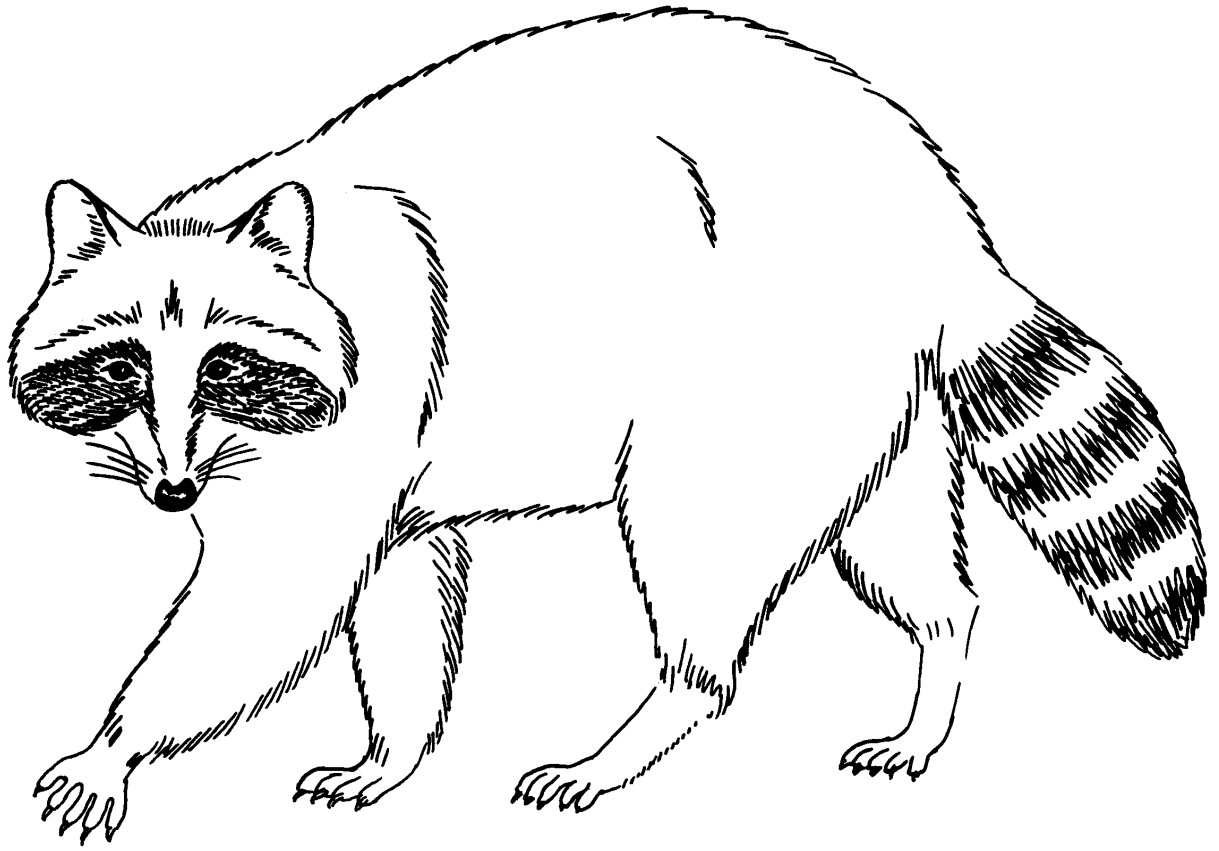




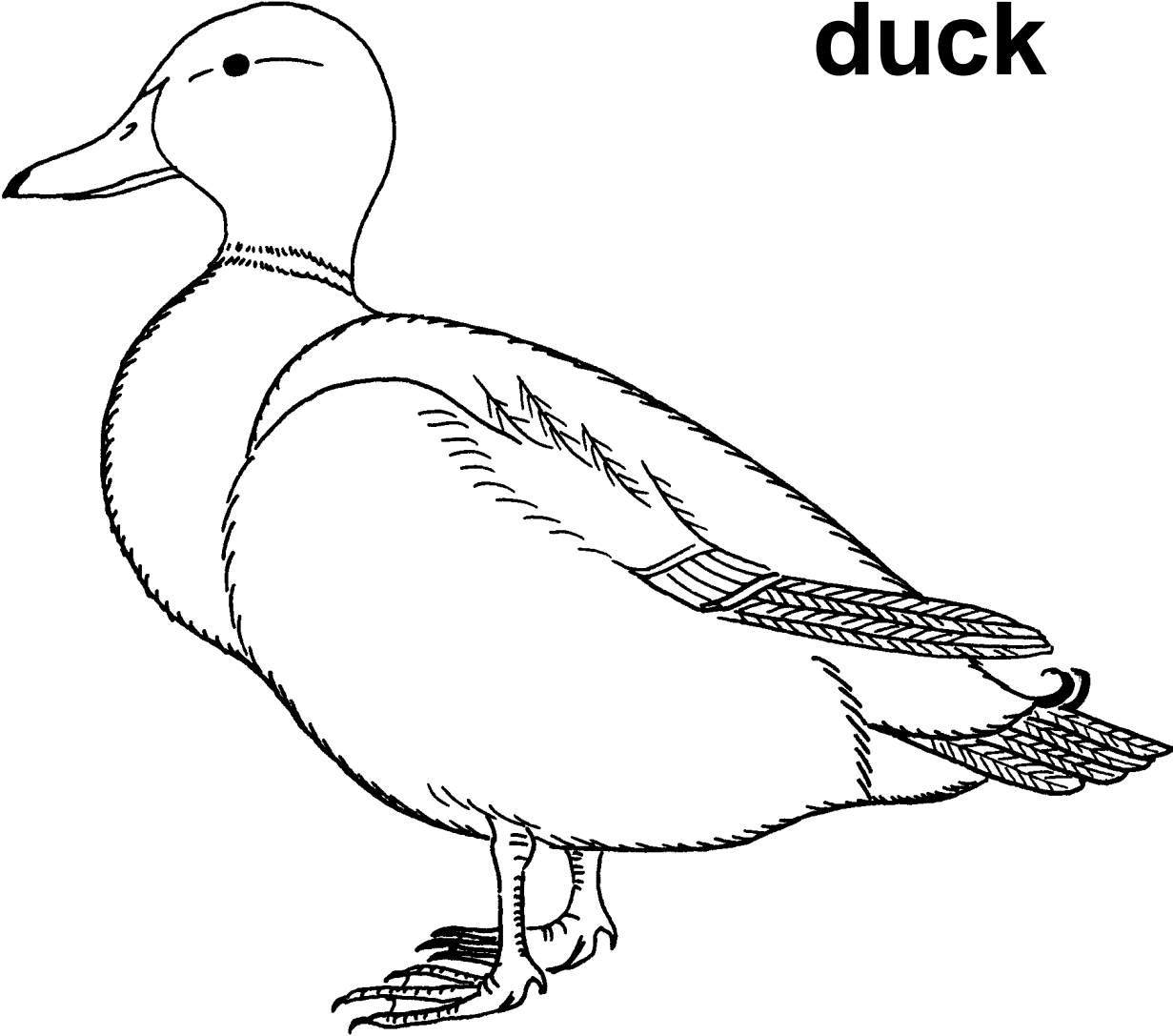
river otter

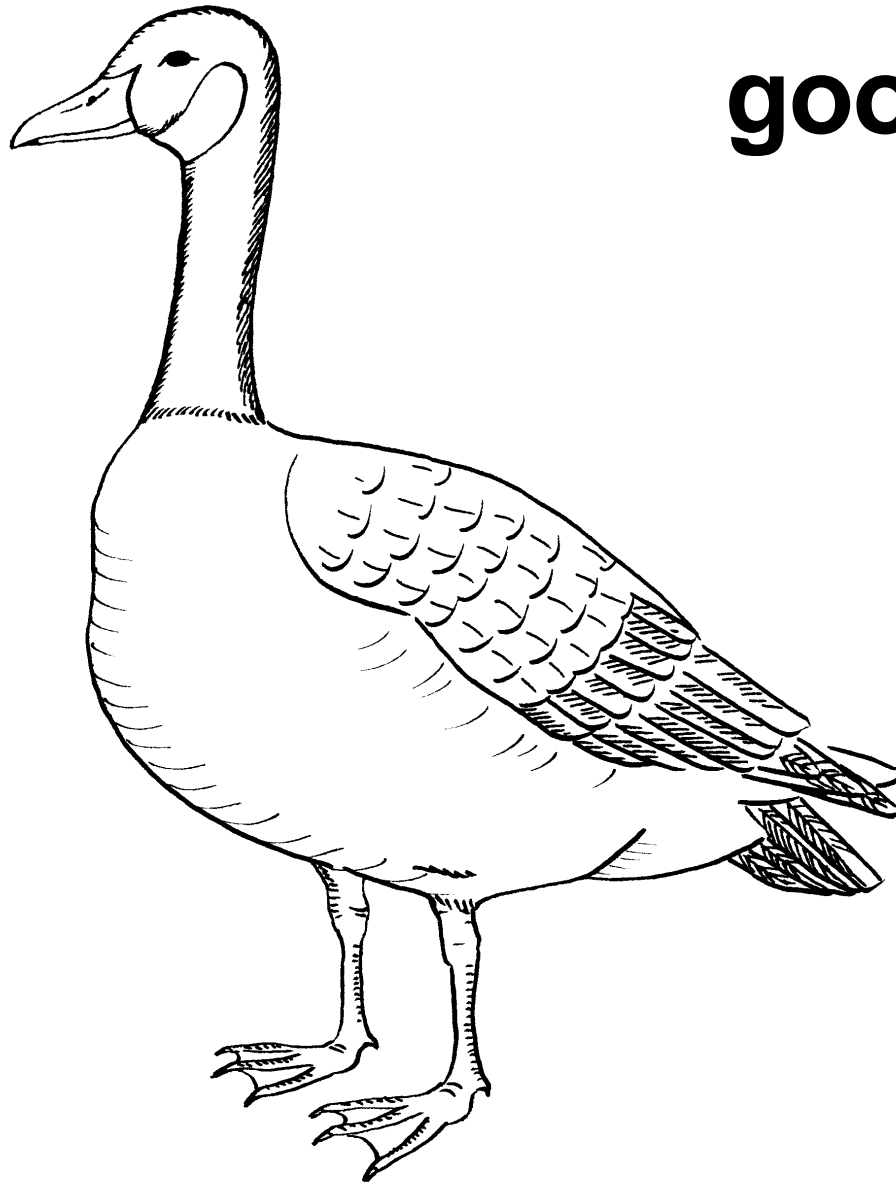


raccoon



duck



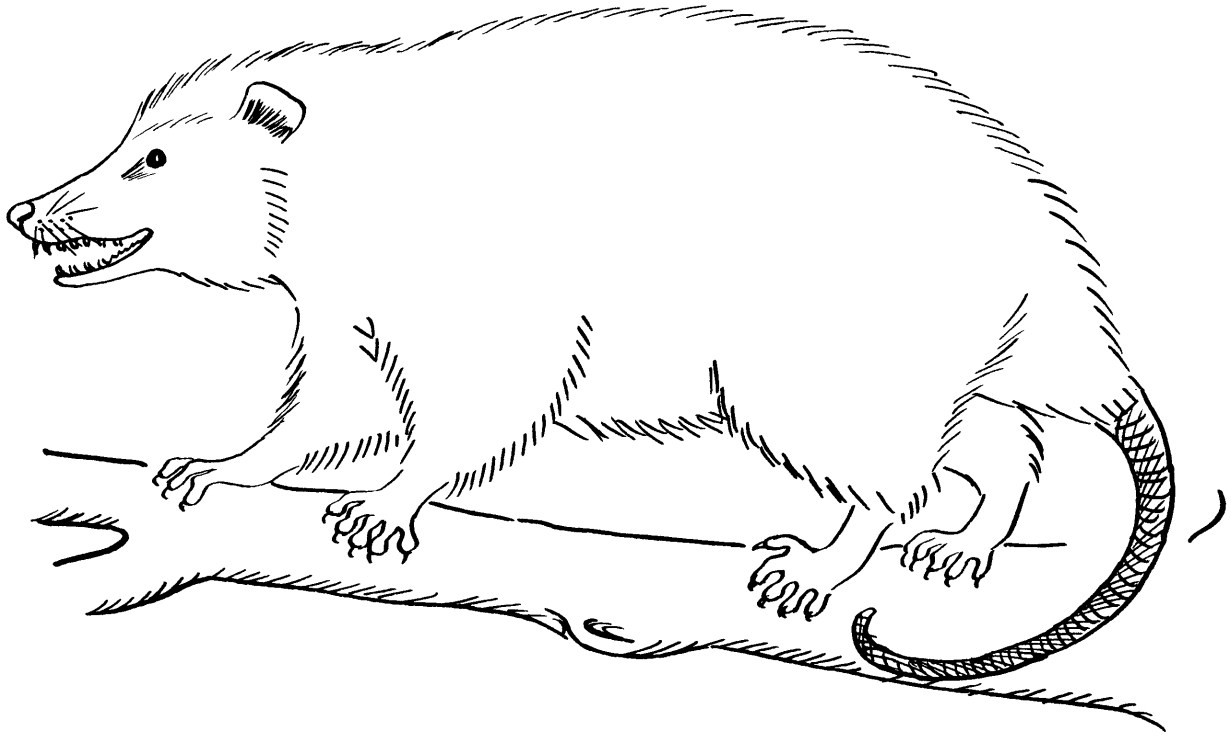


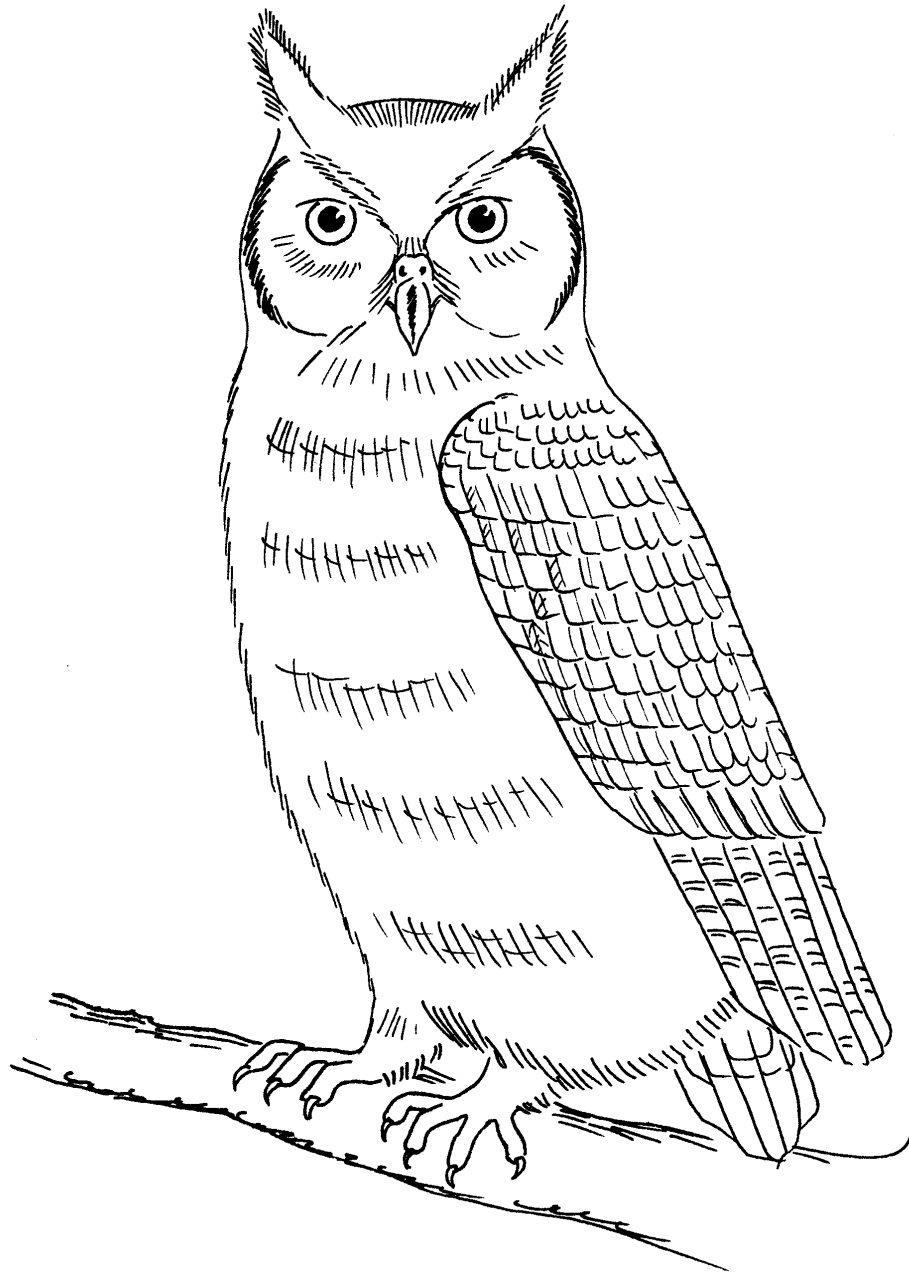
goose

squirrel

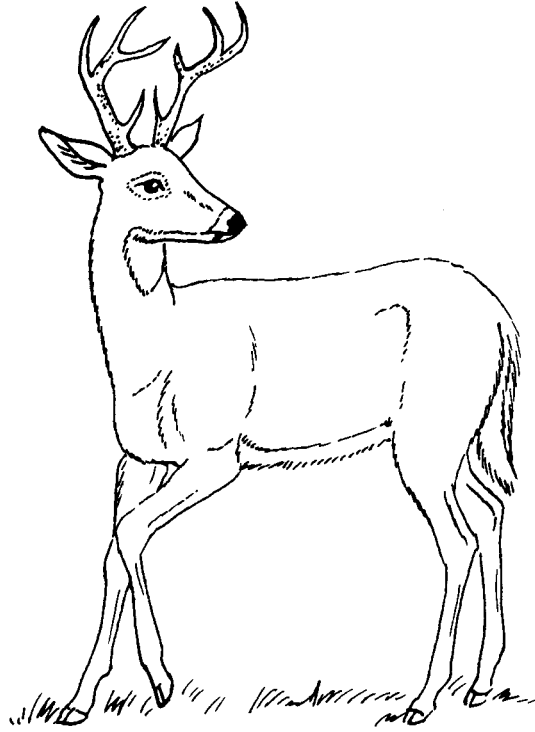


opossum





deer



skunk

