

Conservation Matters

A monthly column focused on conservation education, as the result of collaboration among several area conservation commissions and organizations. If your town's commission or conservation organization would like to contribute articles, please contact Jessica Tabolt Halm jess.tabolt@hotmail.com

Title: Exploring Campton Bog in Winter

Written by: Lea Stewart, friend of Campton Conservation Commission

Many people think of winter as a period of relative inactivity for animals. Many of us choose to slow down and stay "under cover" during the harsh winter months, and some other animals do hibernate until the temperatures warm in the spring. But for many mammals in particular, the winter season is as busy as ever. A careful observer can get an idea of just what these critters are up to by following the tracks they leave behind in the snow.

Campton Bog, located in the southwest corner of the Town of Campton, near the junctions of Beech Hill Road and Bog Road, provides excellent opportunity for winter tracking. Besides the relative ease of access from near the dam on Beech Hill Road and a wide expanse of open snowfields once the pond is frozen solid, the Campton Bog area has been identified by NH Fish and Game as a top-quality wildlife habitat area in it's recently published Wildlife Action Plan (for more information, visit http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/wildlife_plan.htm)

Have you ever noticed an animal's tracks in the snow and wondered what it might be? Have you ever followed tracks, curious about where they might go and what they were doing? And have you ever explored the Campton Bog? You will get an opportunity to sample all of these things in a guided walk at **2 pm on Sunday, February 1, 2015!**

Join the Campton Conservation Commission and members of the Newfound Tracking Team in the third annual winter walk around Campton Bog. You never know what you will see – so far, in the winter, we have seen deer and coyote tracks, several sets of mink tracks, snowshoe hare, red fox, and even an abundance of shrew tracks, all on the surface of the frozen bog! Will we see bobcat tracks here this year? How about grey fox? Or porcupine or beaver?

Winter tracking is a perfect opportunity to see what animals are out there, though we don't always agree as to what it might be. Always, however, your curiosity will be stimulated – to find that perfect track or scat or sign that will be the defining clue.

Come join us for a fun, family friendly walk! Participants can park along Beech Hill Road, near the dam. Be sure to dress for the weather, and bring microspikes / yaktracks / snowshoes/ xc skis, cameras and/or binoculars! Please RSVP by January 29th by calling 726-4741 or email: conservationcommission@camptonnh.org.



Photo caption: Participants of all ages are actively engaged in wildlife tracking at the Annual Frozen Bog Walk.

