

How to make plaster cast prints








MATERIALS NEEDED:



Container of plaster of Paris (plastic with screw lid is best)
Plastic bottle of water
A couple of spoons
Small plastic bowl/container
Strips of thin cardboard approximately 10cm wide
Paper clips
Scotch tape
Scissors



A good field guide: *Animal Tracks and Signs* by Bang and Mahlstrom, or the *FSC Guide to Tracks and Signs*

-  Make a ring from a strip of fairly stiff cardboard that is big enough to have some border around the track. Tape the ends together (to form the ring).
-  Place the cardboard ring around the track and gently settle it to the dirt to seal it all the way around.
-  In the bowl, mix the plaster of Paris and water, with a spoon, to the consistency of a milkshake. Too thick and it won't fill the track; too thin and it will take a long time to harden. Make sure you have enough to fill the ring about half way to the top.
-  Pour the plaster evenly over the track and to a depth just of about 5cm.
-  Depending on how wet the ground is, it may take up to an hour or more to harden. On a warm day though, the track will be ready to move after about 20 minutes.
-  Once the plaster has hardened sufficiently, lift it slowly and carefully from the dirt by. Place in a cloth bag or container to take it home. Allow a couple of hours before you clean the track off. Remove the cardboard ring.
-  You can leave the cast natural, or you can paint them. This is completely up to you.

Good luck on your track hunting and collecting; how many different animals can you collect??

