



WHO LIVES IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Make your own tracking tunnel to find out who lives in your backyard! Scientists use tracking tunnels to find out which kinds of creatures are in reserves or national parks. Bugs or other animals are enticed with food to walk across an ink pad. Once they have stepped in the ink you can tell who has been visiting from the footprints they leave behind.

You will need:

- Two 2L plastic milk bottles
- Scissors
- Black plastic (like bin liners)
- Red food colouring
- A sponge
- A small plastic tray
- Peanut butter
- Sheets of white paper
- A piece of wire
- An adult to help you

How to make your tracking tunnel:

- Start by cutting off both ends of the milk bottles and slide one bottle halfway inside the other to form a long tunnel.
- Darken the tunnel by wrapping it in black plastic.
- Line the base of the tunnel with white paper.
- Soak the sponge in red food colouring and put it on the plastic tray.
- Put a spoonful of peanut butter in the middle of the sponge.
- Place the tray in the middle of the tunnel.
- Find a flat place in your backyard to put the tunnel. Hold it in place by making your wire into a U shape and placing it over your tunnel and into the ground.

Leave your tunnel in place for 4-5 days, checking it each morning and replacing the white paper. Keep the white paper so that at the end of the 4-5 days you have a good idea of who lives in your backyard!

If you need further help, or help identifying who has made the footprints in your tunnel, more information can be found at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/conservation-activities/become-a-pest-detective/> or <http://kiwifoundation.org.nz/project-pest-monitoring-protocol>.