

8. WATER INSECTS

Some of the insects you are likely to see along the pond are Water Boatmen and Backswimmers, both of which look like small beetles swimming, waterstriders, which look like spiders walking on the surface of the water, and Dragonflies.

9. SQUIRRELS



When you hear a rustling in the leaves along the trail, it is usually a squirrel. Gray Squirrels typically live to 7 or 8 years of age.

Their bodies measure 15-21 inches in total length, of which 6-10 inches is tail length, and they range in weight from 11-25 ounces.

Eighteen plant species account for 87% of their diet. In New Jersey, squirrels mostly eat the nuts, flowers and buds of Oak trees. Elsewhere, they also eat the same parts of Walnut, Hickory, and Pecan trees. Other food items include the fruits, seeds, buds, or flowers of various other trees, Pine Tree seeds and cones, fungi, cultivated crops, bones, bird eggs, nestlings, and frogs.

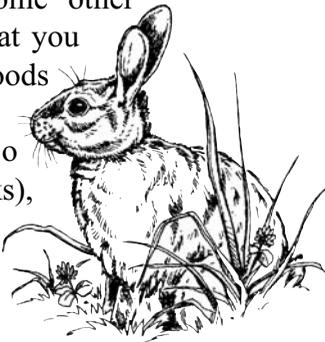
Female Eastern Gray Squirrels can have two litters per year. Average litter sizes range from 2 - 3 babies. Eastern Gray Squirrels are highly adapted for climbing trees and fatal falls are rare. They have the ability to reverse their hind feet 180 degrees to permit headfirst descent. Gray Squirrels can leap considerable distances using powerful hind

limbs. Tails are used for balance when leaping between trees.

Although they are rarer and harder to see, Northern Flying Squirrels can be found in New Jersey. They are generally dark brown in color with a white belly. Their bodies measure 10-14 inches total length, 5-7 inches tail length, and they range in weight from 1.5-2.5 ounces. They feed on nuts and seeds, but will also eat insects. Northern Flying Squirrels typically make nests out of shredded bark in abandoned Woodpecker or other similar holes.

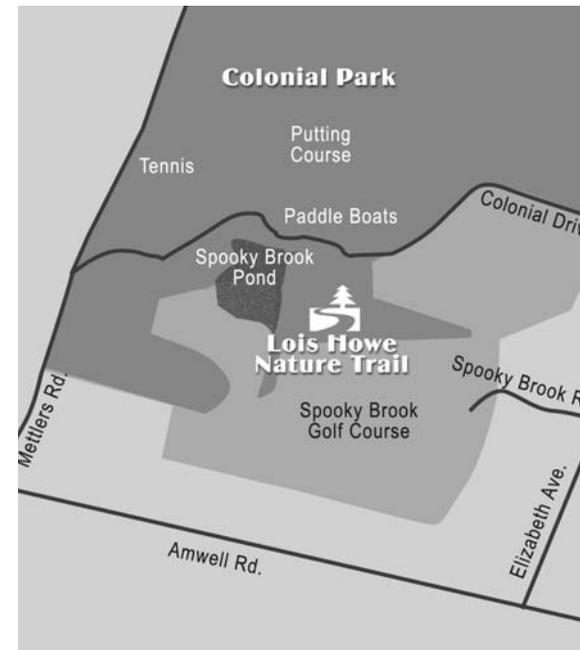
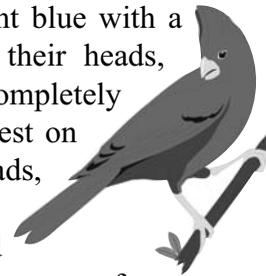
10. OTHER MAMMALS

Besides squirrels, some other types of mammals that you might see in the woods are deer, rabbits, ground hogs (also known as woodchucks), opossums, raccoons, mice, and possibly Black Bears.



11. WOODLAND BIRDS

Some of the birds you may see along the trail are Robins, which have a brown back and a bright red breast, Blue Jays, which are mostly bright blue with a crest on the back of their heads, Cardinals, which are completely red and also have a crest on the back of their heads, Sparrows, and Crows. You may also see Wild Turkeys, which are about two feet tall and range in color from black to brown.



Answer to tree rings: about 110 years



Somerset County
Park Commission

COLONIAL PARK

Mettlers Road
Franklin Township, NJ 08873
Park Rangers: 732 873-2695
www.somersetcountyparks.org

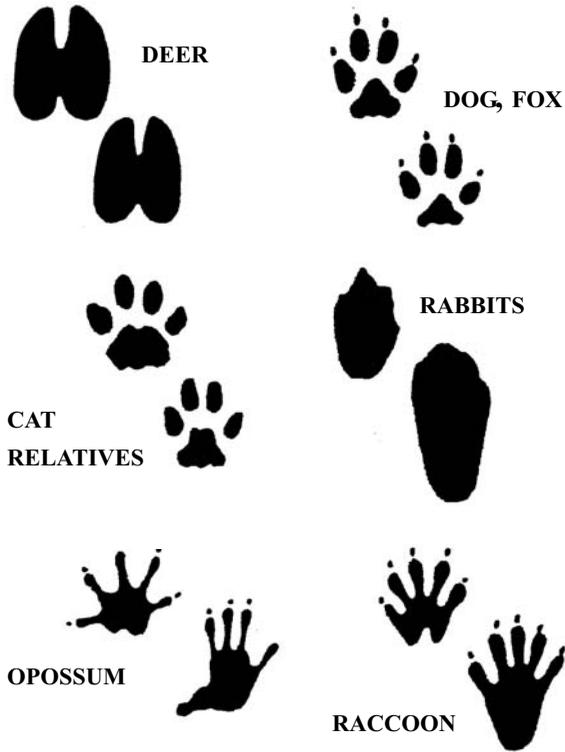
LOIS HOWE NATURE TRAIL



COLONIAL PARK
Franklin Township, New Jersey

1. ANIMAL TRACKS

The wooden, sand-filled frame on the ground before you is here to allow you to view animal footprints more clearly.



2. POISON IVY & TICKS

The large vine which is growing near this sign is Poison Ivy. Poison Ivy grows just about everywhere, and is extremely variable in its forms, growing as a vine, a ground cover, or upright. Old vines, such as this one, become very hairy looking. The old adage "leaves of three, leave it be" refers to the three glossy or dull green leaflets, 2-4 inches long. The leaves are somewhat variable in shape. In the spring and fall, the leaves take on bright colors, red in the spring, and yellow (later turning red) in the



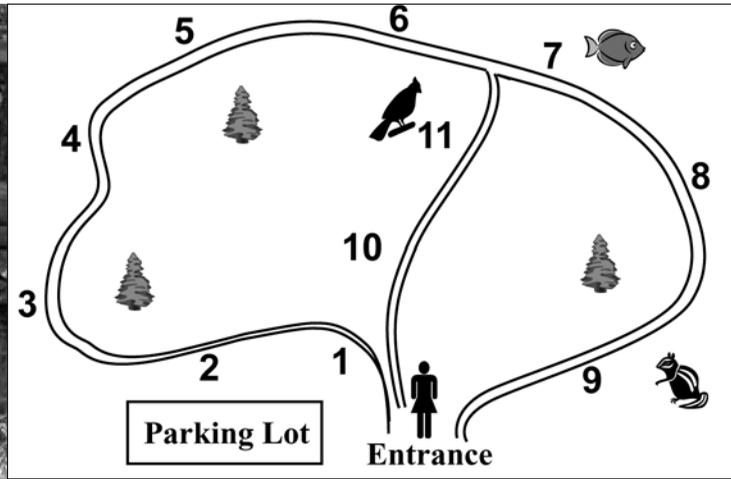
fall. An oil that the plant produces is responsible for varying degrees of irritation, from skin inflammation to blistering. If you have been in contact with Poison Ivy, avoid spreading the oil on your body. Wash the exposed area with soap and warm water.

Another health hazard, which may be encountered in the woods or your backyard, is the tick. Most ticks are basically harmless and want nothing more than to suck some of your blood and leave. Some ticks, however, carry diseases that can be transmitted when they bite.



If the tick is removed within 24 hours of the bite, there is almost no chance of contracting a tick-borne disease. Ticks should be removed using tweezers, with great care taken to remove the small head, in order to avoid infection. If you cannot remove the tick's head yourself, you should see your doctor.

After removal, keep the tick in case you develop any sort of disease. Lyme Disease usually causes a red ring rash near the bite



within weeks of infection. If you suspect you have Lyme Disease, see your doctor.

3. TREE RINGS

Since trees make one ring each year they are alive, tree rings can be used to show the age of trees. Differences in the size of tree rings can be due to many things, especially weather and disease. This can be used to find out about trends in environmental conditions, a science called dendrochronology. See how old you think this tree was and see if your answer agrees with the answer on the back of the pamphlet.

4. AMPHIBIANS

This spot along the creek is a good place to look for amphibians. You are most likely to see frogs sitting on the side near the water, but you might see a newt or salamander scuttling through the leaves.

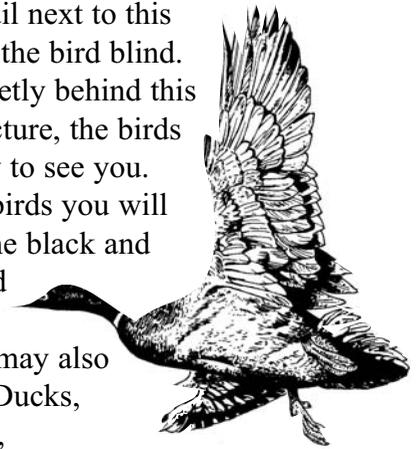


5. REPTILES

In the late morning and early afternoon, turtles often sunbathe on the logs out in the water. They are cold blooded, like all reptiles, and use the sun's energy to warm them. You could also see snakes along the trail, including the garter snake.

6. WATER FOWL

The small trail next to this sign leads to the bird blind. If you sit quietly behind this wooden structure, the birds are not likely to see you. Most of the birds you will see will be the black and white colored Canada Geese. You may also see Mallard Ducks, Wood Ducks, and Herons.



Mallard

7. FISH

This pond is stocked with fish every year. Although you are not likely to see any of the fish from the surface of the water, there are Largemouth Bass, Blue Gill Sunfish, Pumpkinseed Sunfish, and Brown Bullhead living here.

