

welcome to Kites Hill

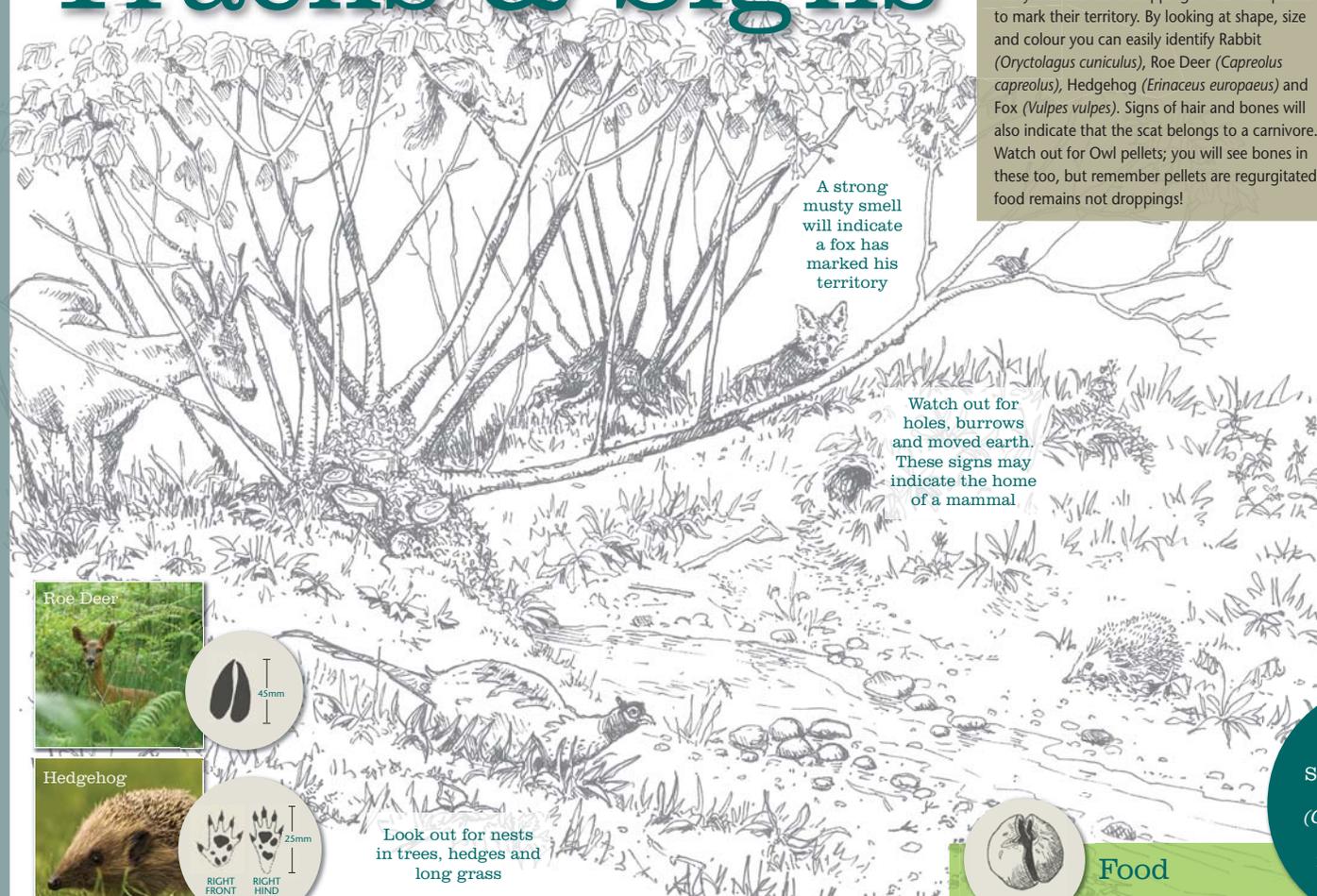
Many animals that live at Kites Hill are hard to see, particularly smaller mammals, but they leave tell-tale signs. Often, animal footprints can be seen in mud, and as there are many natural springs on the reserve, there are usually some muddy places where you can look for prints. There is a natural spring close to where you are standing. Can you see it? Take a closer look at the tracks and signs displayed here and see if you can work out who is sharing the reserve with you today.



Key

- WLT reserve boundary
- Nature trail
- Public footpath
- Tracks (no public access)
- Woodland
- New woodland
- Hedgerow
- Stream
- S Spring
- Stiles
- Steps
- National Trust (NT)

Tracks & Signs



Poo and Pellets

Droppings (or scats) provide a wealth of information right down to what the animal eats. They are often one of the easiest signs to find as many animals leave droppings in obvious places to mark their territory. By looking at shape, size and colour you can easily identify Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). Signs of hair and bones will also indicate that the scat belongs to a carnivore. Watch out for Owl pellets; you will see bones in these too, but remember pellets are regurgitated food remains not droppings!

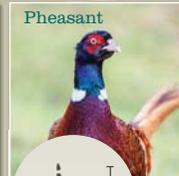
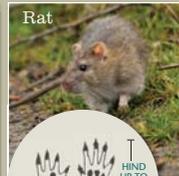
A strong musty smell will indicate a fox has marked his territory

Watch out for holes, burrows and moved earth. These signs may indicate the home of a mammal

Whose poo?

-  Rabbit droppings
LENGTH: 10mm
-  Deer droppings
LENGTH: 15mm
-  Hedgehog dropping
LENGTH: 15-50mm
-  Fox dropping
LENGTH: 90mm
-  Tawny Owl pellet
LENGTH: 50mm

To do:
See if you can spot tiny shrimps (*Gammarus pulex*) in Kites Hill's natural springs



Look out for nests in trees, hedges and long grass

Food

Animals feed in very different ways and often leave remains of their meal behind. Deciphering these remains can tell you who ate what. Hazelnuts attacked by birds will have peck marks, but a mouse will nibble a hole in the side. Squirrels on the other hand will prise the nut open from the top. Several feathers on the ground may indicate a predator attack: chewed ends to these feathers indicate a Fox kill and not a Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), which plucks feathers cleanly.

Credits: Roe Deer, Charlotte Beckham; Hedgehog, Mike Taylor/www.seeing.co.uk; Fox, Sylvia Fresson/www.seeing.org.uk; Dog, Cow & Rat, John Bridges/www.northeastwildlife.co.uk; Pheasant, Graham Carey/www.wildlife-galleries.co.uk; Design and illustration, www.wearredrab.net.