

Part 2

Amelia opened up her computer to do some research on the mysterious tracks outside her house and heard a "ping!" It was a message from her cousin, Grace, who lived in New Jersey! Grace was ten and lived on a farm. She was always talking about her favorite goat, Gandalf.

Grace: Hi Amelia! Guess what? It's snowing here! It's crazy.

Amelia: Hi Gracie! Oh yeah? Same here. But it always snows here.

Grace: It was practically SUMMER a few days ago, though! Gandalf was soo happy.

Amelia thought back to the picture Grace had sent her a few days ago, of her and Gandalf running in the grass. Grace was barefoot and her knees were muddy.

Sooo... I found these strange footprints this morning outside Gandalf's pen! Can you help me?

Amelia: Sure, send them! I've got my own footprint mystery to solve.

Grace: Oh cool! Thanks Ameli! xoxo

Amelia: I'll write back later! Give Gandalf a big hug.

Grace: K! Thnx again :)



Who made these footprints? Amelia wondered, zooming in on the photos that Grace had taken. She examined them closely and counted five toes on each foot. The toes were a bit spread out, like a starfish. She saw a swirly line between the footprints.



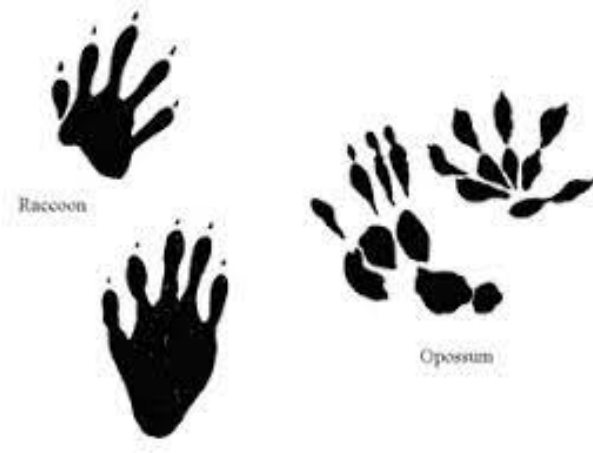
Stumped, Amelia opened her mammal field guide and flipped to a random page.



She gazed at the picture of fox tracks. *Nope, definitely not, she thought. Hmm. Could they be mouse tracks instead? Mice have long, skinny tails.*



She looked at the picture of mice tracks, but the prints *Grace* had found had seemed long, like hands. What about raccoon or opossum tracks? Amelia wasn't familiar with these creatures, whose range didn't include the Rocky Mountains, but were common everywhere else, including New Jersey. Could the swirly line have been made by an opossum or raccoon tail?





What do YOU think? Help Amelia solve the mystery for Grace!

Email your answer to marissamizeski@gmail.com