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Review of Scats and Tracks of the Great Plains: A Field Guide to the Signs of Seventy Wildlife Species. By James C. Halfpenny

Raymond S. Matlack
West Texas A & M University

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Matlack, Raymond S., "Review of *Scats and Tracks of the Great Plains: A Field Guide to the Signs of Seventy Wildlife Species*. By James C. Halfpenny" (2008). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 938.
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Scats and Tracks of the Great Plains: A Field Guide to the Signs of Seventy Wildlife Species. By James C. Halfpenny. Illustrations by Todd Telander. Guildford, CT: Globe Pequot Press, 2006. xxxviii + 147 pp. Glossary, illustrations, maps, selected readings, index. \$9.95 paper.

Scats and Tracks of the Great Plains provides accounts of the scats, tracks, and other signs of 70 species, including 5 species of amphibians, 5 species of reptiles, 23 bird species, and 37 species of mammals. In some instances, accounts focus on a group of similar species. For example, all snakes are covered in one account. The author limited the book's geographic scope and number of species covered to keep the material manageable and for easy use in the field.

Given its focus on the Great Plains, I was surprised by the inclusion and omission of a few species. The eastern chipmunk, southern flying squirrel, and eastern gray squirrel are included, while the eastern fox squirrel (more widespread in the Great Plains than the eastern gray squirrel) and mule deer are not. In a few instances, standard nomenclature is not followed. The book contains an account for the kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*) and mentions within it that the swift fox (*Vulpes velox*) is found only in the northeast portion of the Great Plains. The swift fox, not the kit fox, occurs in the Great Plains. Further, the pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) is presented as the pronghorn antelope.

While these errors detract from the overall quality of the guide, a number of clever and useful items are included. For example, the edge of the page for each species account contains bars denoting the average width and length of the animal's tracks. A similar bar denotes the average width of the animal's scat. This practical feature will allow users to determine quickly if the track they are observing is in the size range for a particular species. The book also includes information on preparing field notes and preserving tracks, the anatomy and nomenclature of footprints, and measuring tracks. Users will find the visual key, glossary, and ruler valuable for identification.

Overall, this is a handy guide to the scats, tracks, and signs of various vertebrates of the Great Plains. Novices will appreciate its restricted scope, quality illustrations, and easy-to-read style, making this a good first guide to animal signs. **Raymond S. Matlack**, *Department of Life, Earth and Environmental Sciences, West Texas A&M University*.