

Dear Family,

In my class today we talked about squirrels and how they hide food in the fall so they can eat it in the winter. We made footprints and animal tracks. We were very busy!

Did You Know?

- Fall is a time when many animals prepare for winter. Because it is hard to find food in some places in the winter, certain animals migrate, or move, to other places where food is more plentiful. A few examples of animals that migrate are birds, bats, fish and butterflies. Some animals, such as snakes, groundhogs and chipmunks, don't migrate. Instead, they hibernate, or go into a deep sleep, in the winter. However, other animals, like squirrels, prepare for the cold winter months by storing food in the fall.
- Squirrels can be found in our everyday environment. Squirrels gather nuts and seeds during the fall and bury them in the ground or hide them in their nests. When winter comes, they find the nuts and seeds they have buried and eat them. Scientists have learned that some squirrels are very tricky about how they hide their food and even bury fake nuts. To protect their food from other animals, they dig holes but bury nothing in them. They just pretend in order to make other animals think something is buried there!

Ask Your Child:

- Tell me what you saw during your walk today.
- Describe how you made your footprints.
- Explain how you made animal tracks.
- Tell me what kinds of animals hibernate.
- Explain what you know about hibernating animals.

Activities To Do With Your Child:

- You can make footprints just like we did. You need bare feet, some water, and a dark surface. You can use a driveway or a sidewalk. Take off your shoes and socks. Get your feet wet and walk across the ground. Take turns with your child and then compare your footprints. What is the same and what is different? You both have ten toes and two feet, but your feet are larger and your toes are longer.
- We counted squirrels and looked for squirrel nests. If you have a yard or live near a park, you can count squirrels with your child. You will find more squirrels early in the day, when they are the most active. Count how many squirrels you see and how many nests you find. Did you see any squirrels gathering food? Share your discoveries with us.

Vocabulary To Use With Your Child: hibernate, tracks, footprint, store, bury, squirrel nest