

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO BEACH TRACKS

St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands

VINP Sea Turtle Program

SEA TURTLES

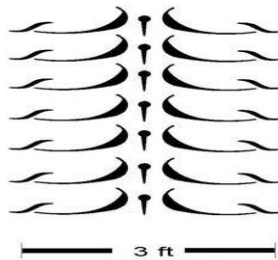
Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

- Alternating gait
- Asymmetrical track
- Comma shaped flipper marks
- Wavy tail drag in track center
- Width ~2-2.5 feet



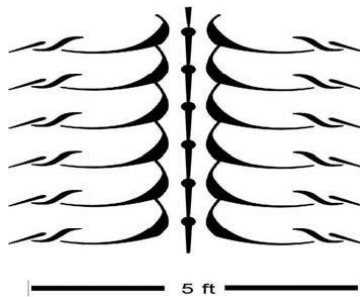
Green (*Chelonia mydas*)

- Symmetrical track with parallel flipper marks
- Ridged track center
- Well defined tail drag
- Front flipper marks at track margins
- Width ~3 feet



Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

- Symmetrical track with parallel flipper marks
- Ridged track center
- Well defined tail drag
- Extensive front flipper marks at margins
- Width ~ 5-7 feet



Hatchlings

- Gait is species specific
- Usually multiple tracks
- Tracks originating from the nest depression, typically leading to the water
- Shell drag is in center of track



SEA TURTLE PREDATORS

Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*)

- Similar to a common cat track
- 4-5 digits; small heel pad
- Claw marks
- About the size of a quarter



Common dog (*Canis familiaris*)

- Size varies
- One single lobe at the front of the heel pad
- Two lobes on the back edge of the heel pad
- Four distinct claw marks at the end of each toe pad



Feral Hog (*Sus scrofa*)

- Split hoof
- Rounded point of toe
- Round overall shape
- Sometimes associated with large areas of disturbance made by rooting for food



Yellow-crowned night heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*)

- Three long slender forward facing digits
- Smaller digit pointed backwards



Cats (*Felis catus*)

- 'M' shaped heel pad
- 4 digits
- No claw marks



OTHER BEACHGOERS

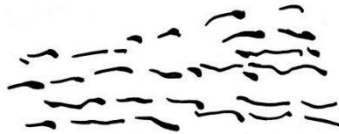
Soldier Crab (*Coenobita clypeatus*)

- Commonly mistaken for hatchling tracks
- Smooth off-centered shell drag
- Asymmetrical
- Large claw mark on one side of shell drag
- Smaller leg marks on other side
- Usually a wandering track



Ghost crabs (*Ocypode quadrata*)

- Scraping and piercing leg marks
- Asymmetrical
- Often lead to a small hole



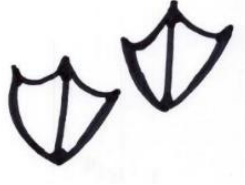
Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

- Three forward facing digits
- One backward facing digit
- Evidence of webbing



Laughing Gulls (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

- Three forward facing digits
- Connected with webbing

**White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus Virginia*)**

- Split hooves
- Pointed toes
- Sometimes dew claw marks behind hoof marks

**Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*)**

- Five-toed footprints
- Hind foot marks larger than front
- Presence of claws
- Tail drag dissecting the footprints

