

Notes on Completing the Introductory Trailing Journal

We journal to help ourselves clarify our own experience and to discover the questions we will take to the trail next time. It's not about correct answers. If you are pressed for time, the journal is just for making some quick notes.

Some of the items on the journal may require explanation. So, let's break it down:

Session #: The journal asks for session # rather than trail #, because if we go out to find a trail, we learn about trailing whether we find one or not.

Start time and End time: these either note the time for the whole session or for the trail you followed; just be consistent in the one that you choose. Or note them both.

ID: Note the identity of the species whose trail you followed, if you know it.

Moon: Pencil in the circle to show what the moon looks like today. If there are no marks in the white circle, it must be a full moon.

Notes about weather (**Current** and **Yesterday**): for "current", record your observations about conditions at the time you finish trailing. What is the temperature? What is the cloud cover? Where is the wind coming from most often, and what is its speed?

Last 3 Events: What and when were the last three environmental events, which might have affected tracks and sign? When did it rain and how heavily? When was the wind stronger than, say, 15 mph? Or was it really hot and dry until 3 days ago, when it became more humid or misty?

Substrates: For example, "leaf litter – especially wet oak leaves", "wet snow", "icy crust on powdery snow", "coarse, dry sand". There are many kinds of sand, snow, dirt. Be as specific as you can be.

Today's Exercise: What exercise did you do today? Please address the questions you find there.

Peripheral/Specific Sensing: Please note your experience of staying with your senses in the field today. Did you feel fluid and flexible as you shifted back and forth between peripheral sensing and paying specific attention to something in particular?

Questions: What questions are with you after your session today?

Site: Name the site. Over time, it's good to have many sites. Which is this one?

MAP: there is a list of prompts beside the map grid to help you remember features to show on your map. Add unlisted elements as you can. Regarding domestic animals, in particular, you may want to note them on the map whether you notice fresh sign of them today or not. For example, house dogs that are often outside can influence the movements of wild animals even on days when they stay inside all day. The "etc" after "Compost/Trash" refers to human-provided food like bird feeders.