

## March - Week 1

### *Spring Awakening: Emerging Signs of Small Mammals*

**The warming in early March promotes** the awakening of chipmunks and also uncovers evidence of other small mammals winter's scurrying.

If you observe a chipmunk who has recently awoken from its winter slumber, observe their movements. Are they quickly scampering on the snow? Food availability will depend on snow depth. Are they digging for food? What food is available for them?

Mice and voles remain active throughout winter. Signs in the snow from these animals include small round holes at the snow's surface and paired tracks often connecting one hole to another. These holes often lead to above-ground tunnels they use all winter. As the snow melts in March evidence of these tunnel systems can often be found. They look like lines in the snow and sometimes the roofs collapse into the tunnels as the snow melts.

Go outside this week. Stop, listen, and look for small mammals and evidence of their movements and activities. Document evidence you find by creating labeled drawings. Search out visual evidence of animals, their homes, trails, and more. Can you find any tunnels in the snow? If so, draw the patterns. Are they straight paths or winding roads? Do they start or end at food sources? What surprises you about the small mammal signs you find?



Most small mammals store food, like acorns, in small stashes .