

American badger

Taxidea taxus

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Mammalia
Order:	Carnivora
Family:	Mustelidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native



adult

ILLINOIS RANGE

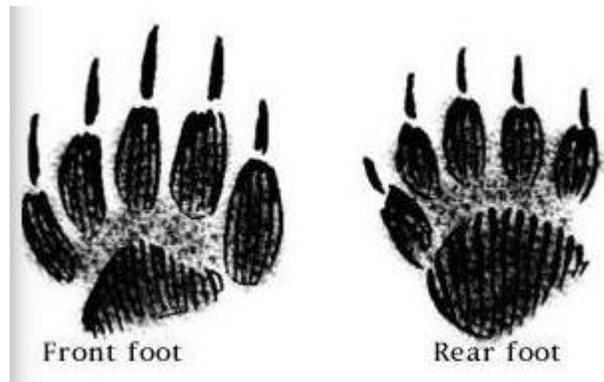


FEATURES

The American badger has a head-body length of 18 to 22 inches and a tail of four to six inches long. The wide body has short legs. The body hairs are gold at the base, black in the middle and white at the tips giving a gray appearance to the animal. Its tail is the same color as its back. There are white markings on its face from the eyes to the ears. A white stripe can be seen from its nose to the middle of its back. The belly is white or tan. Long claws are present on the front feet.

BEHAVIORS

The American badger may be found in the northern two-thirds of Illinois. It lives in open areas like pastures, roadsides, along railroad tracks, brushy areas and alfalfa fields. The badger feeds on cottontails, woodchucks, ground squirrels, mice, plains pocket gophers and voles. It is usually a nocturnal animal. The badger can dig quickly and powerfully. It digs to find food and to make temporary shelters. It makes sounds such as grunts, squeals and hisses. Mating occurs in summer. The fertilized eggs do not implant in the uterus immediately to develop, so the gestation period is long. Young are born in March and April. Litter size varies from one to five young. Young are helpless at birth but develop rapidly and are able to live on their own in about three months.



tracks



adult at den



den entrance



front (top) and rear feet

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie