

## We're Pickin' Up What They're Puttin' Down!



# Bear DNA Project - Scat Collection Instructions

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### When you start your trip

- Make sure that your collection kit is in the top of your backpack so that it can continue to collect GPS data while you're hiking
- Confirm that your GPS tracker stick is on. This will be indicated by the blinking blue light. If it is not, hold down the red power button on the GPS tracker stick for 2 seconds until the blue light comes on.

**Collecting the Scat:** If a scat is marked (ie. there is a stick or a rock on top of it) it means that someone else has already sampled this scat. Please do not resample or mark this scat. If the scat has not been sampled proceed to Step 1.

1. Take a GPS point by pressing and holding the yellow 'mark' button on the tracker stick for 3 seconds. The blue light on the tracker stick will blink rapidly to confirm that the point has been marked.
2. Wear one of the provided rubber gloves while collecting the sample to prevent contamination. Using one of the wooden sticks, collect a sample (about the size of a pencil eraser) from the center (inside) of the scat. Place the used glove and sample stick in provided waste bag to prevent cross-contamination. Please do not reuse gloves or sample sticks for subsequent samples.
3. Place the scat sample in a vial and secure the cap. Gently tip the vial upside down several times to make sure the silica beads surround the sample.
4. Accurately record your name, date, time, backcountry unit number, and scat freshness on the vial label with the provided pencil. Scat freshness is rated 1-3 with 3 being fresh and moist, and 1 being old and dry. Please write this information down as clearly as possible, without this information the sample cannot be used. When recording the time, specify "AM" or "PM" or use military time.
5. After you have sampled the scat, place a rock or stick on top of the sample to indicate to other backpackers that the scat has already been sampled.

### When You Return:

- Drop off your sample kit at the Denali Visitor Center in the provided box located on top of the outdoor bear resistant food container (BRFC) return or at the Backcountry Information Desk.
- Thank you for participating in Denali's Bear DNA Project! The invaluable information collected by citizen scientists like you will help us gain a better understanding of Denali's bear population.

If you have an encounter with a bear, please fill out a Bear-Human-Interaction-Management (BHIMs) form upon your return. Park regulations prohibit approaching to, or engaging in photography, within 300 yards of a bear and 25 yards of other wildlife.

If you have questions or would like to provide us with additional information about your trip, please contact us at [dena\\_bear\\_dna@nps.gov](mailto:dena_bear_dna@nps.gov) or **907-683-9574**.