

walking on snow crust [Digest urth.v008.n015]

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 27 Mar 1998

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John Bishop — 27 Mar 1998, 08:51

I get to see a lot of snow; maybe I can speak to this based on my upstate New York/New Hampshire background.

The crust is a result of settling and freeze-thaw cycles. It can vary from supporting nothing more than a leaf to holding a large adult. New snow holds nothing. Of course other climates could either produce more crust or none. Where does Wolfe live? The snow crust there might be stronger.

The "usual" case here is freeze-thaw cycles in the early or late winter make a crust strong enough to hold a small child (under 50 lbs), but all others will fall through. Fairly often it'll hold a large child. It's rarely strong enough to hold me--once this winter, not at all last winter.

Snowshoes are surprisingly small these days--big boots on Cutthroat would make a difference; lighter gravity would as well.

-John