

Tracks in Moss Beds

Moss is an interesting surface, generally it is not good for registering tracks, but in conditions of low moisture retention in a moss bed this can occur. These conditions are fairly uncommon but as with many things involving the forest people it is often feast or famine. The following examples were from two areas that are quite far apart over the course of two and a half weeks.

What is difficult to see in photographs is there is a separation of the moss on the outer edges of the tracks, almost as if the track was outlined by a sharp tool. This is due to the weight of the track leaver. The soil under the tracks is also highly compressed as is typical in a Sasquatch track. My 180 lbs. in aggressive soled snake boots left no impression on the moss at all in either area. For comparison a mountain lion track in the same conditions is included. It appears from the tracks that the lion sprang at something over the top of a small moss covered hillock and dug into and through the moss



17 inch track, in the first area, the impression of the toes could be felt under the moss.



Same track-way, 17 inch track, back two thirds of the foot. The substrate in this area is hard metamorphic stone and loamy soil.

with his right rear foot.

In both instances of these tracks were part of a



16/17 inch track, older, in the second area, again, the shape of the foot could be felt under the moss.



Mountain lion track, 4.5 inches, showing a deep push off like a leap. There were slight imprints of the front feet on the top of the little hummock to the left.

short track-way with a step length of about 42 inches. In all of the tracks the impression of the shape of the bottom of the foot and in some the impression of the toes could be felt in the soil under the moss.

In the first area the tracks were in a choke point on a steep rise above a small creek that gives a good long range view of the surrounding area and the moss seemed to be avoided where possible.

In the second area the tracks were on the top of a very steep shale bluff bordering a larger creek. The tracks were moving uphill to a high ridge from flat to a rapidly increasing high angle slope, about 40 degrees, and difficult for me to move around on.

Trent Carbaugh, June 2020