

Exploring the southern Sierra on snowshoes

By Marek Warszawski, Fresno Bee

There's a simple reason why snowshoeing is the fastest-growing of all winter sports. Ease.



Unlike downhill skiing, snowboarding or even cross-country skiing, snowshoeing doesn't have a steep learning curve or require any special skills. Just step in, fasten a few buckles and go. Even poles are optional (at least on easy jaunts).

Snowshoeing can be a relaxing stroll through snow-hushed woods, or it can be a demanding physical activity that burns up to 800 calories per hour. It all depends on where you go – and how hard.

Oh, and it's inexpensive, too. Rental equipment costs about \$20 per day (compared to \$50-\$60 for other winter sports) and there's no need to buy a lift ticket or even stand in line. Ever.

Now you just need to know where to go. With that in mind, here are my five favorite snowshoe treks in the Southern Sierra, from Yosemite National Park to Sequoia.

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