

What thing has 3 toes and...?

BRANDON, Man. (UPC) —Naturalists have failed to turn up any known animal to match a set of three-toed, 48-centimeter-long footprints found in fresh snow on a Brandon farm Christmas Day.

"All I can tell you is there's no animal like this listed under the Wildlife Act," said Manitoba government conservationist Sid Robak, one of a team who measured, photographed and made casts of the footprints.

The 20-centimeter wide footprints, found at meter-long intervals, stretch for a kilometer through a ravine, over a barbed wire fence and across a field to a road near the farm of Bob Woodfield, who discovered the tracks.

"If it's someone pulling a practical joke, they went to a lot of trouble," said Woodfield.

Robak contended the stride was too long for one person, too even to have been made by two people and too regular on a hillside for a person on stilts.

No other footprints were found in the snow, said Robak. He admitted he was confused, however, by the footprints crossing rocks and branches because the toes do not spread as human toes would.

"Either it's a different bone structure, or whatever it's made out of is a material that doesn't stretch," said Robak.