

Occasionally, some owe their survival not to struggle, but to nature. Take the startling case of Mitsutaka Uchikoshi. On an ice-cold October day in 2006, Uchikoshi had been with a group on a mountain in western Japan. After wandering off into a field on his own, Uchikoshi tripped, hit his head, and was knocked unconscious. As Uchikoshi remembers, "I was in a field, and I felt very comfortable. That's my last memory." Hibernation reduces the need for food and protects animals from damage to the brain and other organs. Even more incredibly, Uchikoshi, who was treated for severe hypothermia and blood loss, made a full recovery.