

An Introduction to
Cryptozoology

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Chapter- 1

Cryptozoology



Reconstruction of an alleged Ogopogo sighting

Cryptozoology (from Greek κρυπτός, *kryptos*, "hidden" + zoology; literally, "study of hidden animals") refers to the search for animals which are considered to be legendary or otherwise nonexistent by the field of biology. This includes looking for living examples of animals that are considered extinct, such as dinosaurs; animals whose existence lacks physical support but which appear in myths, legends, or are reported, such as Bigfoot and Chupacabra; and wild animals dramatically outside their normal geographic ranges, such

as phantom cats or "ABCs" (an initialism commonly used by cryptozoologists that stands for Alien Big Cats).

The animals cryptozoologists study are often referred to as *cryptids*, a term coined by John Wall in 1983.

Cryptozoology is not a recognized branch of zoology or a discipline of science since it relies heavily upon anecdotal evidence, stories and alleged sightings. Cryptozoology is a pseudoscience.

Overview



Dr. Karl Shuker is a prominent British zoologist who studies cryptids.

The coining of the word *cryptozoology* is often attributed to zoologist Bernard Heuvelmans, though Heuvelmans attributes coinage of the term to the late Scottish explorer and adventurer Ivan T. Sanderson. Heuvelmans' 1955 book *On the Track of Unknown Animals* traces the scholarly origins of the discipline to Anthonie Cornelis Oudemans and his 1892 study, *The Great Sea Serpent*. Heuvelmans argued that cryptozoology should be undertaken with scientific rigor, but with an open-minded, interdisciplinary approach. He also stressed that attention should be given to local, urban and folkloric sources regarding such creatures, arguing that while often layered in unlikely and fantastic elements, folktales can have small grains of truth and important information regarding undiscovered organisms. Phantom cats (an example of living animals supposedly found outside of their normal range) are a common subject of cryptozoological interest, largely due to the relative likelihood of existence in comparison to fantastical cryptids lacking any evidence of existence, such as Mothman.

Another notable book on the subject is Willy Ley's *Exotic Zoology* (1959). Ley was best known for his writings on rocketry and related topics, but he was trained in paleontology, and wrote a number of books about animals. Ley's collection *Exotic Zoology* is of some interest to cryptozoology, as he discusses the Yeti and sea serpents, as well as relict dinosaurs. The book entertains the possibility that some legendary creatures (like the sarrasin, the unicorn or the cyclops) might be based on actual animals, through misinterpretation of the animals and/or their remains. Also notable is the work of British zoologist and cryptozoologist Karl Shuker, who has published 12 books and countless articles on numerous cryptozoological subjects since the mid-1980s. Loren Coleman, a modern popularizer of cryptozoology, has chronicled the history and personalities of cryptozoology in his books.

Discoveries



An Okapi at Walt Disney's Animal Kingdom, symbol of the defunct International Society of Cryptozoology

Cryptozoologists claim there have been cases where species now accepted by the scientific community were initially considered superstition, hoaxes, delusions or misidentifications. The popularly reported European discovery of the okapi in 1901, earlier hinted at but unseen by Henry Morton Stanley in his travelogue of exploring the Congo, later became the emblem for the now defunct International Society of Cryptozoology. The mountain gorilla, giant squid and Hoan Kiem Turtle are other examples of extant species that were brought to the attention of modern science but formerly thought to be cryptids.

The 2003 discovery of the fossil remains of *Homo floresiensis* was cited by paleontologist Henry Gee, editor of the journal *Nature* as possible evidence that humanoid cryptids like the Orang Pendek and yeti were "founded on grains of truth". "Cryptozoology", Gee said, "the study of such fabulous creatures, can come in from the cold."

Criticism

Cryptozoology has been criticised because of its reliance on anecdotal information and because some cryptozoologists do not follow the scientific method and devote a substantial portion of their efforts to investigations of animals that most scientists believe are unlikely to have existed.

As historian Mike Dash notes, few scientists doubt there are thousands of unknown animals, particularly invertebrates, awaiting discovery; however, cryptozoologists are largely uninterested in researching and cataloging newly-discovered species of ants or beetles, instead focusing their efforts towards "more elusive" creatures that have often defied decades of work aimed at confirming their existence. The majority of mainstream criticism of cryptozoology is thus directed towards the search for megafauna cryptids such as Bigfoot, the Yeti, and the Loch Ness Monster, which appear often in popular culture, but for which there is little or no scientific support. Some scientists argue that megafauna cryptids are unlikely to exist undetected in great enough numbers to maintain a breeding population, and are unlikely to be able to survive in their reported habitats due to issues of climate and food supply.

Chapter- 2

Bigfoot



Frame 352 from the Patterson-Gimlin film, alleged by Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin to show a cryptid called Bigfoot, and by some others to show a man in an ape suit.

Bigfoot, also known as **Sasquatch**, is purportedly an ape-like creature that inhabits forests, mainly in the Pacific Northwest region of North America. Bigfoot is usually described as a large, hairy, bipedal humanoid. The term "sasquatch" is an anglicized derivative of the word "Sésquac" which means "wild man" in a Salish Native American language.

A majority of scientists discount the existence of Bigfoot and consider it to be a combination of folklore, misidentification, and hoax, rather than a legitimate animal, in part because some estimate large numbers necessary to maintain a breeding population. A small minority of accredited researchers such as Jane Goodall and Jeffrey Meldrum have expressed interest and possible belief in the creature with Meldrum expressing the opinion that evidence collected of alleged Bigfoot encounters warrants further evaluation

and testing. Nevertheless, Bigfoot remains one of the more famous and controversial examples of a cryptid within cryptozoology and an enduring legend.

Description

Bigfoot is described in reports as a large hairy ape-like creature, ranging between 6–10 feet (2–3 m) tall, weighing in excess of 500 pounds (230 kg), and covered in dark brown or dark reddish hair. Alleged witnesses have described large eyes, a pronounced brow ridge, and a large, low-set forehead; the top of the head has been described as rounded and crested, similar to the sagittal crest of the male gorilla. Bigfoot is commonly reported to have a strong, unpleasant smell by those who claim to have encountered it. The enormous footprints for which it is named have been as large as 24 inches (60 cm) long and 8 inches (20 cm) wide. While most casts have five toes—like all known apes—some casts of alleged Bigfoot tracks have had numbers ranging from two to six. Some have also contained claw marks, making it likely that a portion came from known animals such as bears, which have five toes and claws. Some proponents have also claimed that Bigfoot is omnivorous and mainly nocturnal.

History

Before 1958

Wildmen stories are found among the indigenous population of the Pacific Northwest. The legends existed prior to a single name for the creature. They differed in their details both regionally and between families in the same community. Similar stories of wildmen are found on every continent except Antarctica. Ecologist Robert Michael Pyle argues that most cultures have human-like giants in their folk history: "We have this need for some larger-than-life creature."

Members of the Lummi tell tales about *Ts'emekwes*, the local version of Bigfoot. The stories are similar to each other in terms of the general descriptions of *Ts'emekwes*, but details about the creature's diet and activities differed between the stories of different families.

Some regional versions contained more nefarious creatures. The *stiyaha* or *kwi-kwiyai* were a nocturnal race that children were told not to say the names of lest the monsters hear and come to carry off a person—sometimes to be killed. In 1847, Paul Kane reported stories by the native people about *skoocooms*: a race of cannibalistic wild men living on the peak of Mount St. Helens. The *skoocooms* appear to have been regarded as supernatural, rather than natural.

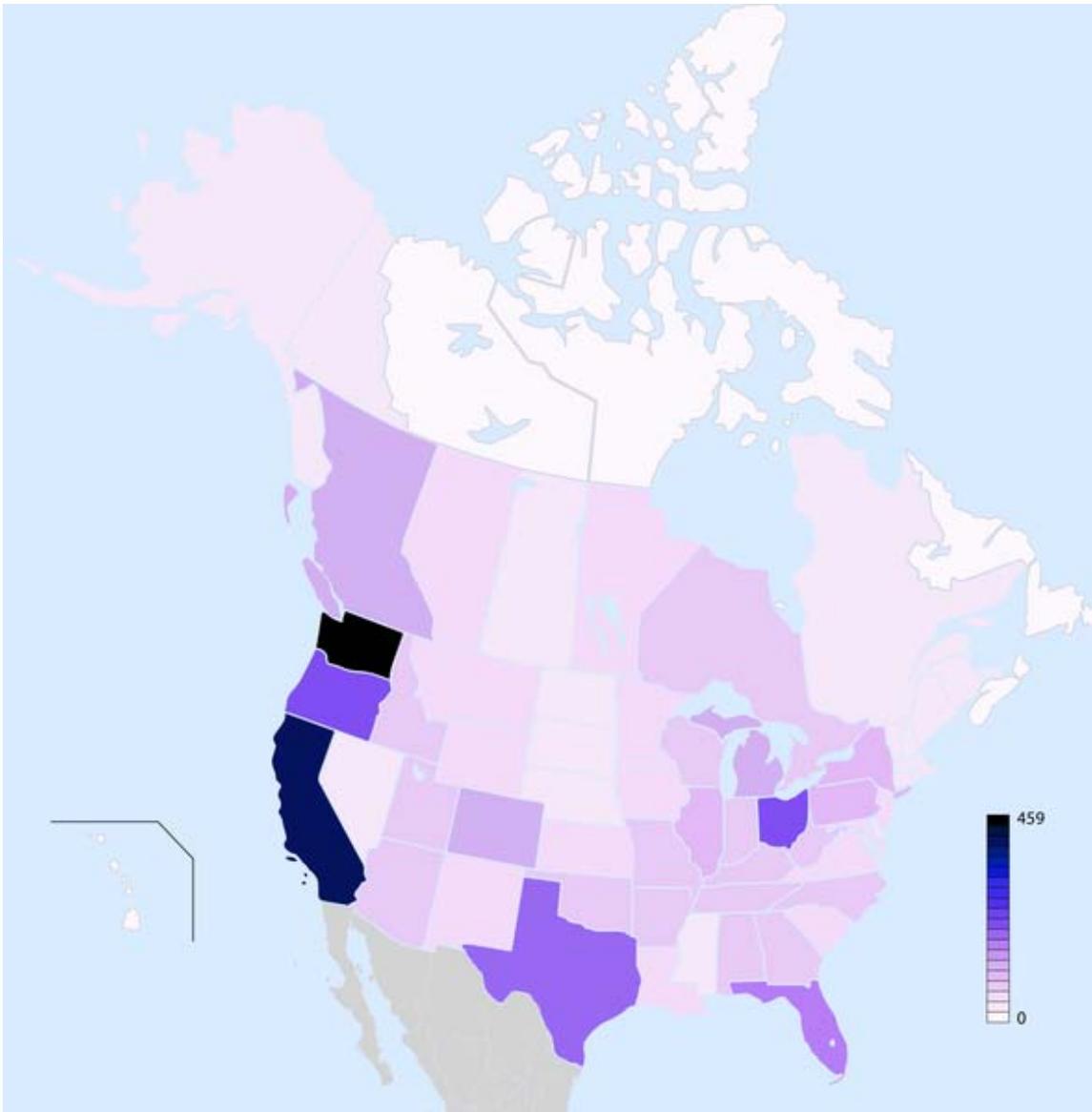
Less menacing versions such as the one recorded by Reverend Elkanah Walker exist. In 1840, Walker, a Protestant missionary, recorded stories of giants among the Native Americans living in Spokane, Washington. The Indians claimed that these giants lived on and around the peaks of nearby mountains and stole salmon from the fishermen's nets.

The local legends were combined together by J. W. Burns in a series of Canadian newspaper articles in the 1920s. Each language had its own name for the local version. Many names meant something along the lines of "wild man" or "hairy man" although other names described common actions it was said to perform (e.g. eating clams). Burns coined the term Sasquatch, which is from the Halkomelem *sásq'ets*, and used it in his articles to describe a hypothetical single type of creature reflected in these various stories. Burns's articles popularized both the legend and its new name, making it well known in western Canada before it gained popularity in the United States.

After 1958

In 1951, Eric Shipton had photographed what he described as a Yeti footprint. This photograph generated considerable attention and the story of the Yeti entered into popular consciousness. The notoriety of ape-men grew over the decade, culminating in 1958 when large footprints were found in Del Norte County, California, by bulldozer operator Gerald Crew. Sets of large tracks appeared multiple times around a road-construction site in Bluff Creek. After not being taken seriously about what he was seeing, Crew brought in his friend, Bob Titmus, to cast the prints in plaster. The story was published in the *Humboldt Times* along with a photo of Crew holding one of the casts. Locals had been calling the unseen track-maker "Big Foot" since the late summer, which Genzoli shortened to "Bigfoot" in his article. Bigfoot gained international attention when the story was picked up by the Associated Press. Following the death of Ray Wallace – a local logger – his family attributed the creation of the footprints to him. The wife of Scoop Beal, the editor of the *Humboldt Standard*, which later combined with the *Humboldt Times*, in which Genzoli's story had appeared, has stated that her husband was in on the hoax with Wallace.

1958 was a watershed year for not just the Bigfoot story itself but also the culture that surrounds it. The first Bigfoot hunters began following the discovery of footprints at Bluff Creek. Within a year, Tom Slick, who had funded searches for Yeti in the Himalayas earlier in the decade, organized searches for Bigfoot in the area around Bluff Creek.



Distribution of reported Bigfoot sightings in Anglo-America.

As Bigfoot has become better known and a phenomenon in popular culture, sightings have spread throughout North America. In addition to the Pacific Northwest, the Great Lakes region and the Southeastern United States have had many reports of Bigfoot sightings.

Prominent reported sightings

About a third of all Bigfoot sightings are concentrated in the Pacific Northwest, with most of the remaining sightings spread throughout the rest of North America. Some Bigfoot advocates, such as cryptozoologist John Willison Green, have postulated that Bigfoot is a worldwide phenomenon. The most notable sightings include:

- **1924:** Fred Beck claimed that he and four other miners were attacked one night in July 1924, by several "apemen" throwing rocks at their cabin in an area later called Ape Canyon, Washington. Beck claimed the miners shot and possibly killed at least one of the creatures, precipitating an attack on their cabin, during which the creatures bombarded the cabin with rocks and tried to break-in. The incident was widely reported at the time. Beck wrote a book about the event in 1967, in which he argued that the alleged creatures were mystical beings from another dimension, claiming that he had experienced psychic premonitions and visions his entire life of which the apemen were only one component. Speleologist William Halliday argued in 1983 that the story arose from an incident in which hikers from a nearby camp had thrown rocks into the canyon. There are also local rumors that pranksters harassed the men and planted faked footprints.
- **1941:** Jeannie Chapman and her children claimed to have escaped their home when a large Sasquatch, allegedly 7.5 feet (2.3 m) tall, approached their residence in Ruby Creek, British Columbia.
- **1958:** Bulldozer operator Jerry Crew took to a newspaper office a cast of one of the enormous footprints he and other workers had been seeing at an isolated work site at Bluff Creek, California. The crew was overseen by Wilbur L. Wallace, brother of Raymond L. Wallace. After Ray Wallace's death, his children came forward with a pair of 16-inch (41 cm) wooden feet, which they claimed their father had used to fake the Bigfoot tracks in 1958. Wallace is poorly regarded by many Bigfoot proponents. John Napier wrote, "I do not feel impressed with Mr. Wallace's story" regarding having over 15,000 feet (4,600 m) of film showing Bigfoot.
- **1967:** Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin reported that on October 20 they had captured a purported Sasquatch on film at Bluff Creek, California. This came to be known as the Patterson-Gimlin film, which is purported to be the best evidence of Bigfoot by many advocates. Many years later, Bob Heironimus, an acquaintance of Patterson's, claimed that he had worn an ape costume for the making of the film.
- **2007:** On September 16, 2007, hunter Rick Jacobs captured an image of a possible sasquatch using an automatically triggered camera attached to a tree, prompting a spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Game Commission to say that it was likely an image of "a bear with a severe case of mange." Australian scientist and journalist Vanessa Woods wrote in "Scientriffic", a bimonthly magazine for ages 7+, that her Duke University colleague's informal measurements showed that the proportions of the creature were not similar to a bear's, although they could not discount the possibility that it was a hoax. The sighting happened near the town of Ridgway, Pennsylvania, in the Allegheny National Forest.

Proposed explanations for sightings

Various types of creatures have been suggested to explain both the sightings and what type of creature Bigfoot would be if it existed. The scientific community typically attributes sightings to either hoaxes or misidentification of known animals and their

tracks. While cryptozoologists generally explain Bigfoot as an unknown ape, some believers in Bigfoot attribute the phenomenon to UFOs or other paranormal causes. A minority of proponents of a natural explanation have attributed Bigfoot to animals that are not apes such as the giant ground sloth.

Misidentification



Photo of an unidentified animal the Bigfoot Research Organization claims is a "juvenile Sasquatch"

The reported size of Bigfoot approximates that of a bear standing on its hind legs, and bears have a high prevalence in regions said to be inhabited by Bigfoot; as such, they are likely candidates to explain some sightings.

In 2007, the Pennsylvania Game Commission said that photos the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization claimed showed a juvenile Bigfoot were most likely of a bear with mange. Jeffrey Meldrum, on the other hand, said the limb proportions of the suspected juvenile in question were not bear-like, and stated that he felt they were "more like a human."

A tale presented in Theodore Roosevelt's 1892 book *The Wilderness Hunter* (reprinted in his 1900 book *Hunting the Grisly and Other Sketches*) describing an encounter between two hunters and a violent bear is sometimes presented by Bigfoot proponents as historical evidence of the creature's existence.

Hoaxes

Both bigfoot researchers and critics agree that many of the sightings are hoaxes or misidentified animals. Cryptozoologists Loren Coleman and Diane Stocking have estimated that as many as 70 to 80 percent of sightings are not real.

Bigfoot sightings or footprints are often demonstrably hoaxes. Author Jerome Clark argues that the "Jacko affair", involving an 1884 newspaper report of an apelike creature captured in British Columbia, was a hoax. Citing research by John Green, who found that several contemporary British Columbia newspapers regarded the alleged capture as very dubious, Clark notes that the *Mainland Guardian* of New Westminster, British Columbia, wrote, "Absurdity is written on the face of it."

On July 14, 2005, Tom Biscardi, a long-time Bigfoot enthusiast and CEO of Searching for Bigfoot Inc., appeared on the Coast to Coast AM paranormal radio show and announced that he was "98% sure that his group will be able to capture a Bigfoot which they have been tracking in the Happy Camp, California area." A month later, Biscardi announced on the same radio show that he had access to a captured Bigfoot and was arranging a pay-per-view event for people to see it. Biscardi appeared on Coast to Coast AM again a few days later to announce that there was no captive Bigfoot. Biscardi blamed an unnamed woman for misleading him, and the show's audience for being gullible.

On July 9, 2008, Rick Dyer and Matthew Whitton posted a video to YouTube claiming that they had discovered the body of a deceased Sasquatch in a forest in northern Georgia. Tom Biscardi was contacted to investigate. Dyer and Whitton received \$50,000 from Searching for Bigfoot, Inc., as a good faith gesture. The story of the men's claims was covered by many major news networks, including BBC, CNN, ABC News, and Fox News. Soon after a press conference, the alleged Bigfoot body arrived in a block of ice in a freezer with the Searching for Bigfoot team. When the contents were thawed, it was discovered that the hair was not real, the head was hollow, and the feet were rubber. Dyer and Whitton subsequently admitted it was a hoax after being confronted by Steve Kulls, executive director of Squatchdetective.com.

Gigantopithecus

Bigfoot proponents Grover Krantz and Geoffrey Bourne believe that Bigfoot could be a relict population of *Gigantopithecus*. Bourne contends that as most *Gigantopithecus* fossils are found in China, and as many species of animals migrated across the Bering land bridge, it is not unreasonable to assume that *Gigantopithecus* might have as well.

The *Gigantopithecus* hypothesis is generally considered entirely speculative. *Gigantopithecus* fossils are not found in the Americas. As the only recovered fossils are of mandibles and teeth, there is some uncertainty about *Gigantopithecus*'s locomotion. Krantz has argued, based on his extrapolation of the shape of its mandible, that *Gigantopithecus blacki* could have been bipedal. However, the relevant part of mandible

is not present in any fossils. The mainstream view is that *Gigantopithecus* was quadrupedal, and it has been argued that *Gigantopithecus's* enormous mass would have made it difficult for it to adopt a bipedal gait.

Matt Cartmill presents another problem with the *Gigantopithecus* hypothesis: "The trouble with this account is that *Gigantopithecus* was not a hominin and maybe not even a crown-group hominoid; yet the physical evidence implies that Bigfoot is an upright biped with buttocks and a long, stout, permanently adducted hallux. These are hominin autapomorphies, not found in other mammals or other bipeds. It seems unlikely that *Gigantopithecus* would have evolved these uniquely hominin traits in parallel."

Bernard G. Campbell wrote: "That *Gigantopithecus* is in fact extinct has been questioned by those who believe it survives as the Yeti of the Himalayas and the Sasquatch of the north-west American coast. But the evidence for these creatures is not convincing."

Extinct hominidae

A species of *Paranthropus*, such as *Paranthropus robustus*, with its crested skull and bipedal gait, was suggested by primatologist John Napier and anthropologist Gordon Strassenburg as a possible candidate for Bigfoot's identity, despite the fact that fossils of *Paranthropus* are found only in Africa.

Michael Rugg, of the Bigfoot Discovery Museum, presented a comparison between human, *Gigantopithecus* and *Meganthropus* skulls (reconstructions made by Grover Krantz) in episodes 131 and 132 of the Bigfoot Discovery Museum Show. He favorably compares a modern tooth suspected of coming from a bigfoot to the *Meganthropus* fossil teeth, noting the worn enamel on the occlusal surface. The *Meganthropus* fossils originated from Asia, the tooth was found in the Pacific Northwest.

Some suggest Neanderthal or *Homo erectus* to be the creature but no remains of either species are found in the New World.

View among the scientific community

Most of the scientific community discounts the existence of Bigfoot, as there is little or no evidence supporting the survival of such a large, prehistoric ape-like creature. The evidence that does exist points more towards a hoax or delusion than to sightings of a genuine creature. In a 1996 *USA Today* article titled "Bigfoot Merely Amuses Most Scientists", Washington State zoologist John Crane says, "There is no such thing as Bigfoot. No data other than material that's clearly been fabricated has ever been presented." In addition to the lack of evidence, scientists cite the fact that Bigfoot is alleged to live in regions unusual for a large, nonhuman primate, i.e., temperate latitudes in the northern hemisphere; all recognized nonhuman apes are found in the tropics of Africa and Asia. Thus, as with other proposed megafauna cryptids, climate and food supply issues would make such a creature's survival in reported habitats unlikely.

Furthermore, great apes are not found in the fossil record in the Americas, and no Bigfoot remains have ever been found. Indeed, scientists insist that the breeding population of such an animal would be so large that it would account for many more purported sightings than currently occur, making the existence of such an animal an almost certain impossibility.

A few scientists have offered varying degrees of support for Bigfoot study and beliefs. Jeffrey Meldrum characterizes the search for Sasquatch as "a valid scientific endeavor" and says that the fossil remains of an ancient giant ape called Gigantopithecus could turn out to be ancestors of today's commonly known Bigfoot. John Napier asserts that the scientific community's attitude towards Bigfoot stems primarily from insufficient evidence. Anthropologist David Daegling echoed this idea, citing a "remarkably limited amount of Sasquatch data that are amenable to scientific scrutiny." Field biologist George Shaller has spoken in favor of greater study of Bigfoot evidence while still expressing skepticism towards the possibility of its existence. Similarly, Napier has argued that some "soft evidence" is compelling enough that he advises against "dismissing its reality out of hand." Other scientists who have expressed guarded interest in Sasquatch reports include Russell Mittermeier, Daris Swindler, and Esteban Sarmiento. Jane Goodall, in a September 27, 2002 interview on National Public Radio's "Science Friday", expressed her ideas about the existence of Bigfoot. First stating "I'm sure they exist", she later went on to say, chuckling, "Well, I'm a romantic, so I always wanted them to exist", and finally: "You know, why isn't there a body? I can't answer that, and maybe they don't exist, but I want them to." Anthropologist Carleton S. Coon, whose theories on the evolution of race in humans have been largely discredited, expressed support for Bigfoot's existence in a posthumously published essay.

Research

There are several organizations dedicated to the research and investigation of Bigfoot sightings in the United States. The oldest and largest is the Bigfoot Field Research Organization or "BFRO". The BFRO also provides a free database to individuals and other organizations. Their internet website includes reports from across North America that have been investigated by researchers to determine credibility.

Chapter- 3

Beast of Exmoor

Beast of Exmoor

Creature

Grouping	Cryptid
Sub grouping	Alien big cat

Data

First reported	1970s
Country	United Kingdom
Region	Devon/Somerset

The **Beast of Exmoor** is a cryptozoological cat that is reported to roam the fields of Exmoor in Devon and Somerset in the United Kingdom.

History

There have been numerous reports of eyewitness sightings, however the official Exmoor National Park website lists the beast under "Traditions, Folklore, and Legends", and the BBC calls it "the famous-yet-elusive beast of Exmoor." Sightings were first reported in the 1970s, although it became notorious in 1983, when a South Molton farmer claimed to have lost over 100 sheep in the space of three months, all of them apparently killed by violent throat injuries. Descriptions of its coloration range from black to tan or dark grey. It is possibly a cougar or black leopard which was released sometime in the 1960s or 1970s after a law was passed making it illegal for them to be kept in captivity outside zoos. However, considering that cougar and leopard life spans are 12–15 years, this is unlikely. In 2006 the British Big Cats Society reported that a skull found by a Devon farmer was that of a puma, however the Department for Environment, Food and Rural

Affairs (Defra) states that "Based on the evidence, Defra does not believe that there are big cats living in the wild in England."

Characteristics

Eyewitness testimony has produced a number of different descriptions. Most accounts report the animal as being a large cat either resembling a puma or a panther. It is recorded as being somewhere between four and eight feet from nose to tail, standing very low to the ground, and as having the ability to leap over 6-foot-tall fences with ease.

Descriptions of its coloration range from black to tan or dark grey.

No such cat is native to England, and the variations in description have led some cryptozoologists to believe that there might be more than one creature.

First sightings

Sightings of the Beast of Exmoor were first reported in the 1970s, although the period of its notoriety began in 1983, when a South Molton farmer named Eric Ley claimed to have lost over a hundred sheep in the space of three months, all of them apparently killed by violent throat injuries. There was even a report of the Beast seen "fishing" with its paw into the River Barle at Simonsbath, whilst some locals theorised that its lair might be in old mine workings on the Moor. The *Daily Express* offered a reward for the capture or slaying of the Beast. Farm animal deaths in the area have been sporadically blamed on the Beast ever since.

Photographic evidence

Photographs have been produced on at least three occasions, one of which appeared in the *West Somerset Free Press* in 1989, taken by the Lewis Family of Blue Anchor, and all appear to show a big cat with the features of both a puma and a panther. Skeptics point out that such photographs invariably show the animal without any objects in frame that might give an indication of its size, leading to the suspicion that the photographs are of domestic cats. 'Photo 2' is not very clear, and could well be a black dog, many say. With so many digital photography programs available, there is a possibility of deception. In April 2010 the Carrigan family from the small town of Darlington stumbled across the beast, which was well documented in the local press before it was revealed that Mr Carrigan had been using his recent passion for Photography mixed with Photoshop.

Explanations

Misidentification

Most observers and scientists believe that the sightings are merely of escaped domestic cats whose size has been greatly exaggerated, or else of large dogs that have been misidentified. The livestock deaths have often been attributed to these large dogs, although human attacks on the sheep have also been suspected.

Escaped pets

Although large cats are not native to England, some people have kept exotic animals, and in the mid 1970s this became something of a fad. It is inevitable that some have escaped over the years, and conceivable that they created a small group of big cats living hidden in the Exmoor area's countryside. In particular, the 1976 Dangerous Wild Animals Act, which controlled the keeping of big cats (among other things) led to the mass release of many privately owned wild cats.

Hybrids

Some descriptions of the Beast attribute it the features of both a puma and a leopard. Although these animals have been hybridized by Carl Hagenbeck in captivity, the offspring were always found to be dwarfed and short-lived; one such hybrid is preserved in the Zoological Museum at Tring. The name for such a hybrid is a Pumapard. Because male big cat hybrids are always sterile, a self-perpetuating race of puma-leopard hybrids is not possible. The apparent mix of features is probably due to inexperienced witnesses rather than hybrid origin.

Government involvement

Soon after 1983, in response to increased reports of livestock death and sightings of the Beast, the Ministry of Agriculture ordered the Royal Marines to send snipers into the Exmoor hills—although some Marines claimed to have seen the Beast fleetingly, no shots were fired, partially because of the risk of the Marines' high-powered sniper rifle bullets passing straight through the creature's body and then causing injury to humans or livestock etc., and the number of attacks on livestock dwindled. As an amusing side note, the Marines' commanding officer was quoted as saying that their quarry behaved with high, almost human, intelligence and "always moved with surrounding cover amongst hedges and woods" Ultimately, the Marines were recalled from the field, after which the attacks on the local sheep allegedly increased. By 1987, the creature was connected to over 200 farm animal deaths. More recent attacks were reported in 1995 and 2001. The Ministry continued to study the reported sightings into the mid-1990s, before concluding that the Beast was either a hoax or myth and that the alleged sightings had been mistaken identifications of creatures native to the Exmoor area. In January 2009 a carcass of an animal that has washed up on a beach in North Devon has left many of the locals speculating that it is the body of the infamous Beast of Exmoor. Later it was revealed that it was a decomposed grey seal.

Chapter- 4

Onza

The **Onza** is a species of wild cat considered to be a legend and one of the numerous creatures studied by cryptozoology. It can also refer to the jaguarundi (*P. yaguarondi*). It is known as a type of cryptid.

In 1938 and again in 1986, animals in Sinaloa were shot and identified as onzas (the legendary cat that resembles a cougar, not the jaguarundi). Only one viable specimen has been taken: A rancher named Andres Murillo in January 1986 saw what he thought was a jaguar attacking him while deer hunting, so he shot it. It turned out not to be a jaguar, and he brought it to Vega, who owned a nearby ranch. He told Murillo that the specimen he had greatly resembled the onza his father had shot in the 1970s, the skull of which he still had. The specimen was a female that weighed 60 lb (27 kg). The body, not including the tail, was 45 inches (1.1 m) long, and the tail added another 23 inches (58 cm). The cat had the appearance of a cougar with a very long, thin body and long, thin dog-like legs. It had eaten recently because deer had been found in its stomach. These animals were much like cougars but had lighter frames, longer legs, a longer tail, and longer ears and had striped legs. Onza's are also much more aggressive and vicious

After examination of a frozen onza corpse in the 1990s, Texas Tech University researchers concluded that the onza is most likely a genetic variant of cougar, but not a distinct cat species. Owing to DNA testing, it is now known that it is in fact a puma and that there are no significant differences between that corpse and any other puma in a zoo or in the field.

There is another legend that is not well known by cryptozoologists. According to that legend, there are two species of jaguarundi living in Mexico. One of them is usually called onza and the other one is referred by any other local name.

Name

The Spanish name "onza" derives from the Latin *lynx, lynx*, and is equivalent to the English word "ounce", originally applied to the lynx, but now more commonly to the snow leopard *Uncia uncia*. There are old texts written by Spanish conquistadors about the onza, but they might refer to the jaguarundi. The jaguarundi is known as onza in many Mexican states. *Onça* is the Brazilian/Portuguese word for jaguar, *Panthera onca*. In its stronghold, the Amazon jungle, the spotted jaguar is known as onça pintada, the black one as onça preta. A very real animal, the onça is spread as far north as Mexico and possibly into the southwest of the USA.

History

A Mexican feline identified as an onza by biased cryptozoologists first appears in Aztec texts. The Florentine Codex, Vol. 13, a compilation of Aztec customs, beliefs and natural history, describes the cuitlamiztli, which they say resembled a cougar but was far more aggressive. Christopher Columbus sent a letter from Mexico to the Spanish kings describing an amazing animal: "A marksman killed a beast like a cat, but pretty much longer and with a humanlike face. He pierced it with an arrow... Nevertheless, it was so wild that he had to cut a foreleg and a rear leg from it. When a boar saw the beast, it got the creeps... In spite of that, the huge cat was dying... It immediately attacked the boar, surrounded his snout with his tail and strongly pressed it. Then with the foreleg that was left, it strangled it." When the conquistadores arrived in Mexico from Spain, they were shown the great zoo of the emperor Motecuzoma (Montezuma). One of the Spaniards, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, said that the zoo contained "tigers [jaguars] and lions [cougars] of two kinds, one of which resembled the wolf".

After the Spaniards settled Mexico, the animal was seen more often, and they christened it with the name onza. "It is not as timid as the [cougar]", wrote Jesuit missionary Father Ignaz Pfefferkorn in 1757, "and he who ventures to attack it must be well on his guard". Another missionary, Father Johann Baegert, wrote that an "onza dared to invade my neighbor's mission when I was visiting, and attacked a 14-year-old boy in broad daylight... A few years ago another killed the strongest and most respected soldier" in the area.

It is very likely that Spanish documents from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries that refer to the onza do not refer to any cryptid animal, or even to the feline known as onza in 20th century Sinaloa as most cryptozoologists think, but to a plain and well-known jaguarundi. Therefore, these texts might be unrelated to the legendary onza. Normal and boring jaguarundis are referred as onzas in most Mexican states.

Twentieth century

In 1938 hunters Dale and Clell Lee, with Indiana banker Joseph Shirk, shot what locals identified as an onza near La Silla Mountain in Sinaloa. Dale Lee was certain that the

animal they shot was not a puma. Although somewhat resembling a puma in coloration, its ears, legs, and body were much longer, and it was built more lightly than a puma.

Finally, in January 1986, Mexican farmer Andres Rodriguez Murillo, who owned a ranch in the San Ignacio District of Sinaloa, killed an animal resembling the cat shot by the Lee brothers. Rodriguez and Ricardo Zamora were deer hunting at about 10:30 p.m. when they came across a large cat which seemed ready to charge. Rodriguez, fearing a jaguar attack, shot the cat. After seeing that the cat was not a jaguar or a puma, Rodriguez and Zamora took the cat's body back to Rodriguez's ranch. A Mr. Vega, who owned a nearby ranch and who was an experienced hunter, was contacted by Rodriguez. Vega said that the cat was an onza and that it was nearly identical to one that his father had shot in the 1970s (the skull of the Vega animal had been preserved). Vega in turn contacted Ricardo Urquijo, Jr., who suggested taking the animal's body to Mazatlán for examination.

The cat was found to have a large wound on one of the rear legs, which both Rodriguez and Vega believed was inflicted by a jaguar. The specimen was also found to have been in good health with a fully functional reproductive system.

Identity

Most cryptozoologists felt that the onza represented a new subspecies of cougar, or possibly an entirely new species of cat. German mammalogist Helmut Hemmer even suggested that the onza represented an extant specimen of the prehistoric American cheetah *Miracinonyx trumani*.

International Society for Cryptozoology (ISC)'s J. Richard Greenwell concluded as far back as 1986 that the onza was not to be identified with *M. trumani* on the basis of examination of skulls of that animal.

There is another problem surrounding the legend of the onza. In Mexico, the term onza is in fact used for more than just one species. DNA testing confirmed that the Sinaloa specimen was a well-known subspecies of cougar and not an *M. trumani* or an unknown species of big cat. Nevertheless, in other states of Mexico, the jaguarundi is also referred as onza. Furthermore, there are also local legends that state that there are two species of jaguarundi. One of them is usually called onza.

Chapter- 5

Kasai Rex

Kasai rex

Creature

Grouping Cryptid

Sub grouping Dinosaur

Data

First reported 1932

Country Republic of the Congo

Kasai rex is an animal claimed to be a surviving carnivorous dinosaur in Africa. It is claimed to be a *Tyrannosaurus rex*, but as *Tyrannosaurus* jumps to mind at the thought of any carnivorous dinosaur, and as *Tyrannosaurs* are not found in the fossil record of Africa, it is likely to be a *Carcharodontosaurus* or *Afrovenator*. There are conflicting descriptions of it, and the only original reports are suspected by most cryptozoologists to be dubious.

Kasai valley report

In 1932 John Johnson (sometimes spelled Johanson), a Swedish plantation owner, was traveling with a servant in the Kasai valley, in the Belgian Congo (now Democratic Republic of the Congo). They encountered a rhinoceros, and, while attempting to pass it without detection, were surprised by a large creature rushing out of the undergrowth and attacking the rhinoceros. The servant ran away and Johnson fainted. He awoke to see that the creature was eating the rhinoceros. "It was reddish in color, with blackish-colored stripes," he said later. "It had a long snout and numerous teeth." He decided that the creature, 13 m (43 ft) long, was a *Tyrannosaurus*. he also said "The legs were thick; it reminded me of a lion, built for speed".

Similar report

There is a similar story in an edition of the *Rhodesia Herald*, also from 1932:

On February 16 last I went on a shooting trip, accompanied by my gunbearer. I had only a Winchester for small game, not expecting anything big. At 2 p.m. I had reached the Kasai valley (sic).

No game was in sight. As we were going down to the water, the boy suddenly called out "elephants". It appeared that two giant bulls were almost hidden by the jungle. About 50 yards away from them I saw something incredible - a monster, about 16 yards in length, with a lizard's head and tail. I closed my eyes and reopened them. There could be no doubt about it, the animal was still there. My boy cowered in the grass whimpering.

I was shaken by the hunting-fever. My teeth rattled with fear. Three times I snapped; only one attempt came out well. Suddenly the monster vanished, with a remarkably rapid movement. It took me some time to recover. Alongside me the boy prayed and cried. I lifted him up, pushed him along and made him follow me home. On the way we had to transverse a big swamp. Progress was slow, for my limbs were still half-paralyzed with fear. There in the swamp, the huge lizard appeared once more, tearing lumps from a dead rhino. It was covered in ooze. I was only about 25 yards away.

It was simply terrifying. The boy had taken French leave, carrying the rifle with him. At first I was careful not to stir, then I thought of my camera. I could hear the crunching of rhino bones in the lizard's mouth. Just as I clicked, it jumped into deep water.

The experience was too much for my nervous system. Completely exhausted, I sank down behind the bush that had given me shelter. Blackness reigned before my eyes. The animal's phenomenally rapid motion was the most awe-inspiring thing I have ever seen.'

I must have looked like one demented, when at last I regained camp. Metcalfe, who is the boss there, said I approached him, waving the camera about in a silly way and emitting unintelligible sounds. I dare say I did. For eight days I lay in a fever, unconscious nearly all the time.'

Criticism

This story presents problems due to inaccuracies. The hunter claims that "giant bull" elephants were in the jungle - yet forest elephants *Loxodonta cyclotis* are much smaller than the familiar elephant *L. africana* of the plains. A large bull *L. africana* would have great difficulty in jungle terrain (Though, considering the size of all elephants, it is reasonable that the Elephant could still have been described as large).

There is also the similarity between many aspects of these two stories: the single servant runs off; the creature eats a rhino; and both Johanson and Johnson faint. This suggests a single source for both stories.

Another point to note is that Tyrannosaurus, or any tyrannosaurid for that matter, did not live in Africa. If the report is true, the creature is more likely a *Carcharodontosaurus*, *Suchomimus* or *Afrovenator*.

It is perhaps notable that, of all cryptids reported from Africa, this is the only one without a unique name in a local language. It is called *Virunga* which means *demon*, but a carnivorous animal of this size would not have escaped a unique name by the local population.

Photographs

Two photographs from the first two sightings are said to exist, each showing radical differences from the other. One shows a creature resembling a large monitor lizard. In this photograph, a white line surrounds the creature; it appears to be a cutout from a nature magazine. The other photograph depicts a *Tyrannosaurus*-like creature eating a rhinoceros.

Burrunjor

The Kasai Rex is very similar to another cryptid said to live in the Australian outback known as the Burrunjor to the natives, although the Burrunjor boasts many more sightings. Cave paintings show a creature very similar to a Tyrannosaurid, and English settlers reported three-toed footprints. The last reported sighting was in Northern Australia in 1982, which resulted with some farmers leaving the area in fear of the creature.

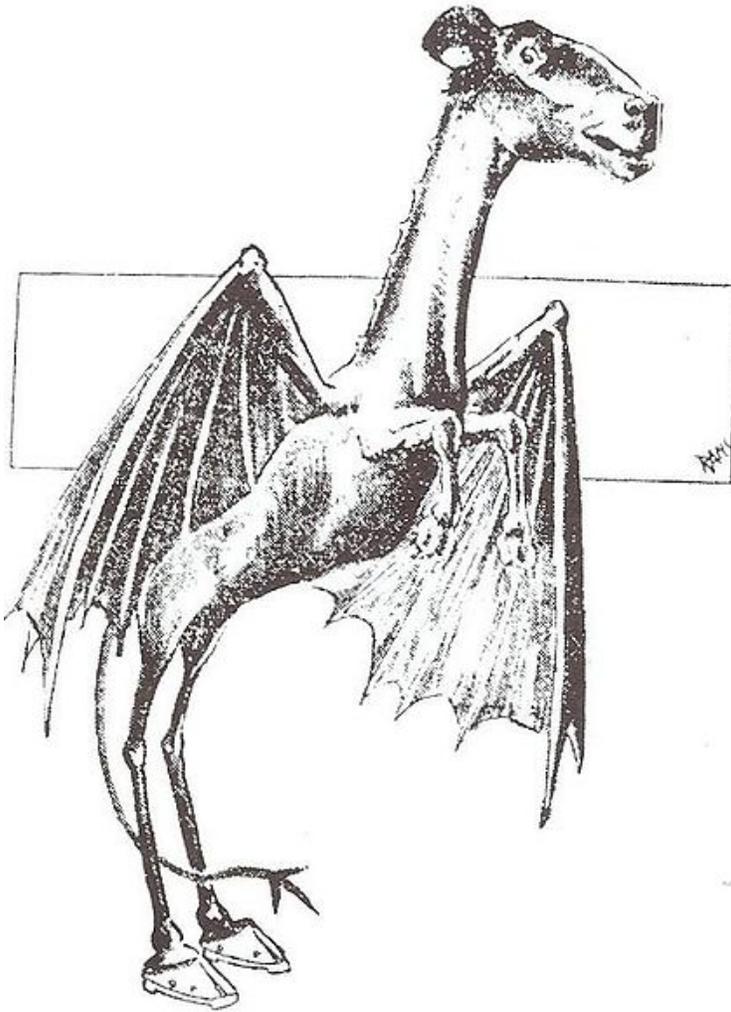
The Burrunjor is said to inhabit Arnhem Land in Australia's Northern Territories as well as Northern Queensland. Aborigines refer to the lands in which the creatures roam as "Burrunjor" after the creatures themselves. Very few Aborigines will enter the lands and, unusually, even animals react in fear of the areas. Some people see the Burrunjor as more likely to exist than even Bigfoot and Nessie due to the consistency of the reports, although conclusive evidence has not yet been brought forward.

Chapter- 6

Jersey Devil

New Jersey Devil

(Leeds Devil)



The Jersey Devil,
Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, January 1909.

Data

First reported 1735

Country United States

Region Pine Barrens (New Jersey) 🇺🇸

The **Jersey Devil**, sometimes called the **Leeds Devil**, is a legendary creature or cryptid said to inhabit the Pine Barrens of Southern New Jersey. The creature is often described as a flying biped with hooves, but there are many variations. The Jersey Devil has worked its way into the pop culture of the area, even lending its name to New Jersey's team in the National Hockey League.

Legends and reported encounters

Most accounts of the Jersey Devil legend attribute the creature to a "Mother Leeds", a supposed whore although the tale has many variations. According to one version, she invoked the devil while giving birth to her 13th child, and when the baby was born, it either immediately or soon afterwards transformed into a devil like creature and flew off into the surrounding pines.

According to legend, while visiting the Hanover Mill Works to inspect his cannonballs being forged, Commodore Stephen Decatur sighted a flying creature flapping its wings and fired a cannonball directly upon it to no effect. Joseph Bonaparte, eldest brother of Emperor Napoleon, is also said to have witnessed the Jersey Devil while hunting on his Bordentown, New Jersey estate around 1820. Throughout the 19th century, the Jersey Devil was blamed for livestock killings, strange tracks, and reported sounds. In the early 20th century, a number of people in New Jersey and neighboring states claimed to witness the Jersey Devil or see its tracks. Claims of a corpse matching the Jersey Devil's description arose in 1957. In 1960, the merchants around Camden offered a \$10,000 reward for the capture of the Jersey Devil, even offering to build a private zoo to house the creature if captured.

Chapter- 7

Mothman

Mothman



A 12-foot-tall (3.7 m), stainless-steel
sculpture of the Mothman
by artist Robert Roach,
located in Point Pleasant.  38°50'33.36"N 82°8'19.207"W /
38.8426°N 82.13866861°W

Creature

Grouping Cryptid

Data

First reported November 15, 1966

Country United States

Region West Virginia

Habitat Air/land

The **Mothman** is a cryptid reportedly seen in the Point Pleasant area of West Virginia from November 12, 1966, to December 1967. Most observers describe the Mothman as a man-sized creature with large reflective red eyes and large wings. The creature was sometimes reported as having no head, with its eyes set into its chest.

A number of hypotheses have been presented to explain eyewitness accounts, ranging from misidentification and coincidence, to paranormal phenomena and conspiracy theories.

Appearance

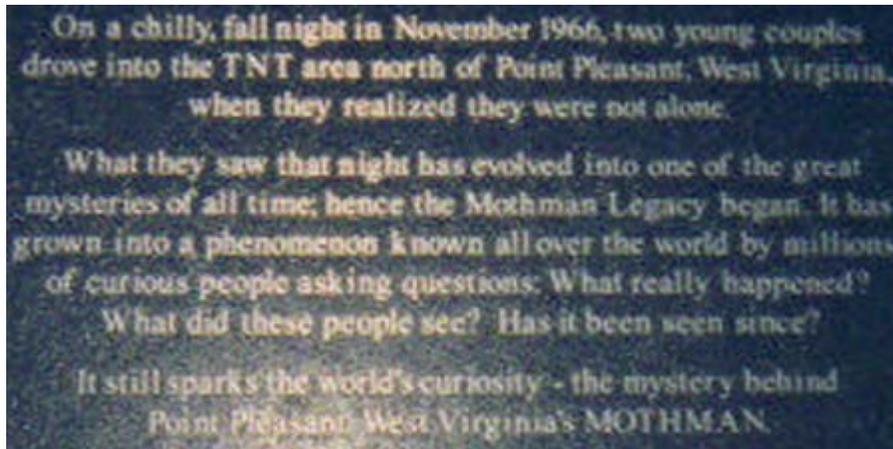
Mothman is described as a man sized, or larger, creature with glowing red eyes and wings of a moth. It may have eyes set in his chest. It is described as a 7-foot-tall (2.1 m) creature, with long wings and huge red eyes. It possesses an unusual shriek.

History

On November 15, 1966, two young couples from Point Pleasant, Roger and Linda Scarberry, and Steve and Mary Mallette, along with their young cousin, Lonnie Button, were traveling late at night in the Scarberrys' car. They were passing the West Virginia Ordnance Works, an abandoned World War II TNT factory, about seven miles north of Point Pleasant, in the 2,500 acre (10 km²) McClintic Wildlife Management Area, when they noticed two red lights in the shadows by an old generator plant near the factory gate. They stopped the car, and reportedly discovered that the lights were the glowing red eyes of a large animal, "shaped like a man, but bigger, maybe six and a half or seven feet tall, with big wings folded against its back," according to Roger Scarberry. Terrified, they

drove toward Route 62, where the creature supposedly chased them at speeds exceeding 100 miles per hour.

A plaque on the Mothman statue provides a version of the original legend: "On a chilly, fall night in November 1966, two young couples drove into the TNT area north of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, when they realized they were not alone." Driving down the exit road, they saw the supposed creature standing on a nearby ridge. It spread its wings and flew alongside the vehicle up to the city limits. They drove to the Mason County courthouse to alert Deputy Millard Halstead, who later said, "I've known these kids all their lives. They'd never been in any trouble and they were really scared that night. I took them seriously." He then followed Roger Scarberry's car back to the old Ordnance Works and found no trace of the strange creature. According to the book *Alien Animals*, by Janet and Colin Bord, a poltergeist attack on the Scarberry home occurred later that night, during which the creature was seen several times.



The plaque on the Mothman statue

The following night, on November 16, several armed townspeople combed the area around the TNT plant for signs of Mothman. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Wamsley, and Mrs. Marcella Bennett, with her infant daughter Teena, were in a car en-route to visit their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Thomas, who lived in a small house near the igloos (concrete dome-shaped dynamite storage structures erected during WW-II) near the TNT plant. The igloos were now empty, some owned by the county, others by companies intending to use them for storage. They were heading back to their car when a figure appeared behind their parked vehicle. Mrs. Bennett said that it seemed like it had been lying down, slowly rising up from the ground, large and gray, with glowing red eyes. While Wamsley phoned the police, the creature walked onto the porch and peered in at them through the window.

On November 24, four people allegedly saw the creature flying over the TNT area. On the morning of November 25, Thomas Ury, who was driving along Route 62 just north of the TNT, claimed to have seen the creature standing in a field, and then it spread its

wings and flew away, and Thomas sped toward the Point Pleasant sheriff's office. He then reported the incident that he had seen.

A Mothman sighting was again reported on January 11, 1967, hovering over the town's bridge, and several other times that same year. Fewer sightings of the Mothman were reported after the collapse of the town's bridge, the Silver Bridge, when 46 people died. The Silver Bridge, so named for its aluminium paint, was an eyebar chain suspension bridge that connected the cities of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, and Gallipolis, Ohio, over the Ohio River. The bridge was built in 1928, and it collapsed on December 15, 1967. Investigation of the bridge wreckage pointed to the failure of a single eye-bar in a suspension chain due to a small manufacturing flaw. There are rumors that the Mothman appears before upcoming disasters and seems to try to warn people of them. Mothman was never again seen in Point Pleasant after the demolition of the Silver Bridge.

Analysis

Supernatural theories

John Keel claimed that Mothman was related to parapsychological events in the area, including precognitions by witnesses, and the December 15, 1967 collapse of the Silver Bridge spanning the Ohio River.

Misidentified bird

One of the early theories is that the Mothman was a misidentified Sandhill Crane, which, in the late 1960s had been a problem in surrounding regions. Sandhill cranes have an average wingspan of 5.3 feet (up to 7 feet), average overall length of 39 inches and have the general appearance described, glide for long distances without flapping, and have an unusual shriek. Other theories suggest the possibility of the Mothman being a Barn Owl, an albino owl, or perhaps a large Snowy Owl (based on artists' impressions). Skeptics suggest that the Mothman's glowing eyes are actually *red-eye* caused from the reflection of light, from flashlights, or other light sources that witnesses may have had with them.

In popular culture

The word "Mothman" was an invention by an Ohio newspaper copyeditor, after a character in the Batman television series at the time.

A large collection of first-hand material about the Mothman is found in John Keel's 1975 book *The Mothman Prophecies*, in which Keel lays out the chronology of the Mothman and what he claims to be related parapsychological events in the area, including precognitions by witnesses, and the December 15, 1967 collapse of the Silver Bridge spanning the Ohio River.

Keel's first book was the basis of a 2002 film, *The Mothman Prophecies*, starring Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Debra Messing, and Will Patton, directed by Mark Pellington. A

companion book called *The Eighth Tower*, also released in 1975, was derived from material edited from *The Mothman Prophecies* by the publishers.

In the May–June 2002 issue of the *Skeptical Inquirer*, journalist John C. Sherwood, a former business associate of UFO hoaxer Gray Barker, published an analysis of private letters between Keel and Barker during the period of Keel's investigation. In the article, "Gray Barker's Book of Bunk", Sherwood documented significant differences between what Keel wrote at the time of his investigation and what Keel wrote in his first book about the Mothman reports, raising questions about the book's accuracy. Sherwood also revealed his participation in a hoax by Barker, having posed as "Richard Pratt" for some of Barker's hoaxes.

Cryptozoologist Loren Coleman, in conjunction with Sony/Screen Gems studio and as noted in the documentary film by David Grabias, "In Search of the Mothman", served as one of the fictional movie's two publicity spokespersons (Keel being the other, although Keel's involvement was limited by health concerns).

Andy Colvin, a photographer and documentary filmmaker who claims to have seen the Mothman, has produced two books and a reality series on Mothman called *The Mothman's Photographer*, featuring John Keel and almost 50 witnesses. Colvin's sister took a snapshot of him in 1973 that allegedly shows a Garuda in the background.

Hoaxes

In Episode 2 of the short-lived TV series *X-Testers*, the researchers on the show attempted various ways to duplicate various photographs of what is said to be Mothman on bridges. The researchers concluded that a recent photo of an unidentified object on the bridge is possibly just a black garbage bag, and earlier photos are possibly just camera tricks.

Folklore

Folklorist Jan Harold Brunvand cited elements in common between many Mothman reports and much older folk tales, and noted: "Something real may have triggered the Mothman scares, but the stories - whatever their sources - also incorporated existing folklore."

Mothman Festival

The **Mothman Festival** is a weekend long event held in Point Pleasant, West Virginia occurring on the 3rd weekend every September. There is a variety of events that go on during the festival such as guest speakers, vendor exhibits, and hayride tours focusing on the notable areas of Point Pleasant.

Chapter- 8

Owlman

Owlman

Creature

Grouping

Cryptid

Data

First reported

April 17, 1976

Last reported

2009

Country

United kingdom

Region

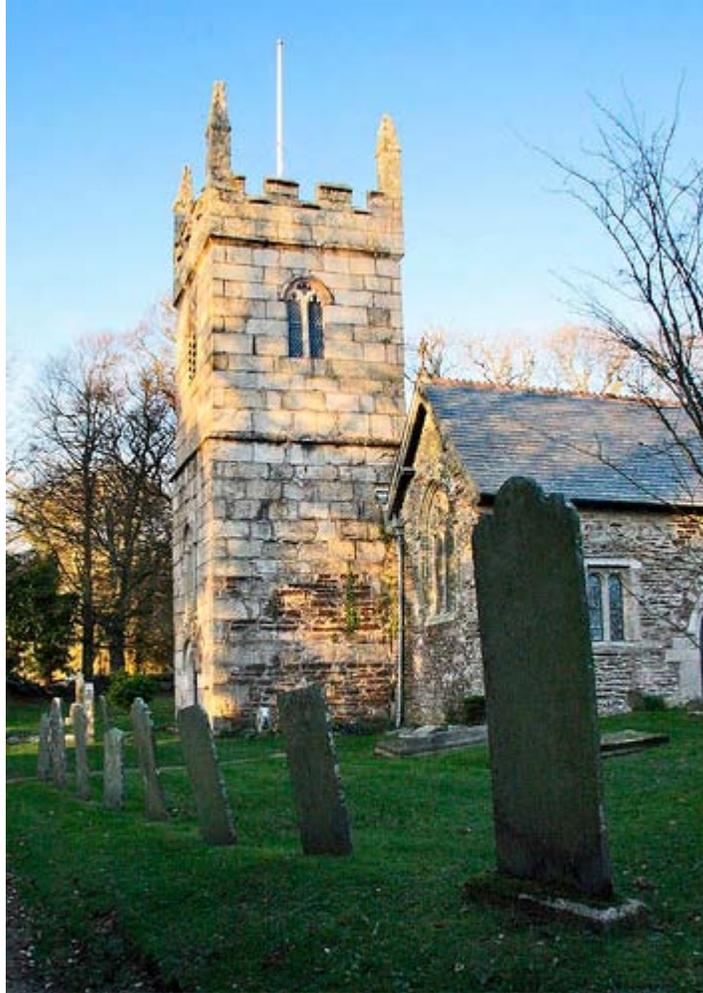
Mawnan Smith, Cornwall

The **Owlman**, sometimes referred to as the **Cornish Owlman**, or **The Owlman of Mawnan**, is a purported cryptid that was supposedly sighted around mid 1976 in the village of Mawnan, Cornwall. The Owlman is sometimes compared to America's Mothman in cryptozoological literature.

First sighting



Doc Shiels' version of a drawing of Owlman made by twelve year old June Melling.



The church tower at Mawnan.

The Owlman story began when paranormal researcher Tony "Doc" Shiels was approached by a man, Don Melling, who had been visiting the area on holiday from Lancaster. Melling said that on April 17, 1976, his two daughters, 12-year-old June and her 9-year-old sister, Vicky, were walking through the woods near Mawnan church when they saw a large winged creature hovering above the church tower. The girls were frightened and immediately ran to tell their father. According to Shiels, the family had become so perturbed by the sighting that they had abandoned their holiday three days early and that the father would not allow either of his daughters to be interviewed. Shiels was, however, provided with a drawing of the creature made by twelve year old June.

In a later study of the case, Jonathan Downes claims that Shiels first described these events in "a letter", although he does not say who Shiels was writing to. The story was subsequently related in a pamphlet entitled *Morgawr: The Monster of Falmouth Bay* by Anthony Mawnan-Peller, which circulated throughout Cornwall in 1976.

Second sighting

Two months later, on July 3, 14-year-old Sally Chapman was camping with a friend, Barbara Perry, in woods near the church. According to her account, as she stood outside her tent, she heard a hissing sound and turned to see a figure that looked like an owl as big as a man, with pointed ears and red eyes. The girls reported that the creature flew up into the air, revealing black pincer-like claws. Sightings of this figure continued to be reported on the following day (when it was described as "silvery gray") and on two occasions two years later, in June and August 1978, all within the vicinity of the church.

Previous to their encounter, the girls had read the pamphlet that described the Owlman's appearance to the Melling girls. They contacted Shiels, who encouraged them to draw images separately; he considered them similar enough to verify their story but different enough to rule out conspiracy.

Later sightings

1989

Because both of the 1970s sightings involved "Doc" Shiels, an eccentric with a fondness for hoaxes, researcher Jonathan Downes acknowledges that Shiels could have invented the Owlman. However, Downes claims to have interviewed a young man, whom he calls "Gavin", who encountered the Owlman in 1989, independently of Shiels. "Gavin" and his girlfriend claimed to have seen a creature "about five feet tall... The legs had high ankles and the feet were large and black with two huge 'toes' on the visible side. The creature was gray with brown and the eyes definitely glowed."

1995

In 1995, a female tourist from Chicago wrote to the *Western Morning News* in Truro, claiming to have seen a "man-bird... with a ghastly face, a wide mouth, glowing eyes and pointed ears" as well as "clawed wings".

Speculation on the Owlman's nature

In *Alien Animals* (1985), British paranormal researchers Janet and Colin Bord pointed out that Mawnan church is built in the middle of a prehistoric earthwork. They suggested that the church may be built on a ley line (a straight line that passes through and links several ancient sites), and speculated that the appearance of the Owlman may be a manifestation of earth energy in this place. However in *Modern Mysteries of the World* (1989), they retracted this and stated that they believed that the sightings were probably of an escaped aviary bird rather than a paranormal phenomenon.

An Eagle Owl?

A more straightforward explanation may be that the Owlman sightings were of an escaped eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*), a species that can grow more than two feet long, with a wingspan of nearly six feet. This is supported by a report by Karl Shuker of a late 1980s sighting of the Owlman. The witness described it as four feet high, with two large toes on the front of each foot. It ducked down and forwards before it took off. Shuker states that this "calls to mind a very large owl". The structure of the feet is also consistent with an owl identity, as owls have an arrangement of the toes known as zygodactyly, in which two toes point forwards and two backwards. A colony of eagle owls exists in North Yorkshire, and the bird is reportedly capable of crossing the English Channel.

Chapter- 9

Champ (Cryptozoology)

Champ

(Lake Champlain Monster, *Champtanystropeus americanus*)

Creature

Grouping	Cryptid
Sub grouping	Lake Monster / Sea Serpent

Data

First reported	1883
Country	United States Canada
Region	Lake Champlain
Habitat	Water

Champ, or **Champy**, is the name given to a reputed lake monster living in Lake Champlain, a natural freshwater lake in North America, partially situated across the U.S.-Canada border in the Canadian province of Quebec and partially situated across the Vermont-New York border. While there is no scientific evidence for the cryptid's existence, there have been over 300 reported sightings. The legend of the monster is considered a draw for tourism in the Burlington, Vermont area.

Like the Loch Ness Monster, while most regard Champ as legend, others have speculated it is possible such a creature does live deep in the lake, possibly a relative of the plesiosaur, an extinct group of aquatic reptiles.

Cultural importance to Vermont



Map of Lake Champlain



Vermont Lake Monsters mascot

Lake Champlain is a 125-mile (201 km)-long body of fresh water that is shared by New York and Vermont and just a few miles into Quebec, Canada.

The Champ legend has become a revenue-generating attraction. For example, the village of Port Henry, New York, has erected a giant model of Champ and holds "Champ Day" on the first Saturday of every August. As the mascot of Vermont's lone Minor League Baseball affiliate, the Vermont Lake Monsters, Champ became more prominent after the team was renamed from the Vermont Expos to the Vermont Lake Monsters. Champ has been the primary attraction of the New York - Penn League affiliate since their inception. Several nearby establishments, including a car wash, use "Champ" as a logo.

History of the legend

Two Native American tribes living in the area near Lake Champlain, the Iroquois and the Abenaki, had legends about such a creature. The Abenaki called the creature "Tatoskok".

An account of a creature in Lake Champlain was ostensibly given in 1609 by French explorer Samuel de Champlain, the founder of Québec and the lake's namesake, who is supposed to have spotted the creature as he was fighting the Iroquois on the bank of the

lake. However, in actuality no such sighting was recorded, and it has since been traced back to a 1970 article.

A report in the Plattsburgh Republican dated July 24, 1819, titled "Cape Ann Serpent on Lake Champlain", gives the account of a "Capt. Crum" sighting an enormous serpentine monster.

The first reported sighting actually came in 1883 when Sheriff Nathan H. Mooney claimed that he had seen a "...gigantic water serpent about 50 yards away" from where he was on the shore. He claimed that he was so close that he could see "round white spots inside its mouth" and that "the creature appeared to be about 25 to 30 feet in length". Mooney's sighting led to many eyewitnesses coming forward with their own accounts of Champ sightings. Mooney's story predated the public Loch Ness controversy by 50 years.

Champ became so popular that P. T. Barnum, in the early 19th century, put a reward of \$50,000 up for a carcass of Champ. Barnum wanted the carcass of Champ so that he could include it in his epic World's Fair Show (Krystek 3).

Some believe that Champ may be a plesiosaur similar to "Nessie", claiming the two lakes have much in common. Like Loch Ness, Lake Champlain is over 400 feet (120 m) deep, and both lakes were formed from retreating glaciers. Believers also claim both lakes support fish populations large enough to feed a supposed sea or lake monster (Krystek 1). This legend would require either a single animal, or a sizable breeding population.

Mansi photograph

In 1977, amateur photographer Sandra Mansi released a photograph that appeared to show a plesiosaur-like body and neck sticking out of the lake. Mansi later showed the photo, which is similar to the famous "Surgeon's photo" of the Loch Ness Monster, to Joseph W. Zarzynski.

Zarzynski, founder of the Lake Champlain Phenomena Investigation and a Wilton, New York Social Studies teacher, took the photo to George Zug of the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Vertebrate Zoology. Zug states that the creature in the photo does not resemble any creature or animal living in Lake Champlain.

The entire bay of the lake where the photograph reportedly was taken is no deeper than 14 feet (4.3 m). According to Joe Nickell, there are few explanations for how a giant creature could swim, let alone hide, in such shallow water. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the object in the photograph could possibly be a rising tree trunk or log. Rotting trees often gather gas in the process of decay, and sometimes rise to the water's surface at considerable speed.

Recent reports

Champ reportedly can be seen in a video taken by fishermen Dick Affolter and his stepson Pete Bodette in the summer of 2005. Close examination of the images may be interpreted either as a head and neck of a plesiosaur-like animal and even an open mouth in one frame and a closed mouth in another; or as a fish or eel. Although two retired FBI forensic image analysts, who reviewed the tape, said it appears authentic and unmanipulated, one of them added that "there's no place in there that I can actually see an animal or any other object on the surface".

One piece of evidence, though not a "sighting" per se, is the recording of echolocation from within the lake by the Fauna Communications Research Institute in 2003, working as part of a Discovery Channel program. The group has concluded that the sounds they have recorded are similar to that of a Beluga Whale or perhaps an Orca, but not of a known animal, and no dolphin or whale species have been previously known to live in the lake. Study of the Mansi Photo in this context has led to speculation that rather than a neck and head, the photo shows a flipper of some large animal in the act of rolling].

In 2008 a study by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife (collectively, The Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative) was released in July 2008 which reported unexplainable fluctuated levels of certain breeds of fish. The study noted that population parameters operate in cycles of growth and recession but they noticed that these variables changed suddenly. The report concluded this must be caused by an unknown X-factor. Many people attribute this X-factor as being the locally known lake monster, Champ. However, The Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative made no such conclusion.

Chapter- 10

Mokele-mbembe

Mokèlé-mbèmbé, meaning "one who stops the flow of rivers" in the Lingala language, is the name given to a large water-dwelling cryptid found in legends and folklore of the Congo River basin. It is sometimes described as a living creature and sometimes as a spirit. It could be considered loosely analogous to the Loch Ness Monster in Western culture.

Several expeditions have been mounted in the hope of finding evidence of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé, though without success. Efforts have been covered in a number of books and by a number of television documentaries. The Mokèlé-mbèmbé and its associated folklore also appear in several works of fiction and popular culture.

Overview

According to the traditions of the Congo River basin the Mokèlé-mbèmbé is a large territorial herbivore. It is said to dwell in Lake Télé and the surrounding area, with a preference for deep water, and with local folklore holding that its haunts of choice are river bends.

Descriptions of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé vary. Some legends describe it as having an elephant-like body with a long neck and tail and a small head, a description which has been suggested to be similar in appearance to that of the extinct Sauropoda, while others describe it as more closely resembling elephants, rhinoceros, and other known animals. It is usually described as being gray-brown in color. Some traditions, such as those of Boha Village, describe it as a spirit rather than a flesh and blood creature.

According to the writings of biologist Roy Mackal, who mounted two unsuccessful expeditions to find it, it is likely that the Mokèlé-mbèmbé is a reptile. Of all the living reptiles, Mackal argues that the iguana and the monitor lizards bear the closest resemblance to the Mokèlé-mbèmbé, though, at 15 to 30 feet (5 to 9 m) long, the Mokèlé-mbèmbé would exceed the size of any known living examples of such reptiles, writing, "I

believe the description of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé is accounted for in all respects by an identification with a small sauropod dinosaur".

The BBC/Discovery Channel documentary *Congo* (2001) interviewed a number of tribe members who identified a photograph of a rhinoceros as being a Mokèlé-mbèmbé. Neither species of African rhinoceros is common in the Congo Basin, and the Mokèlé-mbèmbé may be a mixture of mythology and folk memory from a time when rhinoceros were found in the area.

History

Numerous expeditions were undertaken to discover uncharted Africa. During these, there were some sightings that have been argued by cryptozoologists to involve some unidentified dinosaur-like creature. Additionally, there have been several specific Mokèlé-mbèmbé-hunting expeditions. Although several of the expeditions have reported close encounters, none have been able to provide incontrovertible proof that the creature exists. The sole evidence that has been found is the presence of widespread folklore and anecdotal accounts covering a considerable period of time.

1776: Bonaventure

Amongst the earliest reference that might be relevant to Mokèlé-mbèmbé stories (though the term is not used in the source) comes from the 1776 book of Abbé Lievain Bonaventure, a French missionary to the Congo River region. Among many other observations about flora, fauna, and native inhabitants related in his lengthy book, Bonaventure claimed to have seen enormous footprints in the region. The creature that left the prints was not witnessed, but Bonaventure wrote that it "must have been monstrous: the marks of the claws were noted on the ground, and these formed a print about three feet in circumference."

1909: Gratz

According to Lt. Paul Gratz' account from 1909, indigenous legends of the Congo River Basin in modern day Zambia spoke of a creature known by native people as the "Nsanga", which was said to inhabit the Lake Bangweulu region. Gratz described the creature as resembling a sauropod. This is one of the earliest references linking an area legend with dinosaurs, and has been argued to describe a Mokèlé-mbèmbé-like creature. In addition to hearing stories of the "Nsanga" Gratz was shown a hide which he was told belonged to the creature, while visiting Mbawala Island.

1909: Hagenbeck

1909 saw another mention of a Mokèlé-mbèmbé-like creature, in *Beasts and Men*, the autobiography of famed big-game hunter Carl Hagenbeck. He claimed to have heard from multiple independent sources about a creature living in the Congo region which was described as "half elephant, half dragon." Naturalist Joseph Menges had also told

Hagenbeck about an animal alleged to live in Africa, described as "some kind of dinosaur, seemingly akin to the brontosaurus." Another of Hagenbeck's sources, Hans Schomburgk, asserted that while at Lake Bangweulu, he noted a lack of hippopotami; his native guides informed him of a large hippo-killing creature that lived in Lake Bangweulu; however, as noted below, Schomburgk thought that native testimony was sometimes unreliable.

Reports of dinosaur-like creatures in Africa caused a minor sensation in the mass media, and newspapers in Europe and North America carried many articles on the subject in 1910-1911; some took the reports at face value, others were more skeptical.

1913: von Stein

Another report comes from the writings of German Captain Freiherr von Stein zu Lausnitz, who was ordered to conduct a survey of German colonies in what is now Cameroon in 1913. He heard stories of an enormous reptile alleged to live in the jungles, and included a description of the beast in his official report. According to Willy Ley, "von Stein worded his report with utmost caution," knowing it might be seen as unbelievable. Nonetheless, von Stein thought the tales were credible: trusted native guides had related the tales to him, and the stories were related to him by independent sources, yet featured many of the same details. Though von Stein's report was never formally published, portions were included in later works, including a 1959 book by Ley. Von Stein wrote:

The animal is said to be of a brownish-gray color with a smooth skin, its size is approximately that of an elephant; at least that of a hippopotamus. It is said to have a long and very flexible neck and only one tooth but a very long one; some say it is a horn. A few spoke about a long, muscular tail like that of an alligator. Canoes coming near it are said to be doomed; the animal is said to attack the vessels at once and to kill the crews but without eating the bodies. The creature is said to live in the caves that have been washed out by the river in the clay of its shores at sharp bends. It is said to climb the shores even at daytime in search of food; its diet is said to be entirely vegetable. This feature disagrees with a possible explanation as a myth. The preferred plant was shown to me, it is a kind of liana with large white blossoms, with a milky sap and applelike fruits. At the Ssombo River I was shown a path said to have been made by this animal in order to get at its food. The path was fresh and there were plants of the described type nearby. But since there were too many tracks of elephants, hippos, and other large mammals it was impossible to make out a particular spoor with any amount of certainty.

1919-1920: Smithsonian Institution

A 32-man-strong expedition was sent out to Africa from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. between 1919 and 1920. The objective of this expedition was to secure additional specimens of plants and animals. Moving picture photographers from the Universal Film Manufacturing Company accompanied the expedition, in order to document the life of interior Africa. According to cryptozoologists Loren Coleman and

Patrick Huyghe, authors of the *Field Guide to Lake Monsters*, "African guides found large, unexplained tracks along the bank of a river and later in a swamp the team heard mysterious roars, which had no resemblance with any known animal". However, the expedition was to end in tragedy. During a train-ride through a flooded area where an entire tribe was said to have seen the dinosaur, the locomotive suddenly derailed and turned over. Four team members were crushed to death under the cars and another half dozen seriously injured. The expedition was documented in the H.L. Shantz papers.

1927: Smith

1927 saw the publication of *Trader Horn*, the memoir of Alfred Aloysius Smith, who had worked for a British trading company in what is now Gabon in the late 1800s. In the book, Smith related tales told him by natives and explorers about a creature given two different names: "jago-nini" and "amali". The creature was said to be very large, according to Smith, and to leave large, round, three-clawed footprints.

1932: Sanderson

Cryptozoologist Ivan T. Sanderson claimed that, while in Cameroon in 1932, he witnessed an enormous creature in the Mainyu River. The creature, seemingly badly wounded, was only briefly visible as it lurched into the water. Darkly colored, the animal's head alone was nearly the size of a hippo, according to Sanderson. His native guides termed the creature "m'koo m'bemboo", in Sanderson's phonetic spelling.

1938: von Boxberger

In 1938, explorer Leo von Boxberger mounted an expedition in part to investigate Mokélé-mbèmbé reports. He collected much information from natives, but his notes and sketches had to be abandoned during a conflagration with local tribesmen.

1939: von Nolde

In 1939, the *German Colonial Gazette* (of Angola) published a letter by Frau Ilse von Nolde, who asserted that she had heard of the animal called "coye ya menia" ("water lion") from many claimed eyewitnesses, both natives and settlers. She described the long necked creature as living in the rivers, and being about the size of a hippo, if not somewhat larger. It was known especially for attacking hippos - even coming on to land to do so - though it never ate them.

1966: Ridel

In August or September 1966, Yvan Ridel took a picture of a large footprint with three toes, north-east of Loubomo, notable as hippopotami have four toes.

1976: Powell

In 1960, an expedition to Zaire was planned by herpetologist James H. Powell, Jr., scheduled for 1972, but was canceled by legal complications. By 1976, however, he had sorted out the international travel problems, and went to Gabon instead, inspired by the book *Trader Horn*. He secured finances from the Explorer's Club. Although Powell's ostensible research aim was to study crocodiles, he also planned to study Mokèlé-mbèmbé.

On this journey, Powell located a claimed eyewitness to an animal called "n'yamala", or "jago-nini", which Powell thought was the same as the "amali" of Smith's 1920's books. Natives also stated – without Powell's asking - that "n'yamala" ate the flowering liana, just as von Stein had been told half a century earlier. When Powell showed illustrations of various animals, both alive and extinct, to natives, they generally suggested that the *Diplodocus* was the closest match to "n'yamala".

1979: Powell

Powell returned to the same region in 1979, and claimed to receive further stories about "n'yamala" from additional natives. He also made an especially valuable contact in American missionary Eugene Thomas, who was able to introduce Powell to several claimed eyewitnesses. He decided that the n'yamala was probably identical to the Mokèlé-mbèmbé. Though seemingly herbivores, witnesses reported that the creatures were fearsome, and were known to attack canoes that were steered too close.

1979: Thomas

Reverend Eugene Thomas from Ohio, USA, told James Powell and Roy P. Mackal in 1979 a story that involved the purported killing of a Mokèlé-mbèmbé near Lake Tele in 1959. Thomas was a missionary who had served in the Congo since 1955, gathering much of the earliest evidence and reports, and claiming to have had two close-encounters himself. Natives of the Bangombe tribe who lived near Lake Tele were said to have constructed a large spiked fence in a tributary of Tele to keep Mokèlé-mbèmbé from interfering with their fishing. A Mokele-mbembe managed to break through, though it was wounded on the spikes, and the natives then killed the creature. As William Gibbons writes, "Pastor Thomas also mentioned that the two pygmies mimicked the cry of the animal as it was being attacked and speared... Later, a victory feast was held, during which parts of the animal were cooked and eaten. However, those who participated in the feast eventually died, either from food poisoning or from natural causes. I also believe that the mythification (magical powers, etc) surrounding Mokèlé-mbèmbés [sic] began with this incident." Furthermore, Mackal heard from witnesses that the stakes were in the same location in the tributary as of the early 1980s.

1980: Mackal-Powell

For his third expedition in February 1980, Powell was joined by Roy P. Mackal. Based on the testimony of claimed eyewitnesses, Powell and Mackal decided to focus their efforts on visiting the northern Congo regions, near the Likouala aux Herbes River and isolated Lake Tele. As of 1980, this region was little explored and largely unmapped, and the expedition was unable to reach Lake Tele. Powell and Mackal interviewed several people who claimed to have seen Mokèlé-mbèmbé, and Clark writes that the descriptions of the creature were "strikingly similar ... animals 15 to 30 feet (5 to 9 m) long (most of that a snakelike head and neck, plus long thin tail). The body was reminiscent of a hippo's, only more bulbous ... again, informants invariable pointed to a picture of a sauropod when shown pictures of various animals to which mokele-mbembe might be compared." Mackal and Powell were interviewed before and after this expedition for the TV program *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World*.

1981: Mackal-Bryan

Mackal and Jack Bryan mounted an expedition to the same area in late 1981. He was supposed to be joined by Herman Regusters, but they came in conflict in terms of finance, equipment and leadership and decided to split and make separate expeditions. Although, once again, Mackal was unable to reach Lake Tele, he gathered details on other cryptids and possible living dinosaurs, like the Emela-ntouka, Mbielu-Mbielu-Mbielu, Nguma-monene, Ndendeki (giant turtle), Mahamba (a giant crocodile of 15 meters), and Ngoima (a giant monkey-eating Eagle). Among his company were J. Richard Greenwell, M. Justin Wilkinson, and Congolese zoologist Marcellin Agnagna.

The 1981 expedition would feature the only "close encounters" of the Mackal expeditions. It occurred when, while on a river, they heard a loud splash and saw what Greenwell described as "[a] large wake (about 5") ... originating from the east bank". Greenwell asserted that the wake must have been caused by an "animate object" that was unlike a crocodile or hippo. Additionally, Greenwell noted that the encounter occurred at a sharp river bend where, according to natives, Mokèlé-mbèmbé frequently lived due to deep waters at those points.

1987 saw the publication of Mackal's book, *A Living Dinosaur?*, in which Mackal detailed his expedition and his conclusions about the Mokèlé-mbèmbé. Mackal tried, unsuccessfully, to raise funds for additional trips to Africa.

1981: Regusters

In 1981, American engineer Herman Regusters led his own Mokèlé-mbèmbé expedition, after having a conflict with the Mackal-Bryan expedition that he intended to join. Regusters and his wife Kia reached Lake Tele, staying there for about two weeks. Of the 30 expedition members (28 were men from the Boha village), only Herman Regusters and his wife claim to have observed a "long-necked member" traveling across Lake Tele. They also claim to have tried filming the being, but said their motion picture film was

ruined by the heat and humidity. Only one picture was released showing a large, but unidentifiable, object in the lake. The Regusters expedition returned with droppings and footprint casts, which Regusters believed were from the mokele-mbembe.

It also returned with sound recordings of "low windy roar [that] increased to a deep throated trumpeting growl", which Regusters believed to be the Mokèlé-mbèmbé's call. Regusters conclusions about this tape were later contradicted by Mackal, who asserted that the Mokèlé-mbèmbé did not have a vocal call. Mackal asserts that vocalizations are more correctly associated with the Emela-ntouka, a similarly described creature found in the Central African legends.

Herman Alphanso Regusters died on December 19, 2005, aged 72.

1983: Agnagna

Congolese biologist Marcellin Agnagna led the 1983 expedition of Congolese to Lake Tele. According to his own account, Agnagna claimed to have seen a Mokèlé-mbèmbé at close distance for about 20 minutes. He tried to film it, but said that in his excitement, he forgot to remove the motion picture camera's lens cap. In a 1984 interview, Agnagna claimed, contradictorily, that the film was ruined not because of the lens cap, but because he had the Super 8 camera on the wrong setting: macro instead of telephoto.

1985: Nugent

In December 1985 Rory Nugent claimed to have spotted the animal but to have been ordered at gunpoint by the natives not to approach it. Nugent claimed that they view the creature as a god "that you can not approach, but if he chooses, this god can approach you." He also provided some pictures, which are too blurry to be identifiable.

1985-1986: Operation Congo

Operation Congo took place between December 1985 and early 1986 by "four enthusiastic but naïve young Englishmen," led by Young Earth Creationist William Gibbons. They hired Agnagna to take them to Lake Tele, but did not report any Mokèlé-mbèmbé sightings. The British men did, however, assert that Agnagna did "little more than lie, cheat and steal (our film and supplies) and turn the porters against us." After criminal charges were filed against him, a Congolese court ordered Agnagna to return the items he had taken from the expedition.

Although the party found no evidence of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé, they discovered a new subspecies of monkey, which was later classified as the Crested mangabey monkey (*Cerocebus galeritus*), as well as fish and insect specimens.

1986: Botterweg

In 1986 another expedition was mounted, consisting of four Dutchmen, organized and led by Dutch biologist Ronald Botterweg, who already had experience with tropical rainforest research in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and who later visited, lived, and worked in several African countries. This expedition entered the Congo down the Ubangi River from Bangui in the Central African Republic, and managed, with considerable organizational challenges, to reach Lake Tele, with a group of guides from the village of Boha, some of which had also accompanied Regusters. Since they had only managed to obtain permission from the local authorities (not having passed by Brazzaville) for a very limited period in the area, they only spent about three days at the lake before returning to Boha. During their stay at the lake they spent as much time as possible observing the lake and its surroundings through from their provisional camp on the north-eastern shore, and navigating part of it by dug-out canoe. No signs of any large unknown animal were found.

On the way back, arriving at the town of Impfondo, they were detained by Congolese biologist Agnagna and his team, who had just arrived there for an expedition with the British team of Operation Congo, allegedly for not possessing the proper documents. They were detained for a short while, and the largest part of their film and color slides were confiscated, before being released and leaving the country (again by the Ubangui river and Bangui).

No signs, tracks or anything tangible or visible of the alleged animals was seen or shown whatsoever. Tracks, droppings, and other signs of forest elephants and gorillas were commonly seen, as well as crocodiles in the lake. Despite the fact that the African guides were extremely capable and experienced hunters, guides and experts of the African rainforest, they were not able to show any track or sign of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé and none of the several interviewed guides even claimed ever to have seen one personally, nor its tracks. Remarkable is the fact that the guides that were interviewed by the Dutch expedition and that also accompanied Regusters, stated that they never saw a Mokèlé-mbèmbé during that expedition, although Regusters himself claims to have seen one.

This expedition received some attention in the Dutch media (radio, TV, and newspapers) from 1985 to 1987.

1988 Japanese expedition

In 1988 a Japanese expedition went to the area, led by the Congolese wildlife official Jose Bourges. Members of a Japanese film crew allegedly captured the first evidence of Mokele-mbembe. As they were filming aerial footage from a small plane over the area of Lake Tele, intending to obtain some shots for a documentary, the cameraman noticed a disturbance in the water. He struggled to maintain focus on the object, which was creating a noticeable wake. About 15 seconds of footage was captured, which skeptics have identified as either two men in a canoe or swimming elephants.

1989 O'Hanlon

British writer Redmond O'Hanlon traveled to the region in 1989 and not only failed to discover any evidence of Mokèlé-mbèmbé but found out that many local people believe the creature to be a spirit rather than a physical being, and that claims for its authentic existence have been fabricated. His experience is chronicled in *Granta* no. 39 (1992) and in his book *Congo Journey* (UK, 1996), published as *No Mercy* in the USA (1997).

1992 Operation Congo 2

William Gibbons launched a second expedition in 1992 which he dubbed "Operation Congo 2". Along with Rory Nugent, Gibbons searched almost two thirds of the Bai River along with two poorly charted lakes: Lake Fouloukuo and Lake Tibeke, both of which local folklore held to be sites of Mokèlé-mbèmbé activity. The expedition failed to provide any conclusive evidence of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé, though they did further document local legends and Nugent took two photographs of unidentified objects in the water, one of which he claimed was the creature's head.

1998: Extreme Expeditions

The Extreme Expeditions team was set to travel to the Likouala Region, however the 1997-1999 civil war made this impossible.

1999: Fay

The 1999 megatransect into the wilderness of the Congo basin by the biologist and Africa explorer J. Michael Fay did not reveal any trace of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé. However, it must be noted that the trek did not pass through the Likouala and Lake Tele regions.

2000: Extreme Expeditions

In January 2000, the Congo Millennium Expedition (aka. DINO2000) took place, the second one by Extreme Expeditions, consisting of Andrew Sanderson, Adam Davies, Keith Townley, Swedish explorer Jan-Ove Sundberg, and five others.

2000: Gibbons

In November 2000, William Gibbons did some preliminary research in Cameroon for a future expedition. He was accompanied by David Wetzel, and videographer Elena Dugan. While visiting with a group of pygmies, they were informed about an animal called Ngoubou, a horned creature. The pygmies asserted it was not a regular rhinoceros, as it had more than one horn (six horns on the frill in one eyewitness account), and that the father of one of the senior members of the community had killed one with a spear a number of years ago. The locals have noted a firm dwindle in the population of these animals lately, and are hard to find. Gibbons identified the animal with a *Styracosaurus*, but, in addition to being extinct, these are only known to have inhabited North America.

2001: CryptoSafari/BCSCC

In February 2001, in a joint venture between CryptoSafari and the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club (BCSCC), a research team traveled to Cameroon consisting of William Gibbons, Scott T. Norman, John Kirk and writer Robert A. Mullin. Their local guide was Pierre Sima Noutchegei. They were also accompanied by a BBC film crew. No evidence of Mokèlé-mbèmbé was found.

2006: Marcy

In January 2006, the Milt Marcy Expedition traveled to the Dja river in Cameroon, near the Congolese border. It consisted of Milt Marcy, Peter Beach, Rob Mullin and Pierre Sima. They spoke to witnesses that claimed to have observed a Mokèlé-mbèmbé only two days before, but they did not discover the animal themselves. However, they did return with what they believe to be a plaster cast of a Mokèlé-mbèmbé footprint.

2006: National Geographic

A May 2006 episode called "Super Snake" of the National Geographic series *Dangerous Encounters* included an expedition headed by Brady Barr to Lake Tele. No unknown animals were found.

2008: Destination Truth

In March 2008 an episode of the SyFy (formerly the SciFi Channel) series *Destination Truth* involved investigator Joshua Gates and crew searching for the elusive dinosaur. They did not visit the Likouala Region, which includes Lake Tele, but they visited Lake Bangweulu in Zambia instead, which had reports of a similar creature in the early 20th century, called the "'nsanga". The crew of *Destination Truth* kept calling the animal "Mokèlé-mbèmbé" to the locals, when that name is only used in the Republic of the Congo. The name used in that particular spot is "chipekwe". Their episode featured a videotaped close encounter, but filmed from a great distance. On applying digital video enhancement techniques, the encounter proved to be nothing more than two submerged hippopotamus.

2009: MonsterQuest

In March 2009 an episode of the History Channel series *MonsterQuest* involved Bill Gibbons, Rob Mullin, local guide Pierre Sima and a two-man film crew from White Wolf Productions. It took place in Cameroon, in the region of Dja, Boumba, and Nkogo Rivers, near the border with the Republic of the Congo. The episode aired in the summer of 2009, and also featured an interview with Roy P. Mackal and Peter Beach of the Milt Marcy Expedition, 2006. While no sightings were reported on the expedition, the team found evidence of a large underground cave with air vents. The team also received sonar readings of very long, serpentine shapes underwater.

In cryptozoology

According to science writer and cryptozoologist Willy Ley, while there are sufficient anecdotal accounts to suggest "that there is a large and dangerous animal hiding in the shallow waters and rivers of Central Africa", the body of evidence remains insufficient for any realistic conclusions to be drawn on what the Mokèlé-mbèmbé may be.

According to the writings of biologist and cryptid researcher Roy Mackal, who mounted two unsuccessful expeditions to find it, it is unlikely that the Mokèlé-mbèmbé is a mammal or an amphibian, leaving a reptile as the only plausible candidate. Of all the living reptiles, Mackal argues that the iguana and the monitor lizards bear the closest resemblance to the Mokèlé-mbèmbé, though, at 15 to 30 feet (9.1 m) long, the Mokèlé-mbèmbé would exceed the size of any known living examples of such reptiles.

Mackal judged available evidence as consistent, writing, "I believe the description of the Mokèlé-mbèmbé is accounted for in all respects by an identification with a small sauropod dinosaur". Mackal also judged the existence of an undiscovered relict sauropod to be plausible on the grounds that there were large amounts of uninhabited and unexplored territory in the region where a creature might live, and on the grounds that other large creatures such as elephants exist in the region, living in large open clearings (called "bai") as well as in thicker wooded areas.

Chapter- 11

Lindworm

Lindworm

(Lindworm snake, whiteworm)



Also known as a "snake" (*ormr*) or "dragon" (*dreki*),

lindworms were popular motifs on runestones
in 11th century Sweden.

This runestone is identified as U 871.

Creature

Grouping Cryptid

Data

Country Various

Region Northern Europe

Lindworm (cognate with Old Norse *linnormr* 'constrictor snake', Norwegian *linnorm* 'dragon', Swedish *lindorm* 'serpent', German *Lindwurm* 'dragon') in British heraldry, is a technical term for a wingless bipedal dragon often with a venomous bite.

Etymology

In modern Scandinavian languages, the cognate **lindorm** can refer to any 'serpent' or monstrous snake, but in Norwegian heraldry, it is also a technical term for a 'seaserpent' (*sjøorm*), although it may also stand for a 'lindworm' in British heraldry.

Generally, the word lindworm stood for the Latin word *draco* (whence Norse *dreki*), thus could refer to any draconic creature, from a real life constrictor snake to a legendary dragon. In European mythology and folklore, creatures identified as a 'lindworm' may be winged or wingless, plus quadrapedal, bipedal or limbless. However late persistent tradition designates the lindworm as having no limbs, or just front claws (so that it must slither) in contrast to wyverns that have only hind-quarters (and possible claws on the end of its wings) and in contrast to dragons which have four limbs and may either be winged or wingless.

Lindworms in tales

Saxo Grammaticus begins his story about Ragnar Loðbrók, a semi-legendary king of Denmark and Sweden, by telling of how a certain *Þóra Borgarhjörtr* receives a cute baby lindworm, curled up inside of a casket, as a gift from her father Herraúðr, the Earl of Götaland. As the lindworm grows, it eventually encircles the hall of the Earl and takes Þóra hostage, demanding to be supplied with no less than one ox a day, until she is freed by a young man in fur-trousers named Ragnar, who thus obtains the byname of *Loðbrók* ("hairy britches") and becomes Þóra's husband.

In many descriptions, the lindworm is wingless, with a poisonous bite, like a poisonous snake or Komodo dragon.

The dragon Fáfnir from the Norse *Völsunga* saga appears in the German *Nibelungenlied* as a *lindwurm* that lived near Worms.



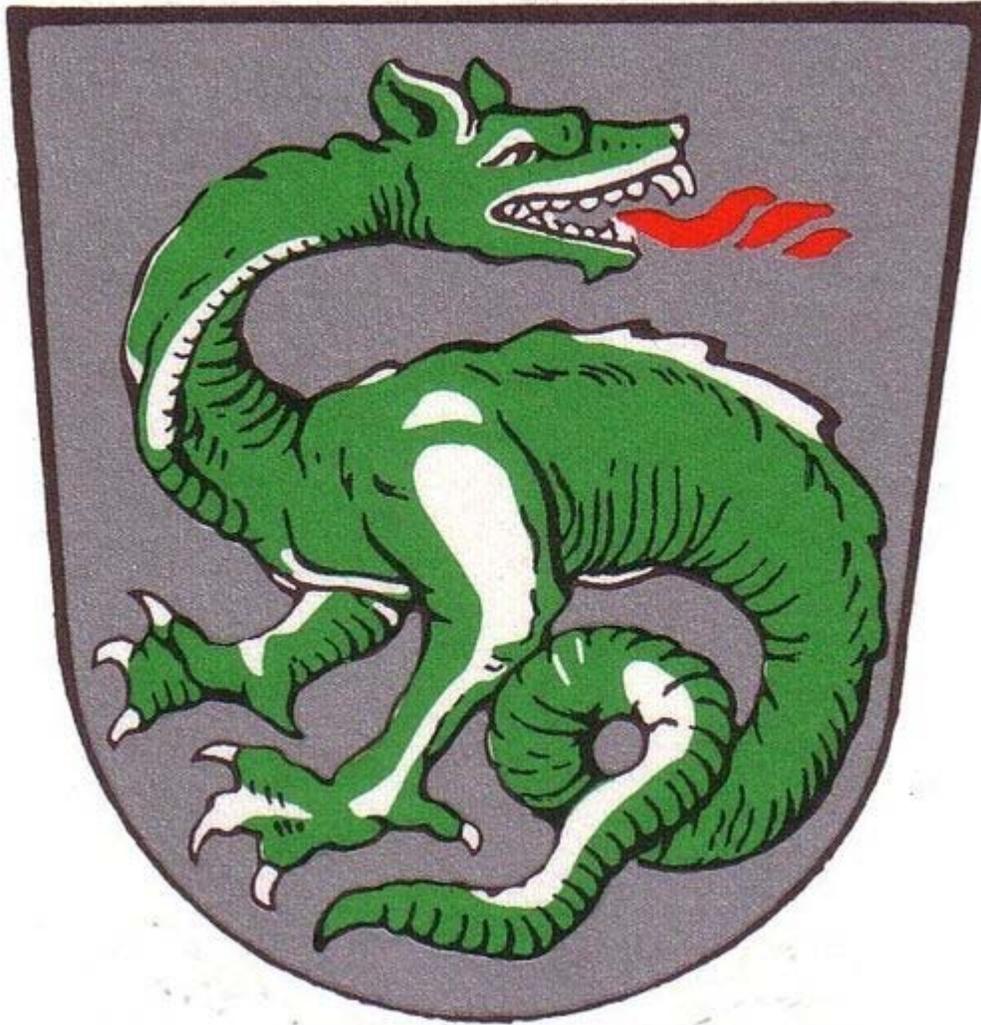
The lindwormwell in Klagenfurt.

Another German tale from the 13th century tells of a lindworm that lived near Klagenfurt. Flooding threatened travelers along the river, and the presence of a dragon was blamed. The story tells that a Duke offered a reward for anyone who could capture it, so some young men tied a bull to a chain, and when the lindworm swallowed the bull, it was hooked like a fish and killed. The head of a 1590 lindworm statue in Klagenfurt is modeled on the skull of a woolly rhinoceros found in a nearby quarry in 1335. It has been cited as the earliest reconstruction of an extinct animal.

The shed skin of a lindworm was believed to greatly increase a person's knowledge about nature and medicine.

A "dragon" with the head of a "salamander" features in the legend of the Lambton Worm. The dragon who was caught in the River Wear when young, was dropped in a well and after about 3–4 years became a beast and started terrorizing the countryside of Durham while the fisher who caught it was away at the Crusades. The villagers caught on and left a sacrifice of milk for the creature, and when the fisher returned home, it was prophesied that he would be the only one who could kill it. He was given armor with bladed spikes to protect himself from the worm's crushing weight, but he had to kill the first living thing he saw so his father arranged so that after the lindworm was killed, he would blow a horn

and a hound dog would be released and he would kill that instead of a human. Eventually he cut its head off but instead of releasing the dog he ran to his son oh and if he did not kill the first living thing his family would be cursed for 9 generations but he could not kill his father so his family was cursed. Bram Stoker used this legend in his short story *Lair of the White Worm*.



Lindworm
(wingless bipedal dragon) in British heraldry

The sighting of a "whiteworm" once was thought to be an exceptional sign of good luck.

The knucker or the Tatzelwurm is a wingless biped, and often identified as a lindworm. In legends, lindworms are often very large and eat cattle and bodies, sometimes invading churchyards and eating the dead from cemeteries.

In the 19th-century tale of "Prince Lindworm" (also "King Lindworm"), from Scandinavian folklore, a "half-man half-snake" lindworm is born, as one of twins, to a queen, who, in an effort to overcome her childless situation, has followed the advice of an old crone, who tells her to eat two onions. She did not peel the first onion, causing the first twin to be a lindworm. The second twin boy is perfect in every way. When he grows up and sets off to find a bride, the lindworm insists that a bride be found for him before his younger brother can marry. Since his bride must love him willingly and none of the chosen maidens do, he eats each new bride they bring him, this creates a slight problem for the kingdom until a shepherd's daughter who spoke to the same crone is brought to marry him. She comes wearing every dress she owns. The lindworm tells her to take off her dress, but she insists he shed a skin for each dress she removes. Eventually he is out of skin and underneath is a handsome prince. Some versions of the story omit the lindworm's twin, and the gender of the soothsayer varies.

Late belief in lindorm in Sweden



... and in the municipal device in Klagenfurt.

The belief in the reality of a *lindorm*, a giant limbless serpent, persisted well into the 19th century in some parts. The Swedish folklorist Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius collected in the mid 19th century stories of legendary creatures in Sweden. He met several people in Småland, Sweden that said they had encountered giant snakes, sometimes equipped with a long mane. He gathered around 50 eyewitness reports, and in 1884 he set up a big reward for a captured specimen, dead or alive. Hyltén-Cavallius was ridiculed by Swedish scholars, and since nobody ever managed to claim the reward, it resulted in a cryptozoological defeat. Rumours about lindworms as actual animals in Småland rapidly died out (Sjögren, 1980).

Chapter- 12

Fish-man

The **fish-man of Liérganes** (Spanish: *hombre pez*), is a cryptid which belongs to the mythology of Cantabria, located in the north of Spain. The fish-man of Liérganes would be an amphibian human-looking being, a metamorphosis of a real human being who was lost at sea. His story was examined by the Enlightenment writer Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, who somehow claimed that the story of the fish-man of Liérganes was true.

The legend

According to Feijoo, legend has it that around 1650 there lived in Liérganes (a very small village in Cantabria, northern Spain), a couple formed by Francisco de la Vega and María del Casar. The couple had four sons, and when the father died, the mother, lacking of means, decided to send one of her sons to Bilbao so that he could make his living as a carpenter. This son, which according to Feijoo was also called Francisco, lived in Bilbao as a carpenter till 1674 when, on Saint John's day eve, he went with some friends to swim into Bilbao's estuary. Although he was allegedly a good swimmer, the currents of the river took him and could not get to the shore. He was last seen swimming away into the sea, and thought to had drown and died.

However, five years later, in 1679, while some fishers where seafaring in the bay of Cadiz, in southern Spain, they found that a strange looking creature had become entangled into their fishing nets, and was trying to fight his way out. Although they tried to capture it, the creature was able to set itself free. During the following weeks, several fishers reported having seen the creature till in the end they were able to capture it by tricking it with bread loaf. When they got the creature on board, they found that the creature had indeed a human shape: he looked like a young man, of white skin and thin red hair. However, he also showed some fish-like signs, such as a strip of scales that when down from his throat to his stomach, another one that covered his spine, and what seemingly were guts around his neck.

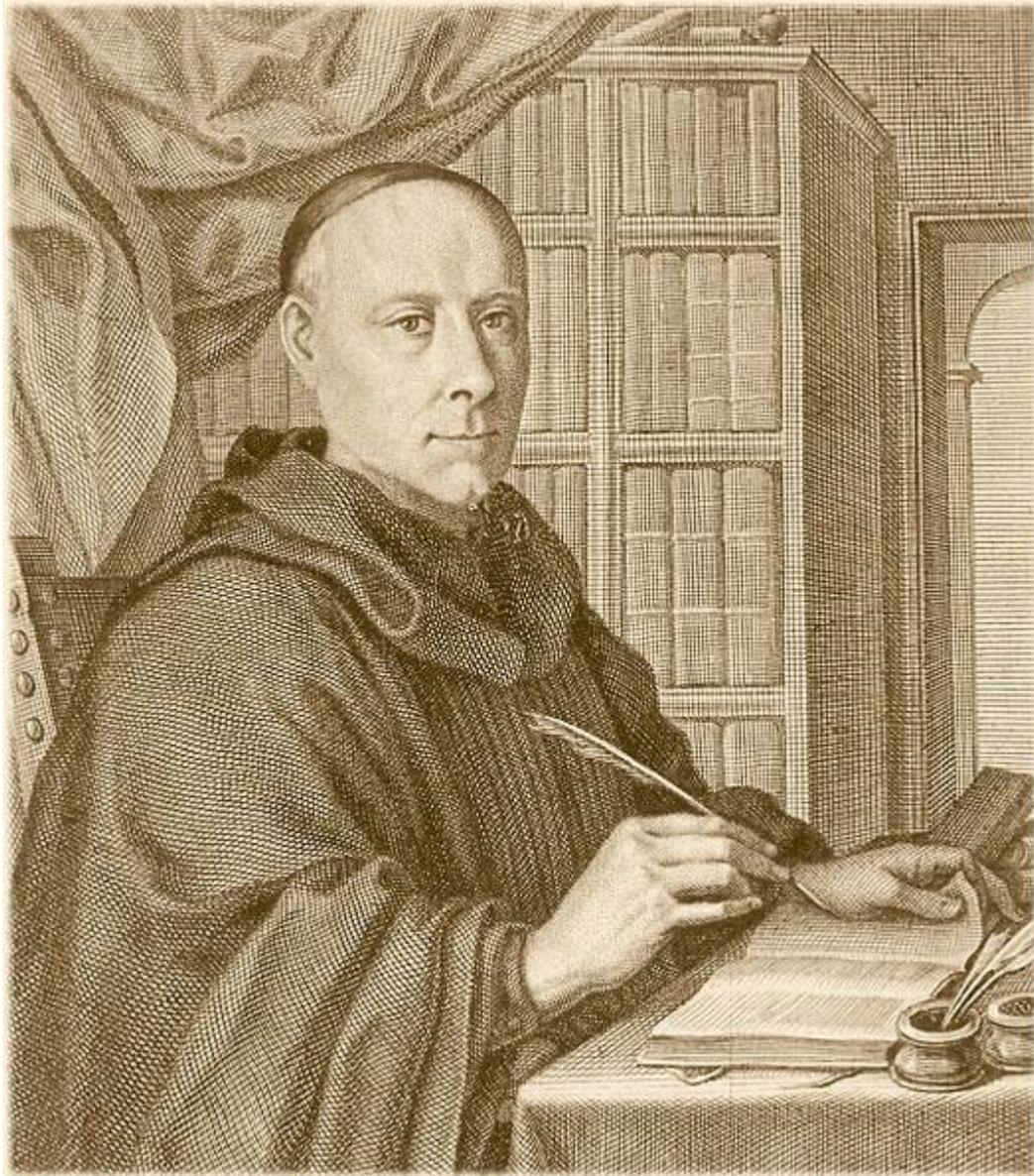
Thinking of it as some kind of monsters, the fishermen took the creature to the convent of Saint Francis nearby, where the creature was allegedly exorcised and then interrogated in several languages without any success. After several days of questioning, the creature

finally articulated a word, "Liérganes", whose meaning nobody knew. This extraordinary event soon spread all around the Cadiz bay area, and nobody was able to recognise the meaning of Liérganes till a sailor from northern Spain who happened to be in the port of Cadiz commented that closed to his home town there was a small village called Liérganes. Domingo de la Cantolla, secretary of the Holy Office, confirmed that there was a place called Liérganes near the city of Santander from which he himself came. The bishop of Cadiz thus sent word to Santander regarding the founding of the creature, including a physical description so that anybody somehow related to the creature could recognise it. From Liérganes came the word that no creature had ever been seen around the town, and that the only extraordinary event that had happened lately was the tragic death of Francisco de la Vega in Bilbao five years ago, who was indeed red haired.

A friar in the convent where the creature was being kept postulated that the fish-man could actually be Francisco de la Vega, so he asked and got permission for taking him to Liérganes. Allegedly, when they were close to Liérganes, the friar let the fish-man free and followed him while the creature was able to guide him directly to Liérganes, and not only that, he took him directly to the house of María del Casar, who recognised him as his late son Francisco.

The fish-man was then left to live with his family, though he kept a tranquil yet odd lifestyle: he would always walk barefoot, and unless he was given clothes, he would not care to walk nude around the place. He never really talk; at most, he would sometimes mutter words such as *tobacco*, *bread* or *wine*, but without any link to the desire of smoking, eating or drinking. When he ate, he did it with avidity, but then he was able not to eat for a week at a time. He was easygoing and even obliging, and whichever simple task he was asked to do, he would do it promptly but without enthusiasm. After nine years living in such a fashion, he went to the sea to swim and was never seen again.

Controversy regarding Feijoo's claim



Benito Jerónimo Feijoo

In his tale of the legend, Feijoo offers a great deal of details, dates and names. He claims that when he first heard about the fish-man's story, he could not believe it, but after having confronted all the testimonies and documents on the case that had survived, as well as interviewing several people who had lived when the fish-man had purportedly appear (Feijoo wrote around 1720, so many people living in 1674 could have told him the tale). He finally concluded that, as far as the facts where concerned, a fish-man had appeared in Cadiz, had been taken to Lierganes, and lived there for some time before disappearing again. He quoted several sources of which, being educated people, he seemed confident enough, including the Marquis of Valbuena (a finely educated

nobleman from Santander), don Gaspar Melchor de la Riba Agüero (a knight from the Order of Santiago from Gajano, a town near Liérganes), and don Dionisio Rubalcava from Solares, who allegedly knew and met Francisco de la Vega.

The fame of Feijoo as an extremely rigorous writer who bitterly criticised superstition and frauds was such that it has been argued that the story could somehow be true, as it seems unlikely Feijoo would have backed it without having good reasons to do so. Still, stories about fish-man being captured were not unheard of in Europe, not the like in Spain, where writers such as Joviano Potano, Alejandro de Alejandro and Pedro Mexía had already written about similar stories. Apparently, Feijoo somehow believed in the existence of fish-man, as he later further extended his views offering a set of scientific arguments backing his claim.

Gregorio Marañón, a reputed 20th century Spanish scholar and physician, argued that whereas the story about the fish-man itself was undoubtedly false, the amount of testimonies offered by Feijoo and others related to the Liérganes' fish-man could not be promptly discarded. According to him, several elements in the tale such as the creature being almost mute and unable to pronounce a word, his white skin, red hair, the scaly skin, the fact that he would allegedly bit his fingernails or that he would walk as wandering are typical symptoms of cretinism, an illness which is endemic from mountainous regions and which was quite common in the Santander area at that time. He concluded that after having somehow wandered his way from Bilbao to Cadiz, he was probably found around a fishing area there and his strange appearance would have done the rest.

Chapter- 13

Morgawr (Cryptid)

	Morgawr
	Creature
Grouping	Cryptid
Sub grouping	Sea serpent
	Data
First reported	1896
Last reported	1999
Country	United kingdom
Region	Falmouth Bay, Cornwall

Morgawr (meaning *sea giant* in Cornish), is a plesiosaur-like cryptid purported to live in the sea near Falmouth Bay, Cornwall. It has been photographed and even caught on tape.

First sighted in 1906, various theories have been proposed for as to the identity of this sea serpent, ranging from a hoax or mistaken identity, to the suggestion that the creature is a surviving species of Plesiosaur or that it is a previously undiscovered species of long necked seal. In the absence of a carcass or a living specimen, identity explanations depend only on eyewitness accounts and low-quality photographs.

Chronology/Timeline

- 1876: A sea serpent is allegedly captured by fishers at Gerran's Bay.
- Allegedly sighted in 1906 off Land's End.

- Pendennis Point, September 1975. Two witnesses claim to have seen a humped figure with 'stumpy horns' and bristles on its long neck, catching a conger eel in its mouth.
- Rosemullion Head, Falmouth, February 1976. 'Mary F' sent two photographs, apparently of Morgawr, to the *Falmouth Packet*, along with a covering letter. She said "it looked like an elephant waving its trunk, but the trunk was a long neck with a small head at the end, like a snake's head. It had humps on its back which moved in a funny way... the animal frightened me. I would not like to see it any closer. I do not like the way it moved when swimming." Neither Mary F or the negatives have ever been traced. Noted mystery writers and photographers Janet and Colin Bord have examined first-generation copy prints, and "feel that these photographs could well be genuine."
- 25 miles south of Lizard Point, July 1976. Fishers John Cock and George Vinnicombe claim to sight a creature whose neck "reared 4 feet up in the water". They estimated the animal's length at 22 feet.
- Parson's Beach, Mawnan, November 1976. Tony 'Doc' Shiels claims to photograph the creature lying low in the water. He mentions "little stumpy horns" on its head, and he describes the body of the animal as 15 feet long.
- Gerran's Bay, August 1985. Christopher and Susan Waldron of King's Stanley, Gloucestershire report on having seen the creature whilst on holiday. It was noted that Mrs Waldron was watching her husband swimming in the sea, when she noticed a large silhouette under the surface behind him. The shape was described to be that of a large, long necked creature.
- Devil's Point, off Plymouth, 1987. An experienced diver sees a dog-like head on a neck rising 1 metre out of the sea. He notes that it is in a spot favoured by conger eels.
- Gerran's Bay, 1999. John Holmes videotapes what is claimed to be an unidentified creature in the sea.

Hoax tape

In 1991 *Strange* magazine published transcripts from a series of tapes made by Shiels, in which he discusses the possibility of hoaxing the people of Falmouth with a sea-serpent story. The article reports him saying:

- "I am a born hoaxer" (30 January 1976)
- "I think that I mentioned that I am hoping to hoax the people of Falmouth, and thereabouts, here in Cornwall, into thinking that there is a Cornish sea monster on the loose." (30 January 1976)

- "They have to be bad photographs in order to seem authentic." (4 February 1976)
- "Of course we are going to have our hoaxing session here with the Cornish sea monster..." (19 February 1976)
- "[There is] a great revival in public interest in things that are strange and mysterious, and we may as well ride the crest of this wave as long as we possibly can..." (19 February 1976)
- "A fisherman friend of mine... he is a good man to start a little bit of a rumor going down here concerning the famous Cornish sea monster as will be, heh-heh. We hope to build the thing up during the next three or four weeks. Paul has agreed to see something strange within the next few days when he is fishing." (19 February 1976) (note, however, that this fisher is not one of the two fishers listed as witness above).

Chapter- 14

Ameranthropoides Loysi

Ameranthropoides loysi

(de Loys' Ape

Didi)

Creature

Grouping	Cryptids
Sub grouping	Hominid, primate

Data

First reported	1920
Country	Colombia/Venezuela Border
Region	Tarra River
Habitat	Rainforest

"*Ameranthropoides loysi*" (**De Loys' Ape**) is allegedly a large primate encountered by François De Loys in South America. Apart from testimony of claimed eyewitnesses, the only evidence of the animal is one photograph.

Controversy continues about the authenticity of the animal, with critics contending that the de Loys' Ape is a hoax and that the photograph shows only a posed spider monkey carcass, though cryptozoology enthusiasts and a few others support the notion that Loys did indeed encounter an unknown primate.

Encounter

François de Loys, a Swiss oil geologist, led an expedition from 1917 to 1920 to search for petroleum in an area along the border between Colombia and Venezuela, primarily near Lake Maracaibo. The expedition was unsuccessful, and furthermore suffered greatly due to disease and skirmishes with natives; of the 20 members of de Loys' group, only four survived.

According to de Loys' later report, in 1920, while camped near the Tarra River, two large creatures approached the group. Initially, de Loys thought they were bears, but then noted that they were monkey-like, holding onto shrubs and branches. The creatures – one male, one female – seemed angry, said de Loys, howling and gesturing, then defecating into their hands and flinging feces at the expedition. Fearing for their safety, the expedition shot and killed the male; the female then fled. De Loys and his companions recognized that they had encountered something unusual. The animal resembled a spider monkey, but was much larger: 1.57 meters tall (compared to the largest spider monkeys, which are just over a meter tall). De Loys counted 32 teeth (most New World monkeys have 36 teeth), and noted that the creature had no tail.

They posed the creature by seating it on a crate and propping a stick under its chin. After taking a single photograph, de Loys reported, they skinned the creature, intending to keep its hide and skull. Both items were later abandoned by the troubled expedition.

According to other reports, more photographs were taken but were lost either in a flood or during the capsizing of the scientists' boat.

Controversy



A spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*), for comparison. This species is not usually found where de Loys' specimen was shot however.

After this publicity, de Loys' account was deemed unreliable by several critics, notably Sir Arthur Keith, a prominent anthropologist. Keith suggested de Loys was trying to pass off a normal spider monkey as something more exotic. The photograph did not clearly indicate the creature's size, and Keith also noted that by not photographing the creature's posterior, de Loys had left open the question of whether or not it had a tail.

According to the cryptozoological researcher, Ivan T. Sanderson, the particular area of South America in which de Loys allegedly found the ape has no reports of oversized hominids. Sanderson believes it to be nothing more than a spider monkey. He says of the mystery surrounding the ape, "it is an outright hoax, and an obnoxious one at that, being a deliberate deception."

Another cryptozoologist, Loren Coleman, also supports the hoax theory, and even goes as far as to say that Montandon perpetrated it in order to support his views on human origin. Montandon had suggested the name *Ameranthropoides loysi* to propose that the specimen was a missing link ancestor of the Western Hemisphere's "red" people. He had previously stated that Africans evolved from gorillas and Asians from orangutans. However, as researcher Richard Ravalli has pointed out, Coleman failed to point to any direct evidence of a hoax by either Montandon or de Loys. Coleman has recently noted that the stump of a banana tree can be seen at the right side of the entire photograph. Bananas are not indigenous to South America, making their occurrence in the remote jungle highly implausible, thus making it probable that the photo was not shot at the location de Loys indicated.

Others have argued that de Loys could have encountered an unknown creature. The crate the creature was posed on was similar to ones commonly used for transporting gasoline, which measured just under 18 inches tall. Assuming this crate was the common type, its size would appear to support de Loys' measurement of the creature, although others say the crate is only 15 inches tall and the ape would measure under 4 feet - smaller than de Loys' claims. Researcher Michael Shoemaker, while noting some similarities to spider monkeys, argues that the creature has a few pronounced differences: its chest and hands are different; its face is much more oval than the spider monkey's distinctively triangular visage; it lacks the spider monkey's pronounced underbite; and has a much higher forehead than spider monkeys.

Chapter- 15

Bukit Timah Monkey Man

Bukit Timah Monkey Man

(BTM, BTMM)

Creature

Grouping	Cryptid
Sub grouping	Hominid, Primate (Hybrid)
Similar creatures	Orang Pendek, Monkey-man of Delhi

Data

First reported	1805
Last reported	2007
Country	Singapore
Region	Bukit Timah
Habitat	Forest

The **Bukit Timah Monkey Man**, commonly abbreviated as **BTM** or **BTMM**, is a cryptid said to inhabit Singapore, chiefly in the forested Bukit Timah region. The creature is often cited as a forest-dwelling hominid or primate, and is also accounted for as being immortal; however, its exact identity remains unknown, and its existence disputed. Documentation of the BTM is sparse and scattered; the creature is largely considered a product of local folklore. Karl Shuker, a leading cryptozoologist, however has featured the BTM at length in his book *Extraordinary Animals Revisited* (2007).

Alleged sightings of the animal are rare. Records come mainly from Malay folklore, accounts from Japanese soldiers in World War II, and occasional unconfirmed reports from local residents. The first claimed sighting is said to have occurred in about 1805; the

most recent was in 2007. The BTM is said to be hominid-like, greyish in colour, and between one and two meters (3 to 6 feet) in height, with a bipedal gait. All sightings have been centred upon the Bukit Timah region, which gives rise to the cryptid's name.

If the creature were to truly exist, its living habitat would be markedly small. The Bukit Timah rainforest, its habitation, is 164 hectares (410 acres) in area, amounting to approximately 1.6 square kilometres (0.62 sq mi), and the area is frequented by visitors and park watchers. Additionally, the area is wholly enclosed by urban settlements, being just 12 kilometres from the city centre, which would likely increase detection by humans. Some experts believe these claims to be a case of mistaken identity; that the observations were probably that of large Crab-eating Macaques, a monkey species common to the area. Cases such as these are also often dismissed as mass hysteria at work.

Sightings

Sightings of the BTM are rare, almost all in the Bukit Timah region and its vicinity. The first report of the creature came in 1805, before the colonial British discovery of Singapore, when a Malay elder claimed to have seen an upright-walking, monkey-faced creature in the Bukit Timah area. Japanese soldiers also reported the creature during World War II. Richard Freeman, a cryptozoologist, has argued that an animal such as the Monkey Man could have easily inhabited Singapore in the pre-colonial days.

The most recent sighting of the BTM was in 2007. A Singapore tabloid, *The New Paper*, has since featured the cryptid on its papers, gathering accounts from a number of witnesses. Amongst those highlighted in the article are:

A 48-year-old taxi driver, who lives around the neighbourhood of Serangoon, was quoted as saying:

"When driving my taxi past the fire station on Upper Bukit Timah Road in the middle of the night I hit what I thought was a child that ran out in the middle of the road. It was on the car bonnet and then snarled at me - it was like a monkey but so big! It ran off injured covered in blood, and holding its arm which was broken."

A 29-year-old housewife said:

"I was going to the bus stop early one morning to catch the bus 171. It was very foggy and cold. I thought I saw a tramp going through the rubbish bin, however when I approached, it called out with a loud animal sound and ran back into the forest. It was grey, hairy and ran on two legs, but had a monkey's face. I was shivering with fear and called the police but to no avail."

A 65-year-old retiree from the neighbourhood of Bukit Panjang recalled the creature from his childhood, saying:

"We were always told as children when in the Kampung not to go near the forest at night due to the Monkey Man. Of course we never saw it ourselves but it was always some uncle or friend of the family who had seen it. Once we were shown these footprints near the forest road, and I remember the strong urine smell. Whenever we heard shrieks coming from the jungle we would tell each other- don't disturb the Monkey Man."

The Chinese-language paper Shin Min Daily News also reported on the BTM in 2008, stating that the Monkey Man would appear after dark in the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. The paper described the creature as having the face of a monkey but walking upright like a man; it dispatched a journalist to comb for evidence, but the expedition proved futile. The Bukit Timah Nature Reserve official take provided at that point in time was that people were mistaking the common long-tailed (aka crab-eating) macaque monkeys for the Monkey Man.

Similarities with local monkeys



A Crab-eating Macaque. Such monkeys are frequently found roaming in the forested Bukit Timah rainforest

Monkeys are often seen roaming about and encountered by visitors in the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, and the Crab-eating Macaque monkeys in particular bear similarities to the descriptions of the Monkey Man. Both species are bipedal hominids with greyish appearances. The clearest distinction between the two would be in size; the Crab-eating

Macaques are typically 38-55 centimetres in body length, while the BTM's height is said to be between one to two metres. Height perception, however, may also be influenced by factors such as darkness and angular perception.

Human-macaque interaction in general is not without conflict; the situation is aggravated in Singapore, where humans often provide food, eventually leading to aggression in macaque monkeys when they fail to obtain food in subsequent encounters. Additionally, in Singapore, frequent contact tends to make the monkeys fearless towards humans, and they sometimes chose to gather food directly from their human counterparts instead of foraging in the forest. There have been incidents where macaque monkeys raided houses to gather food, occasionally leading to standoffs with residents.

Besides local monkeys already existing in the region, the Monkey Man has been connected to other cryptids. The most similar link would be the Orang Pendek, a similarly described cryptid that resides in the Indonesian island of Sumatra; some cryptozoologists have even placed the BTM as part of the Orang Pendek species. The creature is also frequently likened to the reported Monkey-man of New Delhi, in India. In the latter case, many have believed mass hysteria as the sole cause of the perpetuation. The two cryptids have themselves been linked to the Spring Heeled Jack, an extraordinary leaper that frightened civilians in England in the 20th century, in a feature by Terry Deary in his book *True Monster Stories* (1992).

Chapter- 16

Chupacabra

Chupacabras

Creature

Grouping Cryptid

Data

First reported March 1995

Puerto Rico

Country Mexico

United States

Region Central and North America

The **chupacabras**, from *chupar* "to suck" and *cabra* "goat", literally "goat sucker") is a legendary cryptid rumored to inhabit parts of the Americas. It is associated more recently with sightings of an allegedly unknown animal in Puerto Rico (where these sightings were first reported), Mexico, and the United States, especially in the latter's Latin American communities. The name comes from the animal's reported habit of attacking and drinking the blood of livestock, especially goats.

Physical descriptions of the creature vary. Eyewitness sightings have been claimed as early as 1995 in Puerto Rico, and have since been reported as far north as Maine, and as far south as Chile. It is supposedly a heavy creature, the size of a small bear, with a row of spines reaching from the neck to the base of the tail.

Biologists and wildlife management officials view the chupacabras as a contemporary legend.

In July 2010, an animal was killed and reported to be a chupacabra, but found to be a coyote with a severe parasite infection. In October of that year, University of Michigan scientists theorised that parasite-riddled coyotes (specifically the parasites responsible for scabies and mange) were likely the basis for the chupacabra legend.

History

The first reported attacks occurred in March 1995 in Puerto Rico. In this attack, eight sheep were discovered dead, each with three puncture wounds in the chest area and completely drained of blood. A few months later, in August, an eyewitness, Madelyne Tolentino, reported seeing the creature in the Puerto Rican town of Canóvanas, when as many as 150 farm animals and pets were reportedly killed. In 1975, similar killings in the small town of Moca, were attributed to *El Vampiro de Moca* (The Vampire of Moca). Initially it was suspected that the killings were committed by a Satanic cult; later more killings were reported around the island, and many farms reported loss of animal life. Each of the animals had their bodies bled dry through a series of small circular incisions.

Puerto Rican comedian and entrepreneur Silverio Pérez is credited with coining the term *chupacabras* soon after the first incidents were reported in the press. Shortly after the first reported incidents in Puerto Rico, other animal deaths were reported in other countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Brazil, United States, and Mexico.

Reported sightings

In July 2004, a rancher near San Antonio, Texas, killed a hairless dog-like creature, which was attacking his livestock. This animal, initially given the name the Elmendorf Beast, was later determined by DNA assay conducted at University of California, Davis to be a coyote with demodectic or sarcoptic mange. In October 2004, two more carcasses were found in the same area. Biologists in Texas examined samples from the two carcasses and determined they were also coyotes suffering from very severe cases of mange. In Coleman, Texas, a farmer named Reggie Lagow caught an animal in a trap he set up after the deaths of a number of his chickens and turkeys. The animal was described as resembling a mix of hairless dog, rat, and kangaroo. Lagow provided the animal to Texas Parks and Wildlife officials for identification, but Lagow reported in a September 17, 2006 phone interview with John Adolfi, founder of the Lost World Museum, that the "critter was caught on a Tuesday and thrown out in Thursday's trash."

In April 2006, *MosNews* reported that the chupacabras was spotted in Russia for the first time. Reports from Central Russia beginning in March 2005 tell of a beast that kills animals and sucks out their blood. Thirty-two turkeys were killed and drained overnight. Reports later came from neighboring villages when 30 sheep were killed and had their blood drained. Finally, eyewitnesses were able to describe the chupacabras. In May 2006, experts were determined to track the animal down.

In mid-August 2006, Michelle O'Donnell of Turner, Maine, described an "evil looking" rodent-like animal with fangs that had been found dead alongside a road. The animal was apparently struck by a car, and was unidentifiable. Photographs were taken and witness reports seem to be in relative agreement that the creature was canine in appearance, but in widely published photos seemed unlike any dog or wolf in the area. Photos from other angles seem to show a chow- or akita-mixed breed dog. It was reported that "the carcass was picked clean by vultures before experts could examine it". For years, residents of Maine have reported a mysterious creature and a string of dog maulings.

In May 2007, a series of reports on national Colombia news reported more than 300 dead sheep in the region of Boyaca, and the capture of a possible specimen to be analyzed by zoologists at the National University of Colombia.

In August 2007, Phylis Canion found three animals in Cuero, Texas. She and her neighbors reported to have discovered three strange animal carcasses outside Canion's property. She took photographs of the carcasses and preserved the head of one in her freezer before turning it over for DNA analysis. Canion reported that nearly 30 chickens on her farm had been exsanguinated over a period of years, a factor which led her to connect the carcasses with the chupacabras legend. State Mammologist John Young estimated that the animal in Canion's pictures was a Gray Fox suffering from an extreme case of mange. In November 2007, biology researchers at Texas State University–San Marcos determined from DNA samples that the suspicious animal was a coyote. The coyote, however, had grayish-blue, mostly hairless skin and large fanged teeth, which caused it to appear different from a normal coyote. Additional skin samples were taken to attempt to determine the cause of the hair loss.

On January 11, 2008, a sighting was reported at the province of Capiz in the Philippines. Some of the residents from the barangay believed that it was the chupacabras that killed eight chickens. The owner of the chickens saw a dog-like animal attacking his chickens.

On August 8, 2008, a DeWitt County deputy, Brandon Riedel, filmed an unidentifiable animal along back roads near Cuero, Texas on his dashboard camera. The animal was about the size of a coyote but was hairless with a long snout, short front legs and long back legs. However, Reiter's boss, Sheriff Jode Zavesky, believes it may be the same species of coyote identified by Texas State University–San Marcos researchers in November 2007.

In September 2009, CNN aired a report showing closeup video footage of an unidentified dead animal. The same CNN report stated that locals have begun speculating the possibility that this might be a chupacabras. A Blanco, Texas, taxidermist reported that he received the body from a former student whose cousin had discovered the animal in his barn, where it had succumbed to poison left out for rodents. The taxidermist expressed his belief that this is a genetically mutated coyote.

On September 18, 2009, taxidermist Jerry Ayer sold the Blanco Texas Chupacabra to the Lost World Museum. The museum, as reported in the Syracuse Post Standard on 9/26/09,

is placing the creature on display as they work with a unnamed university to have the remains tested.

Captured or killed

On December 18, 2010, in Nelson County, Kentucky, Mark Cothren shot and killed an animal that he could not recognize and feared. Many pictures of the Chupacabra were taken and the story was well documented by various news organizations. Cothren described the creature as having large ears, whiskers, a long tail, and about the size of a house cat. Cothren says he spoke with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and handed over the preserved animal for further analysis.

2010 'solving' of chupacabra

In July 2010, there were reports of chupacabras being shot dead by animal control officers in Hood County, Texas. A second creature was also reportedly spotted and killed several miles away.

However, an officer of Hood County animal control said Texas A&M University scientists conducted tests and identified the corpse as a "coyote-dog hybrid" with signs of mange and internal parasites. The second reported chupacabra, shot July 9 about 8 miles south of Cresson, was eaten by vultures before it could be taken for testing.

New information from researcher Benjamin Radford in 2010 revealed that Madelyne Tolentino, the original eyewitness, had described a creature she had recently seen in the science-fiction horror film *Species* as the chupacabra. The alien in the film, named Sil, is nearly identical to Tolentino's chupacabra eyewitness account: "It was a creature that looked like the chupacabra, with spines on its back and all....The resemblance to the chupacabra was really impressive," Tolentino reported. Radford revealed that Tolentino "believed that the creatures and events she saw in *Species* were actually happening in reality in Puerto Rico at the time," and therefore concludes that "The popular image of the chupacabra—the one appearing on thousands of books, magazines, and Web sites as a credible eyewitness description—is in fact based on a science fiction film." This, Radford believes, seriously undermines the credibility of the chupacabra as a real animal.

In late October 2010, University of Michigan biologist Barry O'Connor concluded that all of the 'chupacabras' were simply coyotes infected with the parasite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. The symptoms of which would explain most of the features of the chupacabra's: they'd be left with little fur, thickened skin, and rank odour. O'Connor theorised the attacks on goats were "because these animals are greatly weakened, they're going to have a hard time hunting. So they may be forced into attacking livestock because it's easier than running down a rabbit or a deer."

Appearance

The most common description of chupacabras is a reptile-like being, appearing to have leathery or scaly greenish-gray skin and sharp spines or quills running down its back. This form stands approximately 3 to 4 feet (1 to 1.2 m) high, and stands and hops in a similar fashion to a kangaroo. In at least one sighting, the creature was reported to hop 20 feet (6 m). This variety is said to have a dog or panther-like nose and face, a forked tongue, and large fangs. It is said to hiss and screech when alarmed, as well as leave behind a sulfuric stench. When it screeches, some reports assert that the chupacabras' eyes glow an unusual red which gives the witnesses nausea.

Another description of chupacabras, although not as common, describes a strange breed of wild dog. This form is mostly hairless and has a pronounced spinal ridge, unusually pronounced eye sockets, fangs, and claws. It is claimed that this breed might be an example of a dog-like reptile. Unlike conventional predators, the chupacabras is said to drain all of the animal's blood (and sometimes organs) usually through three holes in the shape of an upside-down triangle or through one or two holes.

Significant appearances in media

The popularity of the chupacabras has resulted in it being featured in several types of media. Some mystery novels that use aspects of the myth as the centerpoint of the plot have been published. Other kinds of books include those that provide a scientific explanation for the phenomena. The chupacabras has been featured in films such as *Scooby-Doo and the Monster of Mexico* and in independent film productions including: *Chupacabra: Dark Seas*, starring John Rhys-Davies, *Guns of El Chupacabra*, starring Scott Shaw, *El Chupacabras* and *Vuelve el Chupacabras*. Welsh rock band Super Furry Animals have a song on the 1997 album "Radiator" called "Chupacabras". An entire episode of The X-Files series, *El Mundo Gira*, is devoted to the chupacabras. A whole segment in Dexter's Laboratory is for the chupacabras in the episode called "Got Your Goat" from the Season 2. It has also been portrayed various times in the anime series Negima!?.

CNN's Ed Lavandera has described the chupacabras as the "Bigfoot of Latino culture" and has stated that "El Chupacabra also symbolizes the fear of something that doesn't exist". Following the incident in Cuero, Texas the popularity of the chupacabras myth was receiving global attention. Phylis Canion, who was responsible for capturing the alleged specimen, claimed that t-shirts highlighting the event were shipped to locations such as Italy, Guam, and Iraq. The publicity that Cuero received following this event has led to some suggesting changing the town's mascot. In July 2008, History's Monster Quest series featured the Texas carcasses, which were determined to be dogs and coyotes.

A character modeled after the chupacabras appears in the podcast Strange Fairy Tales. He was first introduced in the twenty-second episode which was done entirely in Spanish. The chupacabra was almost arrested for stealing the blood of little goats, but he gave it back, and was then hired as the Foreign Relations Man of Strange Fairy Tales.

Naming convention

Chupacabras can be translated as "goat-sucker." It is known as both *chupacabras* and *chupacabra* throughout the Americas, with the former being the original word, and the latter a regularization of it. The name in Spanish can be preceded by singular masculine article (*el chupacabras*), or the plural masculine article (*los chupacabras*).

Related cryptids

In the Philippines, another cryptid called the Sigbin shares many of the same descriptions as the *Chupacabra*. Including comparisons of its appearance to dogs, kangaroos, and goats. They may share the same origins, though the recent discovery of the cat-fox in Southeast Asia suggests that it could also have been simply sightings of this once unknown animal.

The Peuchen of Chile also share similarities in their supposed habits, but instead of being dog-like they are described as winged snakes. Like the possible relationship between the Sigbin lore and cat foxes, the legend may also have originated from the Common Vampire Bat, an animal endemic to the region.

Chapter- 17

Sea Serpent

Sea Serpent

(Various)



A sea serpent from Olaus Magnus's book
History of the Northern Peoples (1555).

Creature

Grouping Legendary Creature

Sub grouping Sea monster

Data

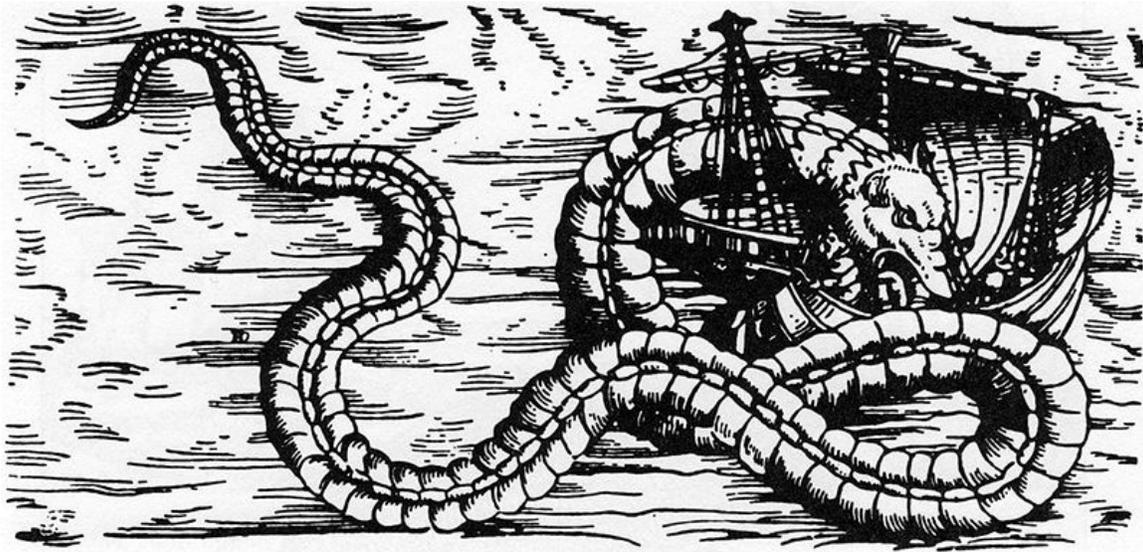
Country Various

Habitat Sea

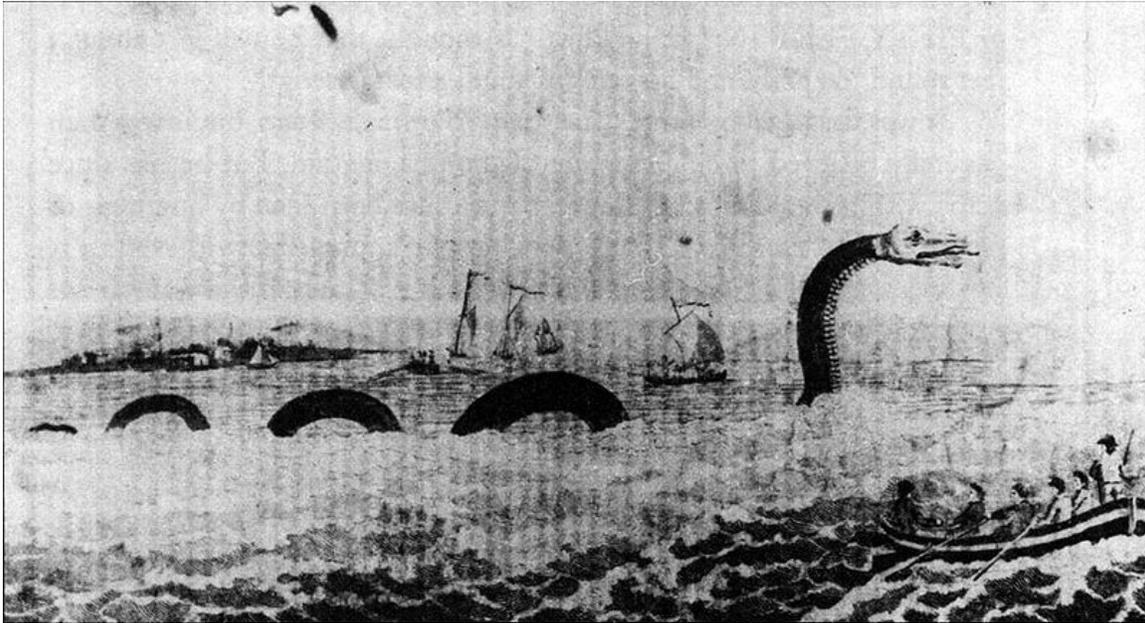
A **sea serpent** or **sea dragon** is a mythological sea monster either wholly or partly serpentine.

Sightings of sea serpents have been reported for hundreds of years, and continue to be claimed today. Cryptozoologist Bruce Champagne identified more than 1,200 purported sea serpent sightings. Despite these numerous sightings, no credible physical evidence has been recorded and it is currently believed that the sightings can be best explained as misidentification of known animals such as oarfish and whales. Some cryptozoologists have suggested that the sea serpents are relict plesiosaurs, mosasaurs or other Mesozoic marine reptiles, an idea often associated with lake monsters such as the Loch Ness Monster.

In mythology



Olaus Magnus's Sea Orm, 1555



The first American sea serpent, reported from Cape Ann, Massachusetts, in 1639.

In Norse mythology, *Jörmungandr*, or "Midgarðsormr" was a sea serpent so long that it encircled the entire world, Midgard. Some stories report of sailors mistaking its back for a chain of islands. Sea serpents also appear frequently in later Scandinavian folklore, particularly in that of Norway.

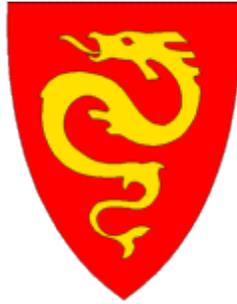
In 1028 CE, Saint Olaf killed and threw onto the mountain Syltefjellet in Valldal, Norway a sea serpent, the marks of which are still visible . In Swedish ecclesiastic and writer Olaus Magnus's *Carta marina*, many marine monsters of varied form, including an immense sea serpent, appear. Moreover, in his 1555 work *History of the Northern Peoples*, Magnus gives the following description of a Norwegian sea serpent:

Those who sail up along the coast of Norway to trade or to fish, all tell the remarkable story of how a serpent of fearsome size, 200 feet long and 20 feet wide, resides in rifts and caves outside Bergen. On bright summer nights this serpent leaves the caves to eat calves, lambs and pigs, or it fares out to the sea and feeds on sea nettles, crabs and similar marine animals. It has ell-long hair hanging from its neck, sharp black scales and flaming red eyes. It attacks vessels, grabs and swallows people, as it lifts itself up like a column from the water.

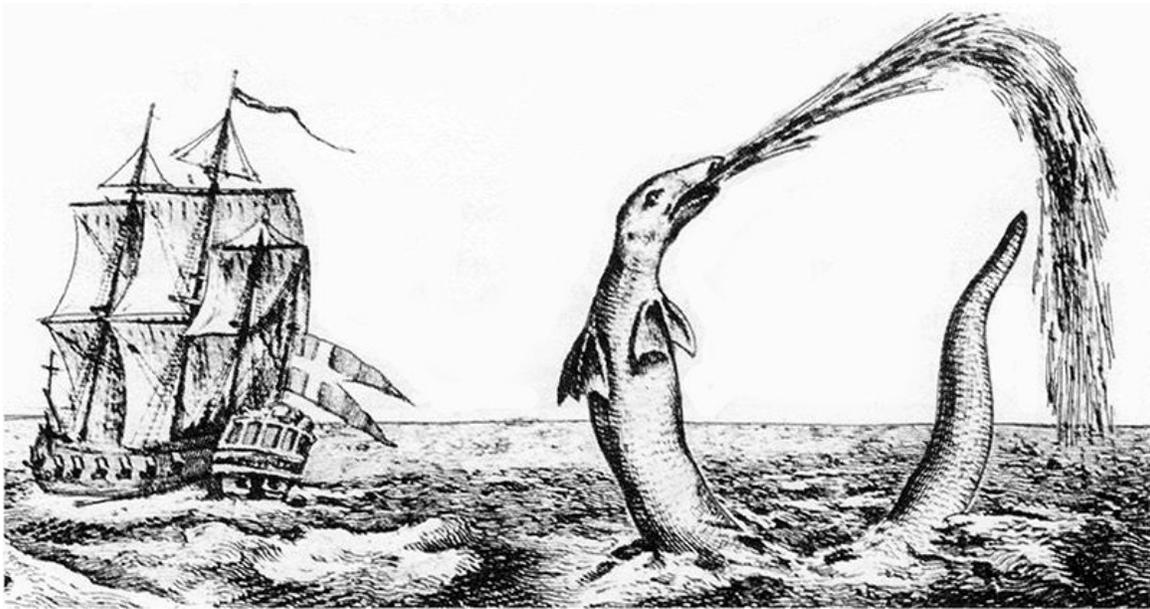
Sea serpents were known to sea-faring cultures in the Mediterranean and Near East, appearing in both mythology (the Babylonian Labbu) and in apparent eye-witness accounts (Aristotle's *Historia Animalium*). Better known today are the Biblical references to Leviathan and Rahab, from the Hebrew Tanakh.

In Greek and Roman mythology, a pair of sea serpents killed Laocoön and his sons when Laocoön argued against bringing the Trojan Horse into Troy.

Historical and notable cases



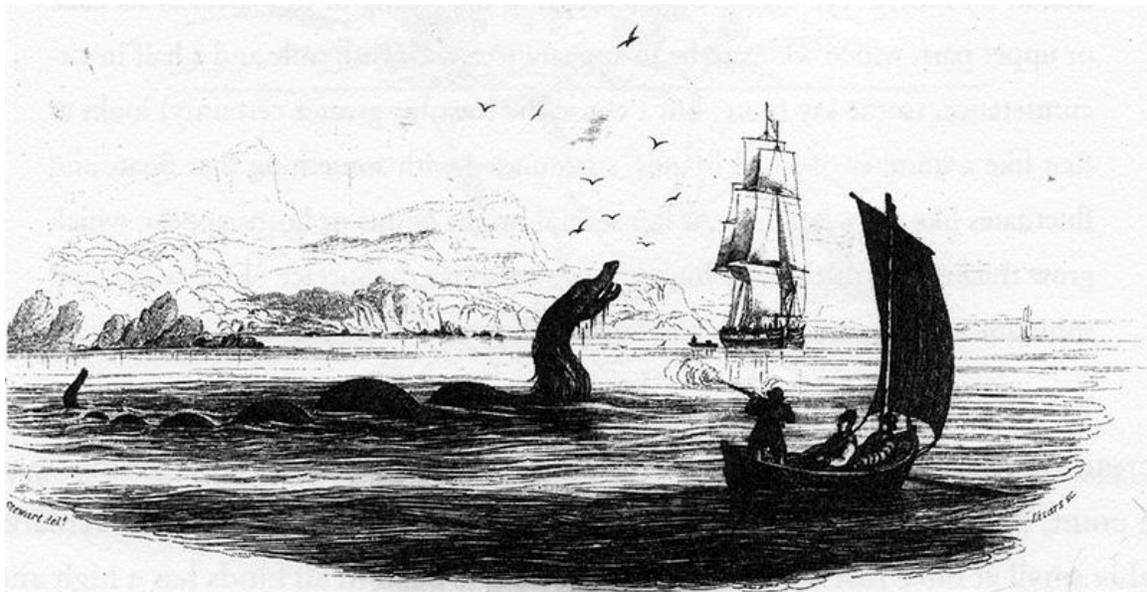
Sea serpent in the heraldry of Seljord in Norway.



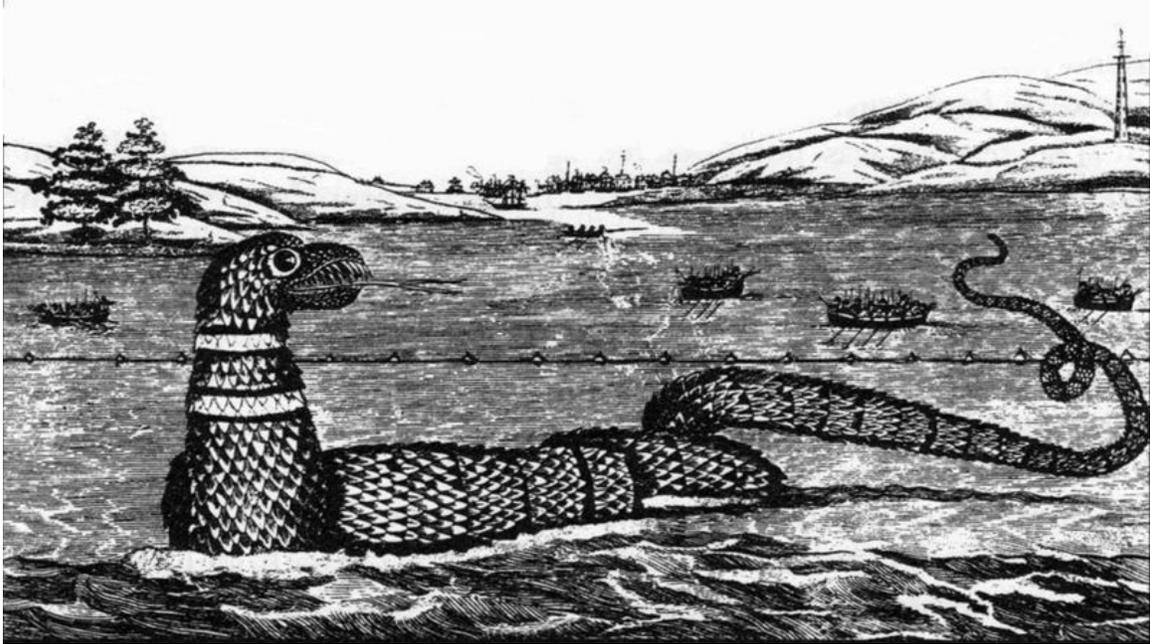
Sea serpent reported by Hans Egede, Bishop of Greenland, in 1734. Henry Lee suggested the giant squid as an explanation.



The "Great Sea Serpent" according to Hans Egede.



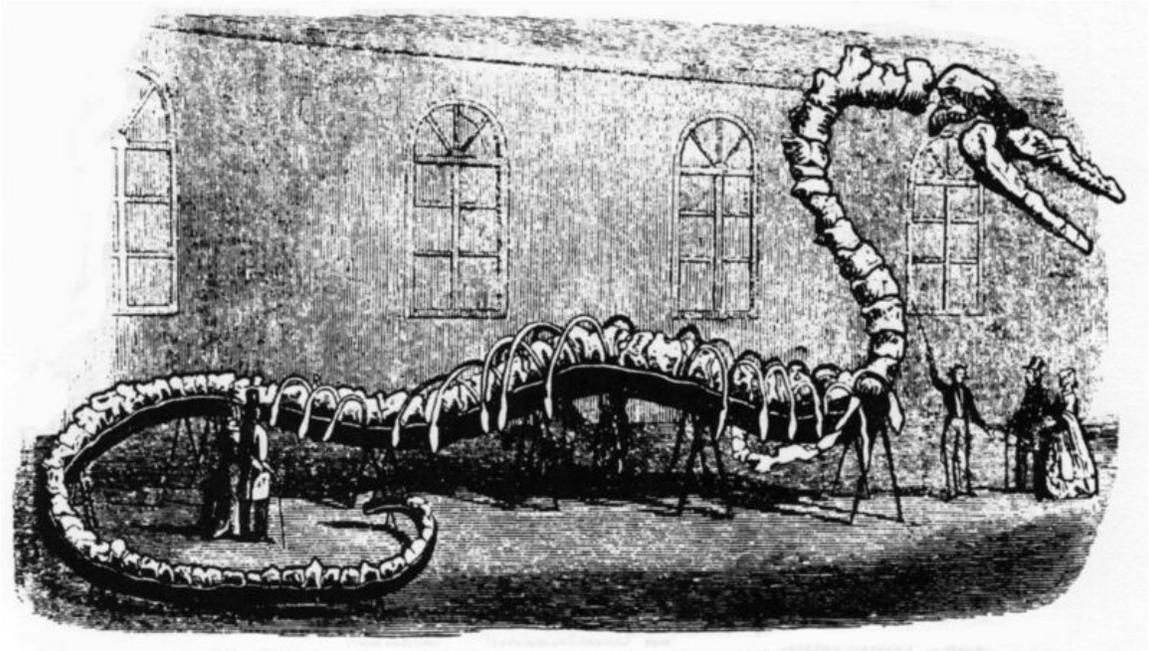
Maned sea serpent from Bishop Erik Pontoppidan's 1755 work *Natural History of Norway*.



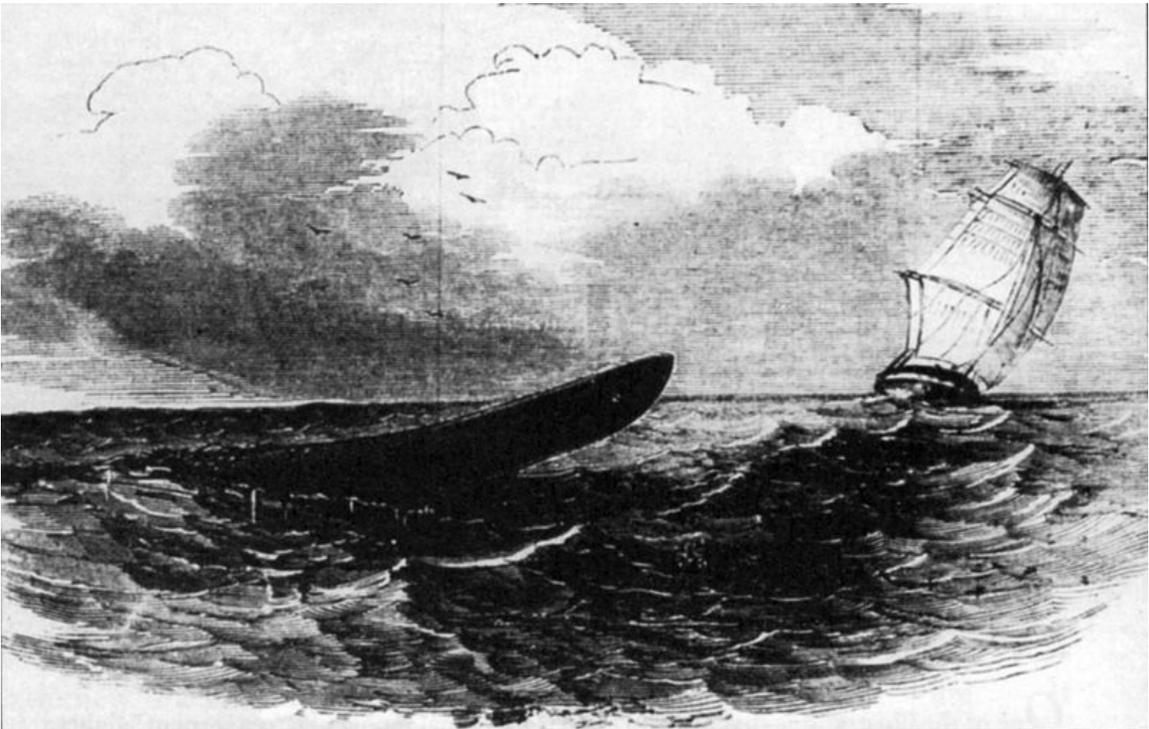
The Gloucester sea serpent of 1817.



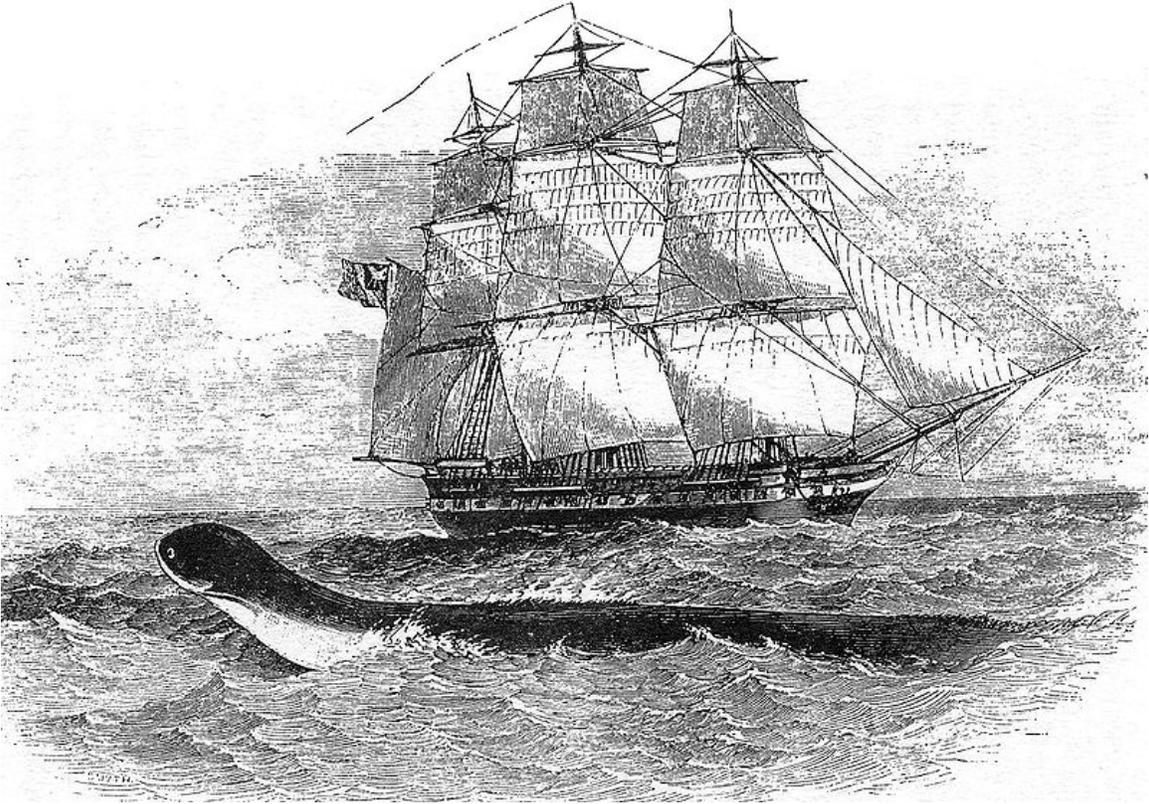
A curiously hairy sea serpent.



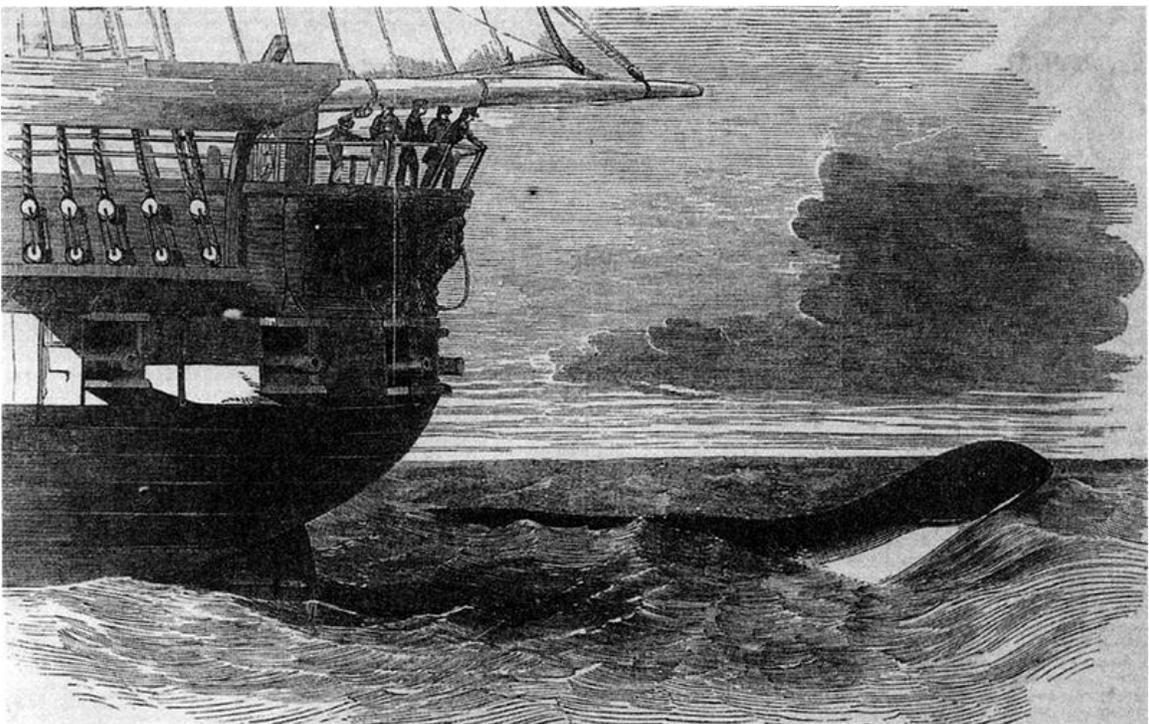
Albert Koch's 114-foot long "Hydrarchos" fossil skeleton from 1845. It was found to be an assembled collection of bones from at least five fossil specimens of *Basilosaurus*.



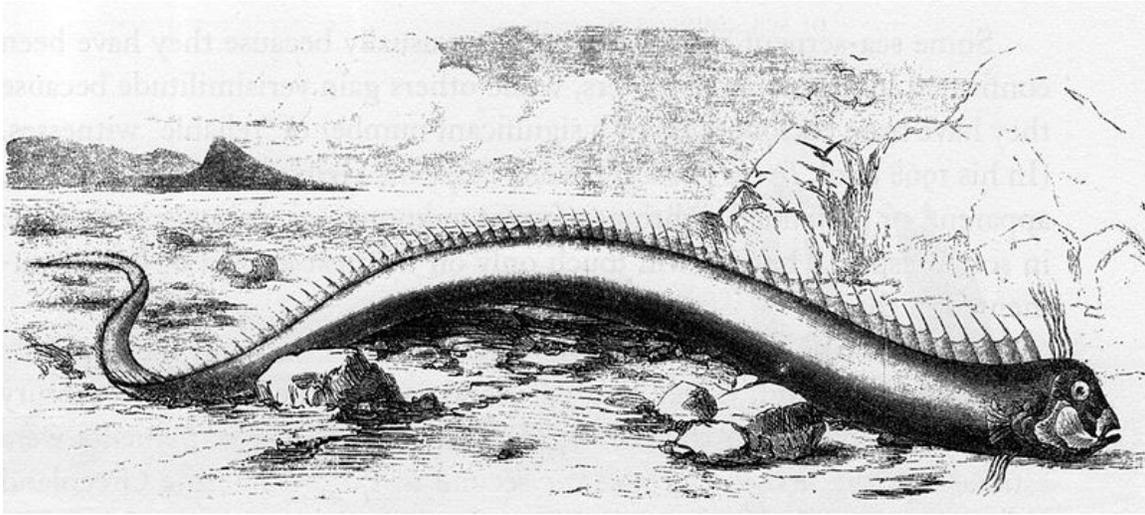
Supposed Appearance Of The Great Sea-Serpent, From H.M.S. Plumper, Sketched By An Officer On Board, Illustrated London News, 14 April 1849



The sea serpent spotted by the crew of HMS *Daedalus* in 1848.



Another of the original illustrations of the HMS *Daedalus* encounter



Oarfish that washed ashore on a Bermuda beach in 1860. The animal was 16 feet long and was originally described as a sea serpent.

Hans Egede, the national saint of Greenland, gives an 18th century descriptions of a sea serpent. On 6 July 1734 his ship sailed past the coast of Greenland when suddenly those on board

"saw a most terrible creature, resembling nothing they saw before. The monster lifted its head so high that it seemed to be higher than the crow's nest on the mainmast. The head was small and the body short and wrinkled. The unknown creature was using giant fins which propelled it through the water. Later the sailors saw its tail as well. The monster was longer than our whole ship", wrote Egede. (Mareš, 1997)

Sea serpent sightings on the coast of New England, are documented beginning in 1638. An incident in August 1817 spawned a rather silly mix-up when a committee of the New England Linnaean Society went so far as to give a deformed terrestrial snake the name *Scoliophis atlanticus*, believing it was the juvenile form of a sea serpent that had recently been reported in Gloucester Harbor. After the Linnaean Society's misidentification was discovered, it was frequently cited by debunkers as evidence that the creature did not exist.

A particularly famous sea serpent sighting was made by the men and officers of HMS *Daedalus* in August, 1848 during a voyage to Saint Helena in the South Atlantic; the creature they saw, some 60 feet long, held a peculiar maned head above the water. The sighting caused quite a stir in the London papers, and Sir Richard Owen, the famous English biologist, proclaimed the beast an elephant seal. Other explanations for the sighting proposed that it was actually an upside-down canoe, or a posing giant squid.

Another sighting took place in 1905 off the coast of Brazil. The crew of the *Valhalla* and two naturalists, Michael J. Nicoll and E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, saw a long-necked, turtle

headed creature, with a large dorsal fin. Based on its dorsal fin and the shape of its head, some (such as Heuvelmans) have suggested that the animal was some sort of marine mammal. A skeptical suggestion is that the sighting was of a posing giant squid, but this is hard to accept given that squids do not swim with their fins or arms protruding from the water.

On April 25, 1977, the Japanese trawler *Zuiyo Maru*, sailing east of Christchurch, New Zealand, caught a strange, unknown creature in the trawl. Photographs and tissue specimens were taken. While initially identified as a prehistoric plesiosaur, analysis later indicated that the body was the carcass of a basking shark.

Misidentifications

Skeptics and debunkers have questioned the interpretation of sea serpent sightings, suggesting that reports of serpents are misidentifications of things such as cetaceans (whales and dolphins), sea snakes, eels, basking sharks, baleen whales, oarfish, large pinnipeds, seaweed, driftwood, flocks of birds, and giant squid.

While most cryptozoologists recognize that at least some reports are simple misidentifications, they claim that many of the creatures described by those who have seen them look nothing like the known species put forward by skeptics and claim that certain reports stick out. For their part, the skeptics remain unconvinced, pointing out that even in the absence of out-right hoaxes, imagination has a way of twisting and inflating the slightly out-of-the-ordinary until it becomes extraordinary.

A recent posting on the Centre of Fortean Zoology blog by Cryptozoologist Dale Drinon notes his check of the categories in Heuvelmans' *In The Wake of the Sea-Serpents*, in which he extracted the mistaken observation categories as a control to check the Sea-serpent categories by. Using the reports he created identikits for the mistaken observations and enlarged them to possibly 126 of Heuvelmans' sightings, making the mistaken observations the largest section of Heuvelmans' reports. His identikits include oarfish, basking sharks, toothed whales, baleen whales, lines of large whales for the largest Sea-serpent "hump" sightings and trains of smaller cetaceans for the "Many-finned, elephant seals and manta rays. Each of these categories was given a percentage of the whole body of reports, ranging between 1% and 5% with the whales at an average 2.5%, figures which he considers comparable to the regular Sea-serpent categories of Super-eel and Marine Saurian (each of which he breaks into a larger and a smaller sized series following Heuvelmans' suggestion in *In the Wake of the Sea-Serpents*) Drinon has also published in the 2010 CFZ yearbook in which he modifies Coleman's categories (below), adding a possible Giant otter category to the Giant Beavers and modifying several others, bringing the total to 17 categories to broaden the coverage. The broadened coverage allows more instances of conventional fishes such as sturgeons and catfishes, left off Coleman's list. In a separate and earlier CFZ blog, Drinon reviewed Bruce Champagne's sea-serpent categories and identified several of them as known animals, and several whales in particular Drinon basically recognises the Longneck, Marine Saurian and Super-eel categories in this blog as well, with the modification that the Marine

Saurian as spoken of by Champagne is more likely a large crocodile akin to *C. porosis* and that there has been a suggestion that an eel-like animal is involved in certain "Many-finned" observations. The whale categories he identifies are: BC 2A-Possible Odobenocetops, BC2B, Atlantic gray whale or Scrag Whale, BC 4B, as being similar to an unidentified large-finned beaked whale otherwise reported in the Pacific, and BC 5, the large Father-of-All-the-Turtles, as a humpback whale turned turtle.

Classification systems

Cryptozoologists have argued for the existence of sea serpents by claiming that people report seeing similar things, and further arguing that it is possible to classify sightings into different "types". There have been different classification attempts with different results, although they share some common characteristics.

Anthonie Cornelis Oudemans

- *Megophias megophias* : A large (200+ feet) sea lion-like creature with a long neck and long tail. Only the male has a mane. It is cosmopolitan.

Bernard Heuvelmans

- **Long Necked** or *Megalotaria longicollis*: A 60 foot, long necked, short tailed sea lion. Hair and whiskers reported. Cosmopolitan.
- **Merhorse** or *Halshippus olai-magni*: A 60 foot, medium necked, large eyed, horse-headed pinniped. Often has whiskers. It is also cosmopolitan.
- **Many-Humped** or *Plurigibbosus novae-angliae*: A 60–100 foot, medium necked, long bodied archaeocete. It has a series of humps or a crest on the spine like a sperm whale's or grey whale's. It only lives in the North Atlantic.
- **Super Otter** or *Hyperhydra egedei*: A 65–100 foot, medium necked, long bodied archeocete that resembles an otter. It moves in numerous vertical undulations (6-7). Lived near Norway and Greenland, and presumed to be extinct by Heuvelmans.
- **Many Finned** or *Cetioscolopendra aeliani*: A 60–70 foot, short necked archeocete. It has a number of lateral projections that look like dorsal fins, but turned the incorrect way. Compare to the armor on *Desmatosuchus*, but much more prominent.
- **Super Eels**: A group of large and possibly unrelated eels. Partially based on the *Leptocephalus giganteus* larvae, later shown to be normal sized. [This is a controversial identification of a larval specimen made without benefit of actually examining the specimen. This "identification" was done by the paperwork and the actual specimen was missing by then.] Heuvelmans theorized eel, synbranchid, and elasmobranch identities as being possible. Cosmopolitan.
- **Marine Saurian**: A 50–60 foot crocodile, or crocodile-like animal (Mosasaur, Pliosaur, etc.)
- **Yellow Belly**: A very large (1–200 foot) yellow and black striped tadpole-shaped creature. Dropped.

- **Father-of-all-the-turtles:** A giant turtle. Dropped
- **Giant Invertebrates:** Giant Venus's girdle and salp colonies. Added. It is not clear if Heuvelmans intended them to be unknown species or extreme forms of known species.

Loren Coleman and Patrick Huyghe

- **Classic Sea Serpent:** A quadrupedal, elongated animal with the appearance of many humps when swimming. Essentially a composite of the many humped, super otter, and super eels types. The authors suggest *Basilosaurus* as a candidate, or possibly *Remingtonocetids*.
- **Waterhorse:** A large pinniped, similar to the long necked and merhorse. Only the males are maned, but females appear to have snorkels. Both of their eyes are rather small. They are noteworthy for being behind both salt and fresh water sightings.
- **Mystery Cetacean:** A category of unknown whale species including double finned whales and dolphins, dorsal finned sperm whales, unknown beaked whales, an unknown orca, and others.
- **Giant Shark:** A surviving *Megalodon*.
- **Mystery Manta:** A small manta ray with dorsal markings.
- **Great Sea Centipede:** Same as the many finned. The authors suggest the flippers may either be retractile, and the "scaly" appearance could be caused by parasites.
- **Mystery Saurian:** Same as the marine saurian.
- **Cryptic Chelonian:** A resurrection of the father-of-all-turtles.
- **Mystery Sirenian:** Late surviving *Steller's Sea Cow*.
- **Giant Octopus, *Octopus giganteus* or *Otoctopus giganteus*:** A large cephalopod living in the tropical Atlantic.

Bruce Champagne

- **1A Long Necked:** A 30 foot sea lion with a long neck and long tail. The neck is the same thickness or smaller than the head. Hair reported. It is capable of travel on land. Cosmopolitan.
- **1B Long Necked:** Similar to the above type but over 55 feet long and far more robust. The neck is of lesser thickness than the head. Only inhabits water near Great Britain and Denmark.
- **2A Eel-Like:** A 20–30 foot long heavily scaled or armored reptile. It is distinguished by a small square head with prominent tusks. "Motorboating" behavior on surface. Inhabits only the North Atlantic.
- **2B Eel-Like:** A 25–30 foot beaked whale. It is distinguished by a tapering head and a dorsal crest. "Motorboating" behavior engaged in. Inhabits the Atlantic and Pacific. Possibly extinct.
- **2C Eel-Like:** A 60–70 foot, elongated reptile with no appendages. The head is very large and cow-like or reptilian with teeth similar to a crabeater seal's. Also shares the "motorboating" behavior. Inhabits the Atlantic, Pacific, and South China Sea. Possibly extinct.

- **3 Multi-Humped:** 30–60 feet long. A possible reptile with a dorsal crest and the ability to move in several undulations. The head has a distinctive "cameloid" appearance. Identical with *Cadborosaurus willsi*.
- **4A Sailfin:** A 30 to 70 foot beaked whale. It is distinguished by a very small head and a very large dorsal fin. Only found in the North West Atlantic. Possibly extinct.
- **4B Sailfin:** An elongated animal of possible mammalian or reptilian identity reported from 12 to 85 feet long. It has a long neck with a turtle-like head and a long continuous dorsal fin. Cosmopolitan.
- **5 Carapaced:** A large turtle or turtle-like creature (mammal?) reported from 10 to 45 feet long. Carapace is described as jointed, segmented, and plated. May exhibit a dorsal crest of "quills" and a type of oily hair. Cosmopolitan.
- **6 Saurian:** A large and occasionally spotted crocodile or crocodile-like creature up to 65 feet long. Found in the Northern Atlantic and Mediterranean.
- **7 Segmented/Multi limbed:** An elongated mammalian creature up to 65 feet long with the appearance of segmentation and many fins. Found in the Western Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific.

Chapter- 18

Yeti

Yeti

(Abominable Snowman

Migo, Meh-teh et al.)



Purported Yeti scalp at Khumjung monastery

Creature

Grouping Cryptid, Orangutan

Sub grouping Homin, Hominid

Data

Country Nepal, China, India, Mongolia

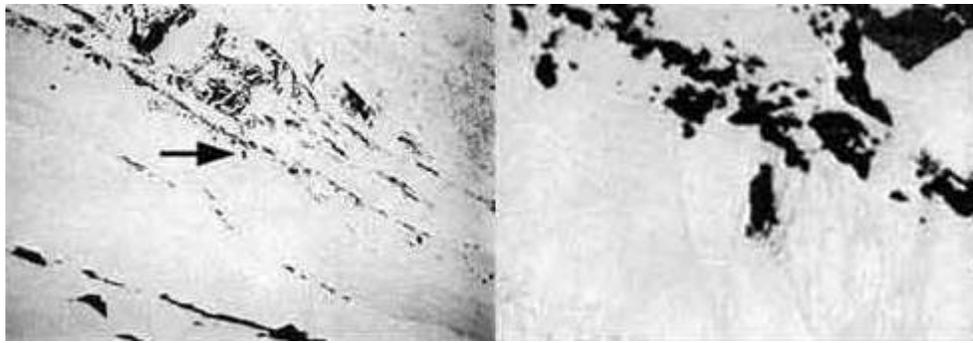
Region Himalayas

Habitat Mountains

The **Yeti** or **Abominable Snowman** is an ape-like cryptid said to inhabit the Himalayan region of India, Nepal and Tibet. The names *Yeti* and *Meh-Teh* are commonly used by the people indigenous to the region, and are part of their history and mythology. Stories of the Yeti first emerged as a facet of Western popular culture in the 19th century.

The scientific community generally regards the Yeti as a legend, given the lack of conclusive evidence, yet it remains one of the most famous creatures of cryptozoology. The Yeti may be considered a sort of parallel to the Bigfoot of North America.

Etymology and alternate names



A supposed photo of a Yeti taken in 1986

The word *Yeti* is derived from Tibetan: གཡའ་དྲེད་; Wylie: *g.ya' dred*), a compound of the words Tibetan: གཡའ་; Wylie: *g.ya'* "rocky", "rocky place" and (Tibetan: དྲེད་; Wylie: *dred*) "bear". Pranavananda states that the words "ti", "te" and "teh" are derived from the spoken word 'tre' (spelled "dred"), Tibetan for bear, with the 'r' so softly pronounced as to be almost inaudible, thus making it "te" or "teh".

Other terms used by Himalayan peoples do not translate exactly the same, but refer to legendary and indigenous wildlife:

- **Meh-teh** (Tibetan: མི་དྲེད་; Wylie: *mi dred*) translates as "man-bear".
- **Dzu-teh** – 'dzu' translates as "cattle" and the full meaning translates as "cattle bear" and is the Himalayan Brown Bear.
- **Migoi** or **Mi-go** (Tibetan: མི་རྒྱུ་གོ་; Wylie: *mi rgod*) translates as "wild man".
- **Mirka** – another name for "wild-man", however as local legend has it "anyone who sees one dies or is killed". The latter is taken from a written statement by Frank Smythe's sherpas in 1937.
- **Kang Admi** – "Snow Man".

- **JoBran** – "Man-eater".

The "**Abominable Snowman**"

The appellation "*Abominable Snowman*" was not coined until 1921, the same year Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Howard-Bury led the joint Alpine Club and Royal Geographical Society "Everest Reconnaissance Expedition" which he chronicled in *Mount Everest The Reconnaissance, 1921*. In the book, Howard-Bury includes an account of crossing the "Lhakpa-la" at 21,000 ft (6,400 m) where he found footprints that he believed "were probably caused by a large 'loping' grey wolf, which in the soft snow formed double tracks rather like a those of a bare-footed man". He adds that his Sherpa guides "at once volunteered that the tracks must be that of "The Wild Man of the Snows", to which they gave the name "metoh-kangmi". "Metoh" translates as "man-bear" and "Kang-mi" translates as "snowman".

Confusion exists between Howard-Bury's recitation of the term "metoh-kangmi" and the term used in Bill Tilman's book *Mount Everest, 1938* where Tilman had used the words "metch", which cannot exist in the Tibetan language, and "kangmi" when relating the coining of the term "Abominable Snowman". Further evidence of "metch" being a misnomer is provided by Tibetan language authority Professor David Snellgrove from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London (ca. 1956), who dismissed the word "metch" as impossible, because the consonants "t-c-h" cannot be conjoined in the Tibetan language." Documentation suggests that the term "metch-kangmi" is derived from one source (from the year 1921). It has been suggested that "metch" is simply a misspelling of "metoh".

The origin of the term "Abominable Snowman" is rather colourful. It began when Mr Henry Newman, a longtime contributor to *The Statesman* in Kolkata, using the pen name "Kim", interviewed the porters of the "Everest Reconnaissance expedition" upon their return to Darjeeling. Newman mistranslated the word "metoh" as "filthy" lily, substituting the term "abominable", perhaps out of artistic license. As author Bill Tilman recounts, "[Newman] wrote long after in a letter to *The Times*: The whole story seemed such a joyous creation I sent it to one or two newspapers".

History

19th century

In 1832, James Prinsep's *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* published trekker B. H. Hodgson's account of his experiences in northern Nepal. His local guides spotted a tall, bipedal creature covered with long dark hair, which seemed to flee in fear. Hodgson concluded it was an orangutan.

An early record of reported footprints appeared in 1889 in Laurence Waddell's *Among the Himalayas*. Waddell reported his guide's description of a large apelike creature that left the prints, which Waddell thought were made by a bear. Waddell heard stories of bipedal,

apelike creatures but wrote that of the many witnesses he questioned, none "could ever give ... an authentic case. On the most superficial investigation it always resolved into something that somebody had heard of."

20th century

The frequency of reports increased during the early 20th century, when Westerners began making determined attempts to scale the many mountains in the area and occasionally reported seeing odd creatures or strange tracks.

In 1925, N. A. Tombazi, a photographer and member of the Royal Geographical Society, writes that he saw a creature at about 15,000 ft (4,600 m) near Zemu Glacier. Tombazi later wrote that he observed the creature from about 200 to 300 yd (180 to 270 m), for about a minute. "Unquestionably, the figure in outline was exactly like a human being, walking upright and stopping occasionally to pull at some dwarf rhododendron bushes. It showed up dark against the snow, and as far as I could make out, wore no clothes." About two hours later, Tombazi and his companions descended the mountain and saw the creature's prints, described as "similar in shape to those of a man, but only six to seven inches long by four inches wide... The prints were undoubtedly those of a biped."

Western interest in the Yeti peaked dramatically in the 1950s. While attempting to scale Mount Everest in 1951, Eric Shipton took photographs of a number of large prints in the snow, at about 6,000 m (20,000 ft) above sea level. These photos have been subject to intense scrutiny and debate. Some argue they are the best evidence of Yeti's existence, while others contend the prints are those of a mundane creature that have been distorted by the melting snow. It should also be noted that Eric Shipton was a notorious practical joker.

Peter Byrne reported finding a yeti footprint in 1948, in northern Sikkim, India near the Zemu Glacier, while on holiday from a Royal Air Force assignment in India.

In 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay reported seeing large footprints while scaling Mount Everest. Hillary would later discount Yeti reports as unreliable. In his first autobiography Tenzing said that he believed the Yeti was a large ape, and although he had never seen it himself his father had seen one twice, but in his second autobiography he said he had become much more skeptical about its existence.

During the *Daily Mail* Snowman Expedition of 1954, the mountaineering leader John Angelo Jackson made the first trek from Everest to Kanchenjunga in the course of which he photographed symbolic paintings of the Yeti at Tengboche gompa. Jackson tracked and photographed many footprints in the snow, most of which were identifiable. However, there were many large footprints which could not be identified. These flattened footprint-like indentations were attributed to erosion and subsequent widening of the original footprint by wind and particles.

On March 19, 1954, the Daily Mail printed an article which described expedition teams obtaining hair specimens from what was alleged to be a Yeti scalp found in Pangboche monastery. The hairs were black to dark brown in colour in dim light, and fox red in sunlight. The hair was analysed by Professor Frederic Wood Jones, an expert in human and comparative anatomy. During the study, the hairs were bleached, cut into sections and analysed microscopically. The research consisted of taking microphotographs of the hairs and comparing them with hairs from known animals such as bears and orangutans. Jones concluded that the hairs were not actually from a scalp. He contended that while some animals do have a ridge of hair extending from the pate to the back, no animals have a ridge (as in the Pangboche "scalp") running from the base of the forehead across the pate and ending at the nape of the neck. Jones was unable to pinpoint exactly the animal from which the Pangboche hairs were taken. He was, however, convinced that the hairs were not of a bear or anthropoid ape. He suggested that the hairs were from the shoulder of a coarse-haired hoofed animal.

Sławomir Rawicz claimed in his book *The Long Walk*, published in 1956, that as he and some others were crossing the Himalayas in the winter of 1940, their path was blocked for hours by two bipedal animals that were doing seemingly nothing but shuffling around in the snow. Rawicz's entire account has since come to be regarded as fictional.

Beginning in 1957, wealthy American oilman Tom Slick funded a few missions to investigate Yeti reports. In 1959, supposed Yeti feces were collected by one of Slick's expeditions; fecal analysis found a parasite which could not be classified. Cryptozoologist Bernard Heuvelmans wrote, "Since each animal has its own parasites, this indicated that the host animal is equally an unknown animal."

In 1959, actor James Stewart, while visiting India, reportedly smuggled remains of a supposed Yeti, the so-called Pangboche Hand, by concealing it in his luggage when he flew from India to London.

In 1960, Hillary mounted an expedition to collect and analyze physical evidence of the Yeti. He sent a supposed Yeti "scalp" from the Khumjung monastery to the West for testing, whose results indicated the scalp was manufactured from the skin of a serow, a goat-like Himalayan antelope. Anthropologist Myra Shackley disagreed with this conclusion on the grounds that the "hairs from the scalp look distinctly monkey-like and that it contains parasitic mites of a species different from that recovered from the serow."

In 1970, British mountaineer Don Whillans claimed to have witnessed a creature when scaling Annapurna. According to Whillans, while scouting for a campsite, he heard some odd cries which his Sherpa guide attributed to a Yeti's call. That night, he saw a dark shape moving near his camp. The next day, he observed a few human-like footprints in the snow, and that evening, viewed with binoculars a bipedal, ape-like creature for 20 minutes as it apparently searched for food not far from his camp.

There is a famous Yeti hoax, known as the *Snow Walker Film*. The footage was created for Paramount's UPN show, *Paranormal Borderland*, ostensibly by the show's producers.

The show ran from March 12 to August 6, 1996. Fox purchased and used the footage in their later program on *The World's Greatest Hoaxes*.

21st century

In 2004, Henry Gee, editor of the prestigious journal *Nature*, mentioned the Yeti as an example of a legend deserving further study, writing, "The discovery that *Homo floresiensis* survived until so very recently, in geological terms, makes it more likely that stories of other mythical, human-like creatures such as Yetis are founded on grains of truth ... Now, cryptozoology, the study of such fabulous creatures, can come in from the cold."

In early December 2007, American television presenter Joshua Gates and his team (Destination Truth) reported finding a series of footprints in the Everest region of Nepal resembling descriptions of Yeti. Each of the footprints measured 33 cm (13 in) in length with five toes that measured a total of 25 cm (9.8 in) across. Casts were made of the prints for further research. The footprints were examined by Jeffrey Meldrum of Idaho State University, who believed them to be too morphologically accurate to be fake or man made. Meldrum also stated that they were very similar to a pair of Bigfoot footprints that were found in another area. Then, during the 3rd season mid finale visit to Bhutan, Gates' team found a hair sample on a tree that they took back to have analyzed. After it was tested, it was concluded that the hair belonged to an unknown primate.

On July 25, 2008, the BBC reported that hairs collected in the remote Garo Hills area of North-East India by Dipu Marak had been analyzed at Oxford Brookes University in the UK by primatologist Anna Nekaris and microscopy expert Jon Wells. These initial tests were inconclusive, and ape conservation expert Ian Redmond told the BBC that there was similarity between the cuticle pattern of these hairs and specimens collected by Edmund Hilary during Himalayan expeditions in the 1950s and donated to the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, and announced planned DNA analysis. This analysis has since revealed that the hair came from the Himalayan Goral.

On October 20, 2008 a team of seven Japanese adventurers photographed footprints which could allegedly have been made by a Yeti. The team's leader, Yoshiteru Takahashi claims to have observed a Yeti on a 2003 expedition and is determined to capture the creature on film.

A group of Chinese scientists and explorers propose to renew searches in Shennongjia province, which was the sight of expeditions in the 1970's and 1980's.

Possible explanations

Misidentification of Himalayan wildlife has been proposed as an explanation for some Yeti sightings, including the Chu-Teh, a Langur monkey living at lower altitudes, the Tibetan Blue Bear, the Himalayan Brown Bear or Dzu-Teh, also known as the Himalayan Red Bear. Some have also suggested the Yeti could actually be a human hermit.

One well publicized expedition to Bhutan reported that a hair sample had been obtained that, after DNA analysis by Professor Bryan Sykes, could not be matched to any known animal. Analysis completed after the media release, however, clearly showed that the samples were from the Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) and the Asiatic Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*).

In 1986, South Tyrolean mountaineer Reinhold Messner claimed to have a face-to-face encounter with a Yeti. He has since written a book, *My Quest for the Yeti*, and claims to have actually killed one. According to Messner, the Yeti is actually the endangered Himalayan Brown Bear, *Ursus arctos isabellinus*, that can walk upright or on all fours.

In 2003, Japanese mountaineer Makoto Nebuka published the results of his twelve year linguistic study postulating that the word "Yeti" is actually a corruption of the word "meti", a regional dialect term for "bear". Nebuka claims that the ethnic Tibetans fear and worship the bear as a supernatural being. Nebuka's claims were subject to almost immediate criticism, and he was accused of linguistic carelessness. Dr. Raj Kumar Pandey, who has researched both Yetis and mountain languages, said "it is not enough to blame tales of the mysterious beast of the Himalayas on words that rhyme but mean different things."

Some speculate that these reported creatures could be present-day specimens of the extinct giant ape *Gigantopithecus*. However, while the Yeti is generally described as bipedal, most scientists believe *Gigantopithecus* to have been quadrupedal, and so massive that, unless it evolved specifically as a bipedal ape (like *Oreopithecus* and the hominids), walking upright would have been even more difficult for the now extinct primate than it is for its extant quadrupedal relative, the orangutan.