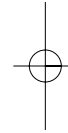
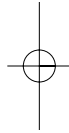


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### **Yeti Researcher volume 24, issue 8: August 2005**

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The Society For Cryptic Hominid Investigation was founded in 1982 as an honor society for cryptozoologists specializing in unknown bipeds. Today the society has ten chapters and 1,500 members, and its goals are to promote research into mystery primate phenomena around the world; foster interaction among cryptozoological professionals; and encourage appreciation and support for original work in the field. *Yeti Researcher*, the non-technical monthly journal of the Society, is part of the effort to bring the hard work of its members and affiliated groups to its members and the general public. All contents herein are © 2005 The Society For Cryptic Hominid Investigation and/or credited contributors. Except for research and educational purposes, you may not reproduce any part of this journal without prior written consent from the publisher. Address? Postmaster notice? Submission guidelines?

## [Letters]

## Clone Questions

Dear Editor:

As a genetic engineering student, I read with interest your article in last month's issue regarding the possibility of creating a viable Bigfoot clone from genetic material extracted from field samples. ["Can We Clone Bigfoot? Technological and Ethical Considerations," January 2005.]

Dr. Culver is correct that it is currently beyond our abilities to clone any animal from hair, toenail, or epithelial cells (extracted directly or from scat samples) alone. Should that process become possible, however, there is the secondary problem of gestation, the main question being whether a human female would be able to carry a viable non-human hominid fetus to term. Presumably, the infant's size would be significantly larger than that of a human, introducing many possibilities for pregnancy complications. Ethan Greenwell, Jr, of the University of Southern Alberta has suggested an ape may be a more suitable trans-species surrogate for that reason, and I'm inclined to agree.

About the article's discussion of transgenic cloning, it's questionable whether fertilizing either an ape or human oocyte to create "a hybrid Bigfoot-human/ape chimera" will not be compromised by chromosomal deficiencies. A female primate or human will probably be able to surrogate a Bigfoot chimera, but

there is a 99.9% probability that cloned specimen would be infertile due to the species interbreeding.

Should any of this prove successful, however, there remains the larger issue of late-stage obesity in somatic cell clones. For reasons still not very well understood, most cloned animals today — mice, sheep, goats, and cows are the most drastic examples — show dramatic, even fatally abnormal growth during adult development. Although some of this was addressed by Dr. Culver's informed article, there are many more problems to be resolved before the Bigfoot community should proceed with a cloning research program.

*Jeremy Rivkin*

*Ann Arbor, Michigan*

## Beyond Belief

Dear Editor,

In September, I was a speaker at the International Bigfoot Symposium in Willow Creek, California. It was my first visit to America, and quite enjoyable. Among the gifts I received from colleagues was a copy of *Yeti Researcher*, August, 2004, with the article "New Believers: Mainstream Scientists Speak Out."

First of all, thank you for this article. Its contents are very positive and serious. Verbal support for Bigfoot research from some leading primatologists is refreshing news indeed. I only wish it would not remain just lip-service, but turn into concrete and tangible action.

Back in 1973, I wrote the following to a leading primatologist, Dr. John Napier of the Smithsonian Institution: "The living missing link is 'unknown' to science because there is no science to know it." Today, of course, there is such a science, the science of living non-sapiens hominids, called hominology. This discipline is a new branch of primatology, just as paleoanthropology was once a new branch of paleontology. There is nothing uncommon for a newborn science to be in a sorry plight. The history of primatology itself is a telling example; the Order of Primates was established by Carl Linnaeus in 1758, discarded after his death, and re-established a hundred years later. It is only in the 19th century that this part of zoology acquired a scientific basis.

There are special ideological and methodological reasons why factions within primatology and paleoanthropology have strong opposition to our field, but that's a long story to tell. They call us pseudo-scientists now, but they will kick themselves for that. Cybernetics and genetics were also called "bourgeois pseudo-sciences" once. Our day will come.

Unfortunately, most of us accept the establishment position that the discovery of these hominids remains unproven, and we chase after ever more evidence. But this is a false approach. We don't need new evidence. We have to disseminate the already existing knowledge we've collected and start to change minds.

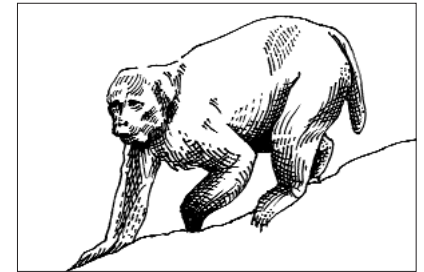
It's only then that the discovery of relict hominids will be properly placed as one of the great scientific results of the 20th century.

*Kaarl Mustanen*

*Chairman, Committee on  
Cryptozoological Research  
Museum of Vertebrate Biology  
Helsinki, Finland*

## [News]

## New Primate Discovered in India



This year, an international team of scientists on a research expedition in the secluded, high-altitude area of northeastern India known as Arunachal Pradesh made a startling discovery: an entirely new species of primate.

The species has been designated *Macaca munzala*, but is also referred to as the Arunachal macaque, after the region in which it was discovered. This newly described simian is characterized by a lustrous dark brown coat, a stocky tail that ends in an abrupt nub, and mocha-colored facial skin with absolutely no cheek whiskers.

Madhusudan and his colleagues will publish their findings later this year in a forthcoming issue of the *International Journal of Primatology*.

The discovery was the first time in more than a hundred years that a new primate species was visually observed by scientists. The last instance was in 1903, when researchers exploring Indonesia's Mentawai islands came across what is now known as the Pagai macaque.

Speculating as to why the Arunachal macaque had not been documented before, Madhusudan pointed out that very few biologists had traveled to this region looking for wildlife prior to their expedition.

Arunachal Pradesh is an area of rugged mountains and a broad-leaved forest canopy. Called "the Hump" during World War II by Flying Tigers who transported supplies from India to China, Arunachal Pradesh is said to be somewhat of a biological well-spring. In addition to the new macaque, researchers point out that the rare leaf deer, black barking deer, and Chinese goral also inhabit this region.

Neil Bement, chairman of the British and Irish primate taxon advisory group — part of the international effort to name species — believes it is very significant that new large mammal species continue to be discovered.

Many cryptozoologists agree. Loren Coleman called the new macaque, along with the conclusive new identification of the Bili

Ape in the Congo ["A Killer in the Congo," *Yeti Researcher*, November 2004], among the top ten discoveries of last year. "When they're finding a new primate," said Thomas Cranston of the Sasquatch Science Center, "it gives more credibility to what we've been saying along."

In this respect, it has been a banner year. Many new species — some thought long extinct, others completely new — have been discovered, including a previously unknown shark, a sub-species of tiger, and several birds and rodents. "It demonstrates that the era of biological discovery is not over," said Cranston. "There are still new animals out there."

—Bryan Gardiner

## Mountaineer to Hunt for Yeti in Japan



A 70-year-old Japanese mountaineer will lead a nine-member party this summer on a Himalayan mission in what he calls "a quest for the yeti, the world's most elusive creature."

Atsu Takahashi will leave Japan for Nepal on August 20 with eight other men. A ninth will meet the group in Kathmandu, where they will take rendezvous with sherpas and take on supplies. "It's only a small few, a select group, who even claim to have seen the yeti," Takahashi said. "But I plan to join them this summer." Takahashi also plans to document tracks in the snow, hairs, or "any other excretions" made by the creature.

There has been a cluster of sightings recently in a specific forest region on the border of Nepal and Tibet, where the creature is known locally by the name of *Migou*. Takahashi plans to begin in this region. "We'll spend six weeks there," he said. "It's summer, so we'll have plenty of time to search under optimal weather conditions."

Takahashi's party, which spans five decades (the youngest member is 20), will camp on the Dhaulagiri massif — the "white mountain" — which rises to 26,950 feet high (8,167 meters), a hair shorter than Mount Everest. By setting up four infra-red cameras, the team hopes to catch a photograph of the yeti. They also plan to record the creature's vocalizations using a new microphone developed for undersea geological applications. "It's related to sonar," explained the expeditions technology expert, Vim Kaefer, "for catching very low frequencies generated by volcanic activity and earthquakes at the ocean floor. The instrument has to be very sensitive, and so that's helpful for us."

Takahashi has climbed the Dhaulagiri peaks before, in 1976 and 1984. He returned in 1994 for the sole purpose of finding the yeti. It was an underfunded expedition, and an unsuccessful one. "He was very disappointed," said Takahashi's wife, Mizuki. "He's become very focused on this, making maps and diagrams in preparations for expeditions. He was hoping to find something."

Although no conclusive documentation turned up on that trip, Takahashi's camp was visited in the night on several occasions by some kind of creature, accompanied by the tell-tale whistling calls and a strong animal scent. Twice, large footprints were found in the snow the following mornings. One on occasion, a set of tracks were discovered that resembled a small human child and measured between 4 and 6 inches (10 and 15 centimeters). "We still don't know what that was," Takahashi said.

—Ronni Kappos

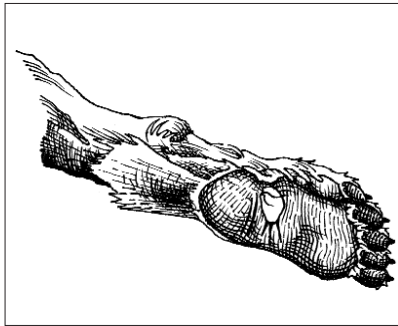
## Siberian "Yeti Paw" Belonged to Bear

Last year, the BBC broadcasted a report from Russian television about a mysterious paw found in the remote Altai Mountains by a mountaineer. The "surprisingly well-preserved" specimen found its way to the Russian Association of Veterinary Anatomists (RAVA), where it was examined and X-rayed. "Scientists think the bones

don't belong to any known animal and they're convinced it's more man than beast," said the report. "Some are already claiming that it could be from a yeti." The newscast shows Yuriy Malofeyev, Vice President of RAVA, examining the X-ray and commenting: "The position of the knee joint indicates that the creature walked on two legs." The limb, he said, "looks very human."

When news of the mysterious appendage spread, cryptozoologists were at first thrilled. Two thirds of all cryptic hominid sightings in Asia, after all, are from the region where the paw was discovered. But the breakthrough may have been a false alarm. Upon closer inspection, the morphology of the paw suggests it a non-hominid origin. As Dr. Esteban Sarmiento, a primatologist at the American Museum of Natural History, observed, "[The paw] has claws and lacks a heel process. The plantar surface is relatively short, proximo-distally, and tapers proximally with no medio-lateral expansion associated to the tarsals. Moreover, none of the outside toes are opposable."

In other words, the foot is not very human-like, and most cryptozoologists now agree. Igor Bourtsev, Director of the International Center of Hominology in Moscow and co-author of *America's Bigfoot: Fact, Not Fiction* came to a similar conclusion when he saw the evidence. Bourtsev concluded that the paw matched that of *Ursus arctos*, the region's brown bear.



For researchers like Bourtsev, who has spent his life searching for unidentified hominids, closing the book on false claims is very important. Hoaxes or erroneous reports like the BBC story, he says, is dangerous to the entire field of cryptozoology. "[A]ny orthodox zoologist," explained Bourtsev, "having seen that program could say: 'Again they show us a myth about Snowman! These people are not researchers! They see the Snowman in every bear footprint!' Such cases discredit all hominology research."

—Evan Derkacz

## Yeti Pioneer Biography May Become Movie

Getting a film about Bigfoot made in Hollywood can be as elusive as the creature itself. Producer Jib Pohlemus understands the difficulties of both endeavors. Pohlemus has been working for almost eight years on a project about legendary Bigfooter Tom Slick, but after many false starts, close calls, and disappointing set-

backs, the prospect of a film about Slick may be within sight.

A hero to cryptozoologists around the world, Tom Slick remains little known to the public. A Yale and Exeter man, Slick came from Texas, where he became a rancher and successful wildcatter, discovering the Benedum Field in West Texas. But it was Slick's avocation as a passionate yeti hunter that made him a legendary character.

Using the large endowment left by his father — over fifteen million dollars in 1930 — and the money generated from his own successful ventures, Slick began to fund expeditions to the Himalayas in the 1950s. He then turned his sights toward North America's Bigfoot, scouring the Pacific Northwest in search of the creature. It was during one of these expeditions that Slick's plane went down over Montana, killing him and his party.

Pohlemus learned about Slick accidentally. "I was reading all these obscure books, and one mentioned Tom Slick's name," said Pohlemus by phone from his office on the Paramount Studios lot. "I contacted the San Antonio newspaper. They had information on him from the 1950s. It was quite an investigation. The more I learned, the more I became fascinated."

It was Slick's persona as a cryptozoological Howard Hughes that enabled Pohlemus to develop and sell the project to Fox. But what started out as a quick sell turned into a winding path not unlike Slick

navigations across the Himalayas.

"I started working on the story in late 1997 and sold the treatment in 1998, with Nicolas Cage and his company producing the film," Pohlemus explained. "But over the course of a few years, three different regimes [came and went] at Fox." That left the project in Hollywood limbo, known in the business as "turnaround."

"The wait has been somewhat frustrating," says H. Richard Pennington, a member of the Austin Explorer's Club and longtime cryptozoologist. "We have been very excited about seeing the film get made." Pennington says that the cryptozoological community hopes that Slick's story in film will be invigorating for their cause. "We need to get more people interested," he says. "There's no one like Slick these days. Expeditions have little funding — or imagination sometimes. I think [the film] could be great for us."

Luckily, Pohlemus says that a new, influential writer is now interested in coming onto the project. "It's back on the road now," he says. "It was as dead as can be, but now it's moving forward."

In Hollywood, however, good news can be temporary. There are still many hurdles before a film goes into production. Both cryptozoologists like Pennington and Pohlemus have their fingers crossed. "Tom Slick," said Pohlemus, "may be as elusive as the yeti himself. But he will be found. It's a story deserves to be told." —Jon Alain Guzik



## Featured Sightings

▲ **Location:** Washington State; nearest town: Montesano; nearest road: 7300 Rd. Simpson Timber) **Terrain:** hiking near Wynoochee river, exiting swampy alder bottom and entering heavy timber with moderate slope up hill. **Observer:** anonymous. **Observer activity:** surveying government land. **Observation:** “We saw a large bipedal creature, with shaggy black and grey hair. The creature was sitting 30 ft. (9.14 m.) up in an old maple tree, tearing off branches and using them to hit the trunk. At first we thought it was a small black bear. As we approached the tree, the creature spat at us, and may have tried to urinate in our direction as well. When we saw the creature move along a branch we noticed human characteristics. A strong musk smell was noticed. After this we ran away. As strange as this reads, this was our exact experience.” (via *ISCHI database*)

▲ **Location:** New Zealand (nearest town: Moeraki) **Terrain:** alpine lake region. **Observers:** Matt and Tammy Hunt. **Observer activity:** picnic. **Observation:** A couple vacationing from England spotted a small, grey-

colored animal with a tail about a foot (0.3 m) in length among some boulders. “It looked like a monkey,” they said, although there are no known monkeys (or any mammals) indigenous to New Zealand. A photograph was attempted, but the animal saw them approaching and jumped from sight. (from the *Youie Foundation Newsletter*) **Editor’s Note:** This primate incident occurred about 18 mi. (36 km) from the site of a sighting reported earlier [see “Sightings,” May, 2001]. A tentative explanation arose for the earlier encounter: a local rancher has a pet monkey who is allowed to roam and climb rocks, which he apparently enjoys. That explanation is thrown into doubt by the Hunts’ story.

▲ **Location:** central China **Terrain:** forested mountain area, near road. **Observers:** six car passengers. **Observation:** The state-run Xinhua news agency reports that Chinese authorities are investigating several sightings in Hubei province. The most recent sighting was a grayish ape-like animal about 6 ft. tall (1.9 m.) with shoulder-length black hair. A vehicle carrying six passengers was making a turn when the occupants saw the

creature moving fast across the road. The passengers found several 12 in. (30 cm.) footprints and newly broken branches in the jungle near the road.

▲ **Location:** Catalina Island, California. **Terrain:** coastal mountain, sagebrush. **Observer:** Dominic Jensen. **Observer activity:** camping **Observation:** “I’d like to report a strange occurrence that happened to me last year. I never told anyone really, but I found your organization and read that other people have seen things like what I did. In April of 2004, I was camping by myself on Catalina Island. The rat race was getting to me I though some ‘island time’ might be just right. I set up my dome tent at the campground and decided to walk into town to pick up dinner. It got pretty dark on the way back, and I could barely see the dirt road. Soon I started hearing a repetitive moaning kind of sound, sort of like snoring, but deeper. At first I thought I my mind was playing tricks on me. Then I really got the feeling something was following me. When I approached a golf course, I saw this thing running across one of the sandtraps. It was man-sized, but its head was down, and its long arms were swinging. When it stepped

into the light by the clubhouse I could see that it was covered in hair, thick and brown as a labrador’s. It stopped for a minute, looked around, and then made for the trees. I’ve never seen anything move like that, even an athlete. I pretty much ran all the way back to the camp and got in my tent. That night, I thought I heard foot-steps and something rummaging around by my cooler but I can’t be sure I wasn’t just hearing things because of what happened earlier. To any of you going to Catalina, keep your eyes open!” (via *ISCHI database*) **Editor’s Note:** Sightings on small islands are rare, but not unknown. In his essay “Modern Sasquatch Biology,” researcher Douglas E. Trapp relates the following with respect to the “offshore sasquatch”: “It is interesting to note that [Bigfoots] can apparently negotiate open seas as between the B.C. coast and Vancouver Island, the southeast Alaska coast and Prince of Wales Island (and others), and even as far south and a distant swim as from the California coast to Catalina Island (22 mi). In fact, many coastal Islands along Washington, B.C. and Alaska have had sasquatch footprint finds and sightings. Their swimming methods can only be imagined.”

# Flores Man and Sumatra's *Orang pendek*: New Evidence

Joshuah Bearman

In 1855, an American named Walter M. Gibson found himself roaming the British and Dutch territories of Southeast Asia, en route to the Pacific. Gibson, a Georgia gentleman and self-proclaimed adventurer, found the excitement he sought, as most of the region was then still a rough landscape of colonial outposts secluded among uncharted wilderness and pirated seas. In his diary of that time, later published as *The Prison of Weltevreden & a Glance at the East Indian Archipelago*, Gibson chronologically relates his tales of travel: glorious Chinese wedding feasts; a mutiny on board his own schooner, *The Flirt*; poetry recitations with a Malay princess. It was on Day 22, however, having put in to port at Sumatra and ventured to the interior town of Palembang, that Gibson recorded his strangest encounter. There, Gibson underwent a friendly interrogation by a local chieftain, who referred often to something called the *Orang kubu*; having heard this term once before, Gibson inquired after it, and was led out into the village's agricultural area, past sheds and buffalo stables, where, yoked to two heavy panniers filled with building materials, he saw a small, hairy humanoid creature imprisoned as a slave. There were more, the chieftain whispered, out in the forest. "They were brutes," Gibson has the locals describing the creatures, "[with] no worship, no marriage, no law, no clothing, no idea of its use; they were the accursed of Allah, companions of djinns on earth; fit only to be beasts of burden." The one Gibson confronted was as tall as a middle-sized man, covered with hair, that he said "looked soft and flowing." Yet, aside from the creature's wide mouth and protruding lips, its face, Gibson observed, carried a "pleasantly human" expression.

Confused, Gibson wondered whether he wasn't witnessing "some lower grade of human being, some connecting link between man and beast, more human than orang utan, or chimpanzee; and less so than Papuan or Hottentot?" It was a well-placed question: what Gibson recorded in his travelogue was the first documented sighting of the mysterious "wild-man" long known to the natives, depending on dialect and region, as the *Orang pendek*,

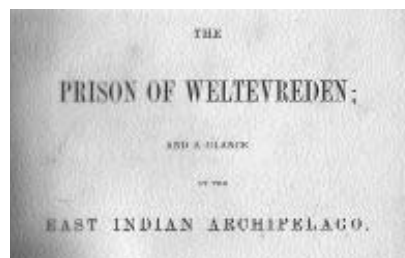


Figure 1. Walter Gibson's *The Prison of Weltevreden & a Glance at the East Indian Archipelago*, title page (detail).

*Orang letjo*, *Atoe pandak*, *Atoe rimbo*, *sedapa*, *sedabo*, and the *goegoeh* — or what goes today by the more popular title of the Jungle Yeti of Sumatra.<sup>1</sup> Gibson's account opened the door to a century-and-a-half of sightings since — so many, and so consistent, that the Jungle Yeti may be the world's most likely candi-

date for actual discovery of an unknown, humanlike primate.

Recent developments bolster this possibility — and add a tantalizing interpretive twist. Expeditions to Sumatra's interior in the past few years have returned with prints and unusual hairs. In addition to the well-established fossil record showing that Southeast Asia was home to highly evolved predecessors of modern humans, late last year came the discovery of Flores Man, the new hominid species unearthed last fall on the Indonesian island by the same name that has forced paleoanthropologists to re-examine the human family tree and its chronology. Flores Man, a three-foot-tall human, lived at least until the last Ice Age, making him contemporaneous with modern humans, and some researchers are exploring whether this new cousin of ours may have endured into the Dutch colonial period.

Or perhaps even until today. Flores, like its neighbors, has its own tales of beast-men. A late-surviving human predecessor gives a new credibility to a theory advanced for some time by cryptozoologists: that the *Orang pendek*, or Jungle Yeti, may be a relic population of just such a species that survives in the area's

1. The terminology of the Jungle Yeti is complicated. Gibson's *Orang kubu* was a likely misnomer. The Sumatran natives referred at that time to two groups of short, shy forest-dwellers: the *Orang kubu* and *Orang gugu*. The *kubu* are, in fact, an aboriginal pygmy group, a well-documented human tribe like the bushmen of the Kalahari or the "negrito" pygmies living throughout Southeast Asia. It was the *gugu*, however, who were distinctly nonhuman, covered in hair and unable to speak. *Orang pendek* has become the most widely circulated Malay name for this creature, although it is technically specific to southern Sumatra. *Sedapa* is also common, and the other names in use tend to refer to specific characteristics of local sightings.

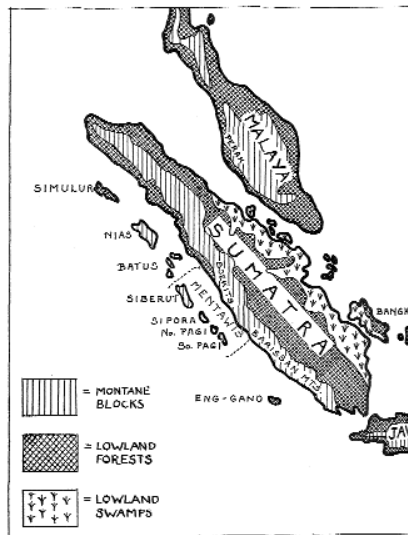


Figure 2. Map of Sumatra

scale yeti variety is reported everywhere, from the heights of the Himalayas down to the lowland forests of the Malay Peninsula, where the *Orang dalam* (meaning “giant man”) is said to leave sixteen-inch footprints while frightening workers on rubber plantations.

Then there are the “little-feet.” Like the *mawa* on the Malay peninsula, the *teh-lma* in the lower forest valleys of Nepal, the *bataut* in Borneo, or the *nguai rung*, or “forest people” of Vietnam. All are small, hairy, bipedal, and well-known to the local aboriginal minorities, although others have seen them too; many American soldiers, for instance, claim to have encountered the *nguai rung* in the jungle during the Vietnam War. All the creatures tend to be described similarly, with pinkish skin and orange or brown hair, sometimes with a dark black mane. On rare occasion, reports fitting this description are made as far away as Australia, by outback travelers who call the animals “Brown Jacks.”

But the most persistent locale of such sightings has always been in Sumatra. The earliest written account dates from the thirteenth century, when Marco Polo stopped at the island and heard about a race of hirsute beast-men. William Marsden, a

boreal forests. With anthropologists now credibly wondering if we are the planet’s sole human inhabitants, the cryptozoological possibilities are renewed. Suddenly, the folklore, the eyewitness accounts, and the fossil record are coming into alignment: something — or someone — may be out there.

### Mounting Evidence

There is a long tradition of encounters with hairy jungle creatures throughout Southeast Asia. The large-

Dutch Secretary in Residence, translated this passage of Marco Polo in 1819, and connected it to stories he heard in his day about the *Orang pendek*. After Walter Gibson’s visit forty years later, there was a dry spell of firsthand encounters until an explosion of physical evidence in the early twentieth century. In 1910, R. Maier, a Dutch surveyor, began collecting a series of strange footprints he found in the forest near Boekit Kaba. In 1917, a frontiersman named Van Heerwarden was timber-cruising when his scouts began sighting the *Orang pendek*, and he confirmed the tracks himself. That same year, the biologist Edward Jacobsen published a book called *De Tropische Natuur* in which he recounts a similar experience while collecting samples, culminating in a close sighting of the animal. Around that time, the Sumatran governor, L.C. Westenenk — a longtime skeptic quick to dismiss the *Orang pendek* as legend — was moved to write about several incidents involving acquaintances of his, including a plantation owner at Dataran, who encountered an animal “as large as a medium-sized native... [with] thick square shoulders, not sloping at all ... I saw that it was not a man, and I started back, for I was not armed. The creature took several paces, without the least haste, and then, with his ludicrously long arm, grasped a sapling, which threatened to break under his weight, and quietly sprang into a tree, swinging in great leaps alternately to right and to left...”

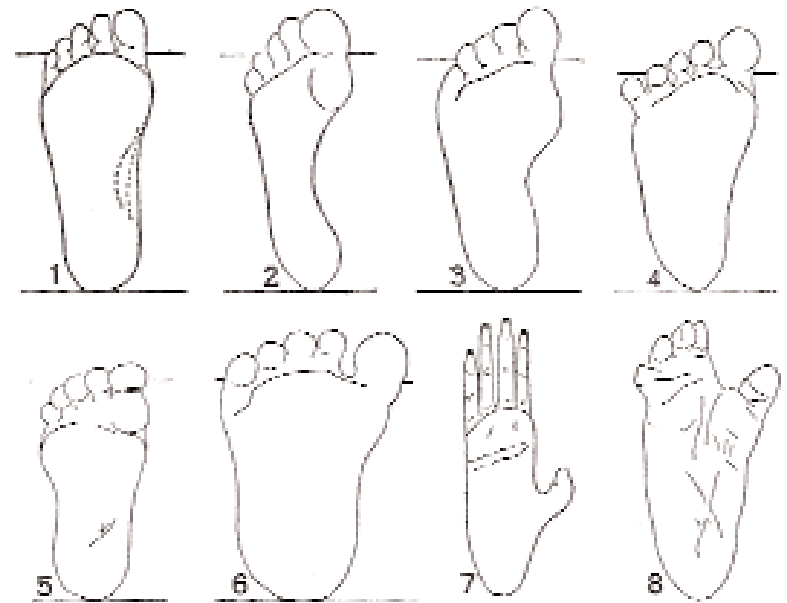
Because of the arm-length and arboreal escape, Westenenk hypothesized that the plantation owner might have seen an enormous gibbon. Examining the evidence years later, Bernard Heuvelmans considered whether the *Orang pendek* may in fact be a large, unclassified subspecies of gibbon. This interpretation is a natural first instinct, and mistaken identity with a known primate is commonly given as an explanation for *Orang pendek* and other hominid sightings. But Heuvelmans harbored second thoughts because of the creature’s prints, which clearly did not belong to any kind of monkey. Beginning with Maier, observers of *Orang pendek* tracks noted that they appear like those of a small human — five-toed, but narrow at the heels with a broad ball of the foot, and six inches long at the biggest. This configuration has been cited consistently since, including when Jack MacKinnon, a Cambridge primatology graduate student doing

field work with orang utans in the 1960s, routinely saw these prints criss-crossing the soft forest floor.

In recent years, a flurry of investigation was touched off by the work of Deborah Martyr, a British journalist writing about wildlife in Sumatra in 1989 when she and her guides came across scaled-down, humanlike foot prints in a remote area. “If we had been reasonably close to a village, I might have momentarily thought the prints to be those of a healthy seven-year-old child,” she wrote at the time. “The ball of the foot was, however, too broad, even for a people who habitually wear no shoes.”

Martyr took casts, and sent them to the Indonesian National Parks Department, where they were unfortunately lost. On later expeditions, Martyr sighted the *Orang pendek* in person, and she has since relocated to Sumatra full time to work for the Kerinci Seblat National Park while also continuing her search for evidence of the island’s elusive hominid. This includes making her own outings as well as advising other groups looking for the *Orang pendek*. It was on one of these in 2001 that some British researchers collected photos of seven of the familiar prints in the jungle near the Gunung Tuju, or the Lake of the Seven Peaks. The following year, another team returned from the jungle with portable physical evidence: several hairs, which they promptly turned over to Dr. Hans Brunner, an Australian conservation officer made famous in the Lindy Chamberlain case when he proved that Chamberlain’s daughter had been killed by a dingo at Ayers Rock, thereby freeing the woman from a wrongful murder conviction.

According to Dr Brunner, the hairs remain unidentifiable. Dr. Brunner has ruled out that the hairs originated from most of the local fauna, but there are still a few species to try as matches. Back in 1855, Walter Gibson’s encounter left him convinced “that beings of well made human form, covered with hair, almost without speech, and living on raw food, dwell in the caves and tree tops of the forests of Sumatra, are facts that are well established.” A hundred and sixty years later, a few strands of hair collected from a tree may back his firm assessment. “If nothing comes which looks the same,” Dr. Brunner said of the samples he’s analyzing, “I would have to say there could be an animal that we do not yet know about.”



**Figure 3. Comparative footprints.** (1) Human adult (Caucasoid). Imprint in clay mold. (2) Human child (10 years). Wet imprint on hard surface. (3) Prehistoric human adult (Cro-magnon Man). From clay cave floor. (4) Human pygmy (Malayan Negrito). From cast. (5) *Orang pendek*. From photograph of print taken in Danau Bendo Swamp, Sumatra. (6) Prehistoric human adult (Neanderthal Man). From Toirano cave, Italy. (7) Ape (Orang utan). From specimen. (8) Ape (Lowland Gorilla). From specimen.

### The Hominid Family Tree

If so, what? The *Orang pendek* is clearly not the hulking brute of the Himalayas. Sumatrans routinely attest to its placid nature. Gibson’s account of enslavement aside, the locals mostly regard it with tolerance rather than fear. The various names for the creature in Malay folklore often include terms of respect.

And the *Orang pendek* never shows aggression, unlike Bigfoot or the traditional yeti. Although much of their lore is probably exaggeration — those creatures are more likely to be gentle if oversized vegetarians — what’s notable is that no one even *suggests* that the *Orang pendek* is hostile or dangerous. Even real animals often acquire a poor reputation, like the African gorilla, which, since it was first recorded by Westerners in the late nineteenth century, has been a repository for our imagery



Figure 4. Engraving of a killer ape. Frontispiece, *The Malay Archipelago*.

of horror: monstrous, aggressive, wildly sexual — un-human, according to the predictably charitable view of ourselves in the late Victorian era. This image of the gorilla has been thoroughly debunked, first by American zoologist George Schaller, and after him, Diane Fossey's long-term cohabitation with the mountain gorillas of Rwanda, during which she recorded their mild manners and peaceful days spent napping or eating. (Even the terrible King Kong, in the end, was the one character in that story capable of true love and altruism.)

While that kind of poor reputation persists among other mysterious bipeds, the *Orang pendek*, at worst, is seen as a mischief-maker. If the yeti is described so often as a manlike beast, the Jungle Yeti seems to be more of a beastlike man. In size, shape, and temperament, it is the closest to us of any of the other rumored animals out there. Gibson related that the local sultans believed the forest-dwellers to be devolved humans — *tai orang*, “the refuse of men” — descendants, they said, of castaway slaves of Alexander the Great who inhabited the island when the Malay people arrived. The aboriginal tribes, who were there before the Malay, sometimes refer to the creatures as “predecessors,” which may be an important clue as to the Jungle Yeti's origin.

The cover of the January 2000 issue of *Scientific American* showed a drawing of a *Homo erectus* and the headline: “Once We Were Not Alone.” The article went on to point out that our species had at least fifteen cousins, and it has only been very recently that we have had the planet to ourselves.

But perhaps we're not alone even now. A popular explanation

for mysterious bipeds is that they are living artifacts: prehistoric ancestors who managed to survive in remote habitats. The yeti and sasquatch are thought to be either specimens or descendents of *Gigantopithecus blacki*, a massive ape that lived in China and Southeast Asia for a million years and is thought to have become extinct in the Pleistocene epoch. Heuvelmans and others have suggested that the Agogwe in Africa — cryptic hominids similar to the Jungle Yeti — might be surviving *australopithecines*, the *Homo erectus* ancestors to modern humans made famous by the Leakeys' discovery of Lucy at the Olduvai Gorge in Kenya.

As for the Jungle Yeti's origins, there is no shortage of candidates. Southeast Asia is full of calcified early hominid bones. One of the most famous subspecies of *Homo erectus* was first unearthed right next door on Java. Peking Man, discovered originally in China and since excavated from sites across the region, is Java Man's more advanced successor. When John Napier, the zoologist who directed the Primate Biology program at the Smithsonian, looked into the science of cryptic hominids in his book *Bigfoot: The Yeti and Sasquatch in Myth and Reality*, he suggested both Java and Peking Man as potential progenitors of the *Orang pendek*. Another prospect, Napier speculated, was *paranthropus robustus*, a developmental dead-end off our lineage found widely in Africa.

Impossible, the skeptics declare. As the *Scientific American* article discussed, there is a strange comfort in our taxonomic loneliness, a profound attachment to our being sole custodians of Earth, and it can color the study of prehistory. That was the sentiment behind the school of thought in paleoanthropology that emerged in

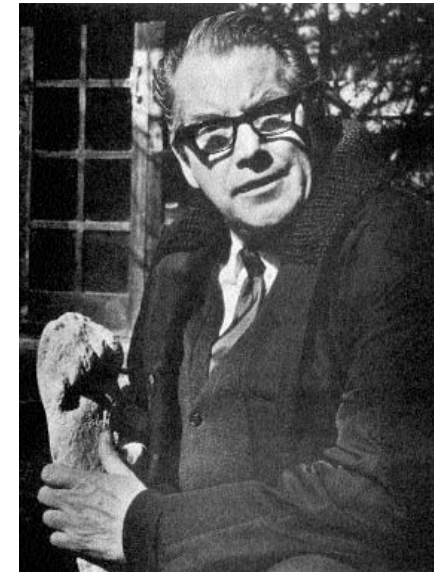
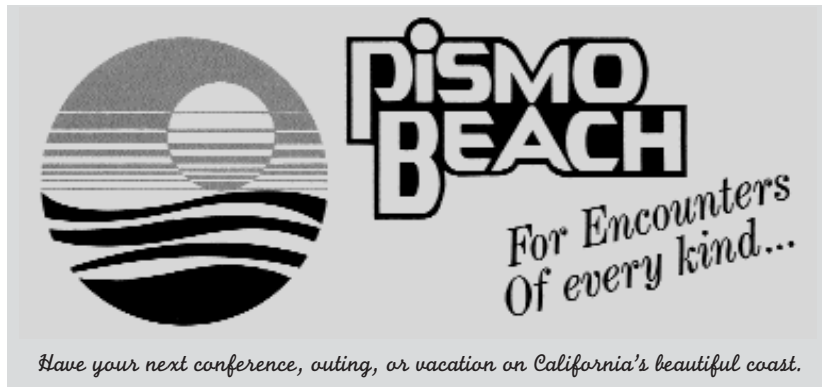


Figure 5. Dr. John Napier, former Director of the Primate Biology Program at the Smithsonian.

the 1950s called the “single-species hypothesis,” which postulated that only one type of hominid could have existed at any given time. By this theory, ours was a clean progression, a slow but steady transformation from barely bipedal, oafish ancestors into our graceful and gifted selves. The single-species hypothesis fell victim to the fossil record, however, which showed that in the seven-million-year history of the genus *Homo*, overlapping species were the norm, the single exception being when our species *Homo sapiens sapiens* fanned out across the globe and either killed, absorbed, or outwitted their less-advanced relatives into extinction about 25,000 years ago.

Such was the conventional wisdom until Flores Man turned up. Flores is a relatively small volcanic outcropping, one of the 7,000 islands that make up Indonesia, although it is somewhat more isolated than most. In the 1990s, archaeologists excavated evidence of a stone tool culture on Flores, suggesting that *Homo erectus* had been there at least 800,000 years ago. Returning to investigate further, a group of researchers working in the Liang Bua limestone cave complex last year found a full skeleton of a hominid, this one living on the island until at least 12,000 years ago. *Homo floresiensis*, as the new species was called, was three feet tall, causing his discoverers to give him the nickname “the Hobbit.” Hobbit or not, *Homo floresiensis* shared both modern and premodern characteristics, and came as quite a shock to the scientific community.

“I would have been less surprised,” reported Peter Brown, an Australian anthropologist who has done work in the region, to



*The Guardian*, “if someone had uncovered an alien.” Because *Homo floresiensis* brings new doubt into the diversity of the human family, it was widely listed as one of the biggest science stories of the year, second only to final proof of water on Mars. Within anthropological circles, *Homo floresiensis* has been called the biggest development in the past 150 years. “We had been looking for the remains of the earliest modern humans in Indonesia,” said Bert Roberts, a geochronologist with the expedition, about the discovery. “So when we found the skeleton of a completely new species of human, with so many primitive traits and that survived until so recently, it really opened up a whole new can of prehistoric worms.”

Such as whether there could be similar new species to discover, and if they might be found alive. It immediately occurred to Gert van den Burgh, a member of the team who’s spent many years on the island, that their skeletal find could be the source of the locals’ persistent stories about three-foot-tall hairy men who live in the forest. *Ebu gogo*, they’re called: *ebu* meaning “grandmother” and *gogo* “he who eats anything.” The *ebu gogo*, according to van den Burgh and Roberts, were also three feet tall, upright walkers, but with longish arms making them able to climb trees. Roberts, van den Burgh and Michael Morwood, co-director of the excavation, are all open to the possibility that *Homo floresiensis* and the *ebu gogo* may be one and

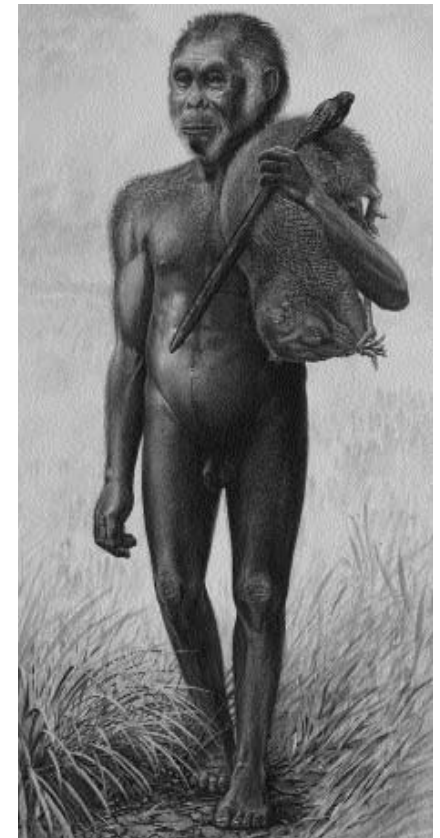


Figure 6. Artist’s rendering of *Homo floresiensis*. Courtesy of Peter Shouten and the National Geographic Society.

the same — and that even more recent evidence of their presence may be uncovered. The villagers, Roberts notes, say the creatures were seen often until “just before the Dutch colonists settled that part of Flores in the nineteenth century.” Next year, when the team returns, they say they’ll visit some of the caves associated with the *ebu gogo* stories to take a closer look.

## Time Running Out?

With the anthropological apple cart upset by Flores Man, the case for the Jungle Yeti seems that much more compelling. Chris Stringer, of the Natural History Museum in London, said that upon hearing about *Homo floresiensis* he quickly imagined a parallel to the *Orang pendek*. Perhaps, he wondered, another wayward *Homo erectus* population like the one on Flores took a divergent evolutionary path — and its progeny have been leaving

small, human-like prints in the jungles of Sumatra ever since.

It’s a reasonable explanation. *Homo erectus* was capable of open-sea navigation; that’s how early man got to a place like Flores in the first place. And as Flores Man’s small size dramatically illustrated, once island-bound, fauna often develops strangely, sometimes shrinking or, conversely, tending toward gigantism. Flores, for instance, is home to today’s komodo dragon, and prehistorically there were even larger lizards, as well as giant rats (as big as *Homo floresiensis*) and an extinct species of tiny elephant.

This occurs in the living human population, too; aboriginal pygmy tribes live all around the rim of the Indian Ocean and into the Pacific, from Africa to Papua New Guinea. The smallest tend to be the most isolated: the tribes on Flores who talk about the *ebu gogo* are themselves only four feet tall on average. Just north of Sumatra are two archipelagos, the Andaman and Nicobar islands, where pygmies lived unknown to the western world until the nineteenth century. One of them, the Sentinelese, has still never had any formal interaction with the rest of the world to this day. Having lived alone on their island for as long as 60,000 years, they’re probably the most genetically divergent humans on the planet.

When pygmies arrived on nearby Sumatra, a much bigger island that is still not very densely populated, they found one of the oddest assortment of species in the world. And what’s to say one of them isn’t the *Orang pendek*? Because the island has oscillated between isolation and being connected to the mainland during the glacial periods when the sea retreats, it’s just the sort of evolutionary laboratory that could have facilitated an anomaly in the human family tree.

If the *Orang pendek* does exist, its days may be numbered. Although Sumatra does not have the same population pressure as other parts of Indonesia, the island is being rapidly developed for agriculture, and the animal life is suffering. The elephant population is in danger. Only a few tigers remain. The Sumatran rhinoceros is critically endangered. At the current pace, the orang utan will be extinct on the island within ten years. Likewise for the *Orang pendek*: four of the five areas where the creature has been sighted are now deforested. This is why Jungle Yeti advo-



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cates like Deborah Martyr see the search for the creature as part and parcel of an environmental protection program. Protecting wildlife refuges like Kerinci Seblat are vital for the survival of megafauna, known and unknown alike. “We need to protect these areas from the loggers and poachers,” says Mark Freeman, a British expeditioner who looked for the *Orang pendek* in 2002. “I want to return soon with a better-equipped party.” Freeman hopes to find evidence of Jungle Yeti, he says, while there is still jungle. “Otherwise, we’ll miss the chance to find the next hobbit alive and well.”

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## The Suburban Sasquatch: Elusive Hominids in Southern California

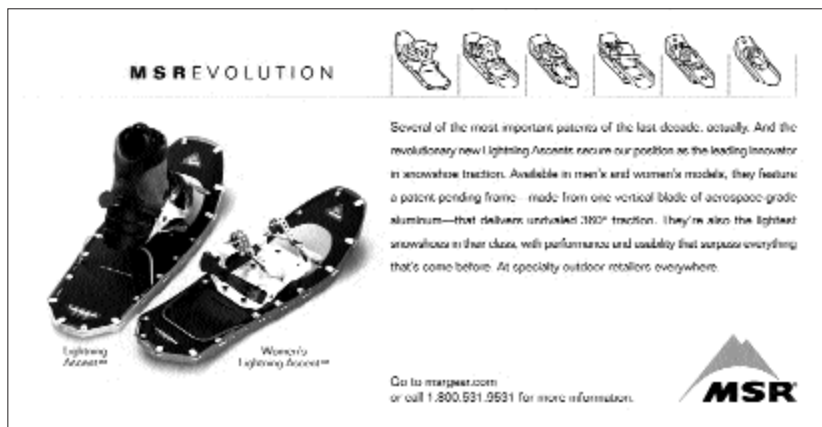
Erik Bluhm

Every part of the world has its own mystery hominid. Yetis traipse the Himalayan highlands, the Yowie roams the Australian outback, and bands of Agogwe make playful raids on remote villages in central Africa. Closer to home, of course, Bigfoot-type creatures have been spotted in all fifty states. But some regional concentrations tend to occupy the cryptozoological limelight, like the sasquatch of the Pacific Northwest, or the Ooh-Mah, whose wooden-carved likeness presides over towns with Bigfoot festivals all over Northern California.

But what about Southern California? The Golden State’s southern deserts and mountain ranges still contain some of the wildest habitats in the country. And nowhere has urban settlement become so thoroughly intertwined with untamed country as in the metropolitan fringes of Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. On the 200-mile periphery where southland sprawl borders wilderness, there are frequent face-offs with coyotes and mountain lions, plenty of bears bathing in Jacuzzis, and enough deer for well-attended hunting seasons.

This zone of ecological interaction should also provide plenty of opportunity for Bigfoot contact. Indeed, sightings occur across Southern California, even within Los Angeles city limits — this year already, hikers had encounters (both friendly) in the Agoura Hills and on trails just above Altadena. Today, the frequency of sightings is steady and moderate; but in the mid-1970s a sudden, sustained, decade-long spike of activity overtook the area — a strong enough swell that several homegrown Bigfoot-tracking societies sprang up to follow up on all the incoming evidence. All of which begged the question, did bigfoots suddenly appear in the region? Or did the mounting human population simply overflow into the home of Southern California’s other indigenous hominids? Much of the new evidence originated in the areas where tract home parcels were first pushing into rough country, and in the state parks, as developers and city residents alike scrambled to get their own piece of manifest destiny and the

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simultaneous explosion of outdoor lifestyles brought more people than ever into the woods. Either way, something started happening in the wilds of Los Angeles.

### “The Ragman of Palmdale”

It was the spring of 1974 when the sightings began. The first was in the Angeles National Forest, at the northeastern edge of Los Angeles County. Three Lancaster students went camping at Big Rock. The air was still cold, leaving patches of snow under the pines. The campground was deserted. By the campers’ account, however, it soon became apparent that the “vibes” at Big Rock were not ideal. One of them, Willie Roemermann, had been acting strangely all afternoon, staring off into the woods as if worried about something. “His attitude was one of listening,” recalled his friends to the researcher and reporter team B. Ann Slate and Alan Berry for their definitive chronicle of the occurrences. Willie became so intense, his friends said, that they had to head home early. They packed up their pickup truck in the dusk and began the drive down to Pearblossom. Willie drove while his companions Brian Goldojarb and Richard Engels sat in the truck’s bed looking backwards.

As they passed Sycamore Flats near the mouth of the canyon,



Figure 1. Big Rock campground near Lancaster, California.

Brian and Richard observed a large, hairy creature following the truck down the road. The moon was bright and nearly full. There was no mistaking what they were seeing. Although the truck was traveling about 20 mph, the two-legged animal had no trouble keeping up. Brian and Richard recalled that the creature was so tall that its head grazed some tree branches overhanging the road. It

followed them for approximately a half-mile and then faded into the darkness. At the bottom of the grade, Brian and Richard told Willie what they had seen. They excitedly discussed their experience over coffee in a roadside diner and considered returning that night but in the end were too frightened.

The next day, the three campers drove back up the canyon and parked approximately near where they’d seen the creature the night before. In the ditch that ran parallel to the road they found giant footprints, each nearly two feet long.

Back home, they drew sketches of what they had seen. Then they started tracing a life-size outline on a big piece of cardboard. They taped two pieces together. Then another. When they finished they cut the shape out and spray-painted it black. They drove back up to Sycamore Flats and held it up where they had seen the monster in the road, moving it around to recreate the perspective they’d witnessed. “Man ... *That’s it! That’s it!*” they all finally agreed. It was hard to believe. The cardboard figure stood nearly ten feet tall.

Brian, Willie, and Richard weren’t the only desert dwellers to have such a run-in that spring. Though Bigfoot has been occasionally spotted from the Mexican border on up to the vineyards of inland Santa Barbara County, no other locale witnessed as much activity as the Antelope Valley did in the mid-1970s. Following the Big Rock sprinter episode, dozens of Bigfoot reports emerged within the next few months. Cops saw them. Military men saw them. Babysitters saw them. The descriptions collected by Slate and Berry ranged from fantastical to scary:

- \* Three Marines were frightened by an eight-foot, hair-covered “monster” that leaped in front of their car on the outskirts of Lancaster.
- \* Weeks later, an unkempt “man-thing” frightened some schoolkids who dubbed it the “Ragman of Palmdale.”
- \* A Bakersfield newscaster was haunted by “inhuman screams” as he steered his Baja Buggy frantically through the night.
- \* Twelve-year-old Bret Baylor and his little sister saw a “huge thing” standing atop Lovejoy Butte.

There were Bigfoots hiding in tall grass; Bigfoots lurking behind Joshua trees; Bigfoots climbing fences; and Bigfoots cruis-

ing campgrounds at Lake Elsinore. According to the exhaustive records in the *Bigfoot Casebook*, the creatures came in a panoply of colors: russet, brown, and dark black. Hiker John Clark saw a Bigfoot covered with long blond hair, or “wearing something that gave such an appearance.” Several children in Saugus saw a hairy man running off with a piglet under each arm and a glowing blue belt around his waist. Thirty-year-old Vietnam vet Ron Bailey observed a smelly, nine-foot form lurking next to his Palmdale duplex one night. A teenager put four 30-30 slugs into something big he saw crossing the Little Rock Dam. Ron Bailey’s Bigfoot even came back for multiple visits. “We have our own little personal thing going,” he told Slate and Berry.

### “On the Edge of Los Angeles”

Southern California contains several hundred thousand square miles of desert steppe, rolling hills, and coastal wetlands, bordered by a long range of geologically dynamic peaks that the Spanish originally called the Sierra Madre. The mountains — since divided by name into the San Bernardinos, San Gabriels and Santa Monicas — begin out east, near Palm Springs. They make for the Cajon Pass a hundred miles to the northwest and then turn hard toward the sea. On one side is the Mojave Desert, one of the country’s biggest. On the other, the criss-crossing ranges separate a patchwork of valleys and alluvial floodplains, including, at the west end, the Los Angeles basin, where seven million people now make their home.

Despite the human presence that’s been etched into the landscape, there is still plenty of space for wildlife within Southern California, including Bigfoot. Much of the Santa Monica mountains are inside the city, as is Griffith Park, a municipal recreational area as large as a nature preserve, where deer, coyote, and raccoons sometimes come down to graze and forage right on Los Feliz boulevard, and where, this past year, a pair of mountain lions even took up residency.

The presence of 200-pound wildcats in Griffith Park is really less of an incursion than a reclamation of territory. When the area was almost entirely wild a hundred years ago, it supported an extremely diverse array of animals, including mountain lions



Figure 2. Sighting simulation created by Willie Roemermann, Brian Goldojarb, and Richard Engels in Big Rock campground.



Figure 3. Map of Northern Los Angeles County and environs.

and even larger megafauna like the grizzly that graces the state's flag. (Until the 1880s, in fact, alarmed visitors en route from the port at San Pedro to the Los Angeles settlement routinely saw grizzlies roaming the vast grasslands well before Hollywood boulevard had been plotted on any planner's survey.) Likewise, the Antelope Valley was so named because of the herd of antelope that roamed the valley floor nibbling on the tidytips, creamcups, fiddlenecks, and poppies that turn the hills orange and yellow each spring. Today, the antelope are gone, but the basin remains the wildest corner of Los Angeles county. Although Lancaster and Palmdale, the valley's two main cities, have grown exponentially in the past three decades, their streets are still a tenuous grid laid atop wilderness. And once you cross those cities' edges, it's not far until there's no trace of civilization at all. A few minutes is all that separates both downtowns from national forests, and after that, there's nothing but landscape for hundreds of miles in every direction but south.

In short, the Antelope Valley presents a perfect habitat for Bigfoot. So it's not surprising that so many of the sightings of the 1970s occurred there. Fewer than 50,000 people lived in the valley then, but their numbers were growing. More Angelenos were leaving the city every day, looking for cheap land and longer horizons. They started building gated communities, a car ride apart, and tilt-up malls with expansive parking lots.

Before the gated communities of family homes, another earlier utopia existed. About an hour down Highway 18, you can find the old foundations and river rock chimneys of the Llano del Rio Cooperative Colony, a 1,000-member socialist experiment founded in 1913 that created its own school system, hotel, and newspaper, *The Western Comrade*. The young witnesses at Big Rock —

Willie, Brian, and Rich — passed these ruins, which occupy the mouth of Big Rock Canyon, on their way to the campground the night they saw Bigfoot, and it was there they returned when they decided to take action.

Shortly after their memorable encounter, the three students united under the banner of discovery and created the Angeles Sasquatch Association. Very quickly, they assembled a conglomeration of Bigfoot enthusiasts whose adopted credo was constant vigilance toward learning more about the creature. They canvassed not just Big Rock but all the area's campgrounds, interviewing guests and rangers. They mailed out hundreds of postcards reading, "To report a Bigfoot sighting, call this number." With the assistance of a local psychic, they even tried conducting telepathic Bigfoot "stings."

Although the medium's efforts added little concrete data, the ASA's hard-nosed field work paid off. The group compiled a vault of sightings records, cast dozens of huge footprints, and even captured some vocalizations on tape. They sent their materials to the Natural History Museum, whose staff was perplexed by the casts but suggested that they represented prints from giant sloths. This itself would have been an enormous scientific discovery — giant sloths have been extinct in North America since the Ice Age — but ASA members were certain of what they had seen. One of them almost paid the ultimate price for his experience. Terry Albright, a self-described "singer-composer" was on his way home from an ASA-sponsored expedition when a large "hair-covered form" stepped across the road in one gigantic stride and caused Albright to lose control of his hot rod. After spinning into the brush, Albright watched the giant shape disappear into the darkness. "I sincerely doubt," he told other ASA members in an ad-hoc meeting the next day, "that was any kind of sloth."

There were enough sightings in the area to support multiple societies of Bigfoot enthusiasts. Shortly after the ASA formed, Ron Bailey, the Vietnam vet from Palmdale, founded The High Desert Sasquatch Research Team. The HDSRT's mission statement, written by Bailey, called for "the capture and confinement" of a Bigfoot utilizing the skills he had developed during covert operations in Southeast Asia. Although "big-game hunters" were discouraged from participating in Bailey's hunts, he was willing

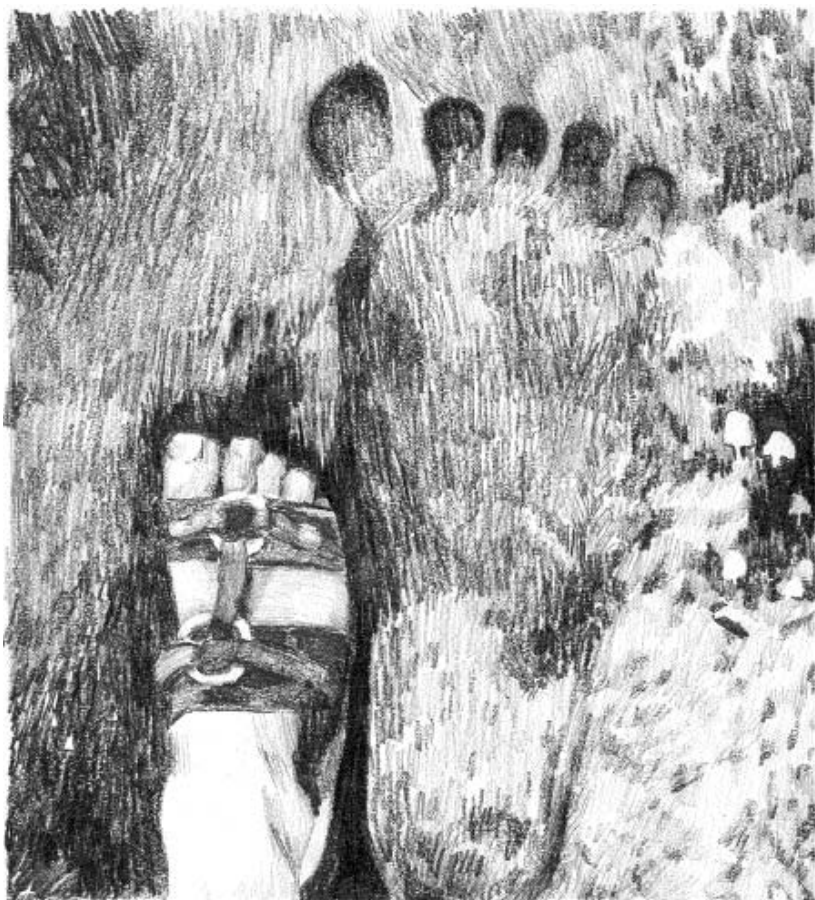


Figure 4. Documentary sketch of Bigfoot print observed *in situ* by ASA members and recorded in Arthur Montague and Jerome H. Lilly's papers, *The Sasquatch in History*.

to share information with “accredited scientific bodies.” Both the ASA and the HDSRT had dozens of active participants. And they weren't rivals. “Everyone,” Bailey told a researcher chronicling the occurrences, “is a brother in the pursuit of this elusive beast.”

Even the active military got involved, if perhaps involuntarily. Over at Edwards Air Force Base, which fences off 470 square miles of high desert between Interstates 14 and 395, the night watch started seeing things with their “starlight scopes” and infrared scanners. “They were all over the place,” recalled Air

Patrol Sergeant Roger Jones about an incident in which large footprints were found on the base. “There were so many of them that I couldn't follow any trail.” Another guard reported to Douglas Trapp for the *Bigfoot Encounters: California Sightings List* that he saw strange creatures while on duty “scores of times.” The guard was under the impression that the sightings were widely known to the brass, but they couldn't admit that the creatures routinely breached base security, so they kept it quiet. The intruders, the soldier observed, “were fully hair-covered except the palms of their hands, the base of their feet, and their face.” He described them as having long arms, slung down below the waist. “They roamed the desert at night,” he said, “sometimes in groups.”

### Errant Migration?

The more confusing question for all the Bigfoot enthusiasts was not what the creatures were but why they'd unexpectedly become so visible — and not just up in Big Rock and the surrounding mountains, but right down on the valley floor, even, according to one witness, bounding across Avenue T. One suggestion was weather. The winter of 1973–74 was particularly severe, with snow levels dropping to 3,000 feet. In these types of conditions, high-altitude mammals routinely seek refuge from storms and better food sources at lower elevations. To the south is the San Fernando Valley and heavily populated Los Angeles, hardly an inviting sanctuary for large animals. So the Antelope Valley, averaging 2,100 feet and supplying foraging opportunities in fruit and nut orchards (and duplex dumpsters), became the natural alternative destination. Like the bears and deer that arrive in the San Fernando Valley following storms, it may be that Bigfoot followed the same logic of survival. “And if they came here to escape Los Angeles and the winter,” speculated Bailey, “maybe they decided to stay. After all, that's what we did.”

There may also be a geological explanation. Far beneath the Antelope Valley's dazzling poppies lies the San Andreas Fault, a massive fissure separating two major tectonic plates that move very slowly but periodically make up for lost time. Like in 1857 when the 9.0 temblor of Fort Tejon, 100 miles north of Antelope

Valley, tossed fish clear out of Tulare Lake and washed miniature tidal waves three miles out onto the plains. During that quake witnesses noticed that the animals “fled in terror” and birds changed their flight patterns. A similar behavioral response among animals has been recorded all over the world. And Bigfoot, too, has been known to flee violence in the earth: after Washington’s Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980, sightings increased as far south as Northern California where witnesses near Gridley repeatedly observed displaced creatures frantically feasting in walnut orchards. In the spring of 1974, a series of smaller tremors on fracture faults radiated through the ranges northwest of Antelope Valley. They didn’t inconvenience the human population, but may have had a stronger effect on the fauna, dislodging Bigfoots from their mountain dens.

But the elements don’t explain Bigfoot’s ultimate origin in the area. Some ASA members believed that their documentation reflected a recent Bigfoot migration. Migration, of course, is a hot topic in Bigfoot scholarship, and quite controversial. Grover Krantz originally proposed that Bigfoot’s social organization was based on migratory groups, while Rene Dahinden insisted that they were strictly local. Either way, the migration concept is critical, if not for describing Bigfoot’s annual activity, then at least for understanding its dissemination. Because population movements play a role in the geographic distribution of all species. That’s how humans arrived North America, and presumably Bigfoot too — across the Bering land bridge in act of opportunistic migration.

Something similar may have happened in the Antelope Valley on a smaller scale. Bigfoot, the ASA reasoned, has long been well known from the Sierra Nevada mountains to the north, and the sudden surge in observations may reflect that at least part of that northern Bigfoot population was moving their way. The HDSRT suggested this was part of a regular migration where Bigfoots summered in the Sierra Nevadas and spent winter in the San Gabriels, and they pointed out that the only way to get from one to the other was to walk across the Antelope Valley.

This happens fairly regularly in nature. Biologists call it “errant migration,” which is when a species moves beyond a reg-

ular migration point, either for food or as a response to predators or other environmental factors. With birds, the errant path may have resulted from being blown off course. If the climate is suitable at the unintended destination, the animal can develop wholly new populations in that habitat. Thus do colonies of wild parrots, never indigenous to Southern California, now thrive in the birds of paradise among the bungalows of the Beverly Hills Hotel.

Ron Bailey and others think it’s more likely that Bigfoot has been in Southern California’s hills and forests all along. The Gabrieleno Indians talked about Bigfoot creatures — *Takwis*, they called them — who dwelled in caves or subterranean burrows high on the mountains. In the Owens Valley, the Paiutes were familiar with large humanoid tracks often found near water sources. Among all the Indians, these creatures were both feared and respected. The two populations lived together, carefully sharing the same resources, and when the Indians encroached too much on Bigfoot, the creatures made it clear where the lines of trespass were drawn.

No matter their provenance, a key reason Bigfoots became more visible in the 1970s is that there were more people in the area to see them. Where civilization expands into rural areas, Bigfoot sightings increase. In the Pacific Northwest, studies have showed a direct correlation between commercial forestry and Bigfoot, as sightings overwhelmingly occur on or near commercial logging roads.

The interaction can be difficult for both parties. Humans often respond with fear, demonizing the creature their colonization throws them into contact with. This happens with more common animals. Think of dingos stealing babies from cribs, polar bears invading Alaskans’ houses, and the bad rap the wolf has gotten in all literature. These tales of savagery are often reversed, and the humans are the real transgressors. In fact, when animals do attack, it is often prompted solely by the presence of people. Ecologists have described how human encroachment into wilderness areas causes animals’ behavior patterns to change unpredictably. This is why mountain lions, not known to attack humans at all in the West, started eating joggers and mountain bikers.

That dynamics fits in with some of the strange behaviors exhibited by the Bigfoots in the Antelope Valley in 1974. ASA members often reported finding stacks of stones or carcasses of rodents when pursuing Bigfoots or following up in sighting leads. Dirtbiker Mike Pense was “just doing his thing” when he was besieged by a volley of rocks. Looking up, he glimpsed “a black, hairy, manlike figure” with its “arms raised overhead in preparation for throwing another boulder.” A pair of campers reporting an encounter to ASA that summer said that a hairy figure glared at them with “unmistakable cold hatred” when they happened across him in a canyon. They also noticed distributed piles of stones, along with the disemboweled remains of several small animals. ASA researchers surmised that these stone pyramids and other unusual findings represented the Bigfoot’s “posted territorial boundaries.” Likewise, the campers felt the Bigfoot they saw “was clearly trying to send a message.”

### “Far-Reaching Consequences”

The reason Antelope Valley has no more antelope is careless human development. When the rail line to San Francisco was built in the 1870s, the antelopes were bewildered by the straight metal lines and refused to cross them. The splendid, hundred thousand-strong herd that gave the area its name starved to death or was easily hunted out of existence within a few years. When the first paved road from Los Angeles to Lancaster was completed in 1920, it opened a new era of environmental damage, as the valley’s scrub flats made way for a new frontier of Southern California settlement. “In just a few short years,” describes urban theorist Matthew Jalbert, “the explosive growth of the Antelope Valley (and countless communities like it) incurred a social and ecological debt that is already contributing to far-reaching consequences.”

Among those consequences are the rejoinders from the environment itself. The catastrophic wildfires that plague Southern California are natural outcomes of thoughtless expansion. Graded roads up the hillsides enable debris flows to gather momentum and tear houses from their foundations. Water management in our seasonal rivers gives way to episodic floods that

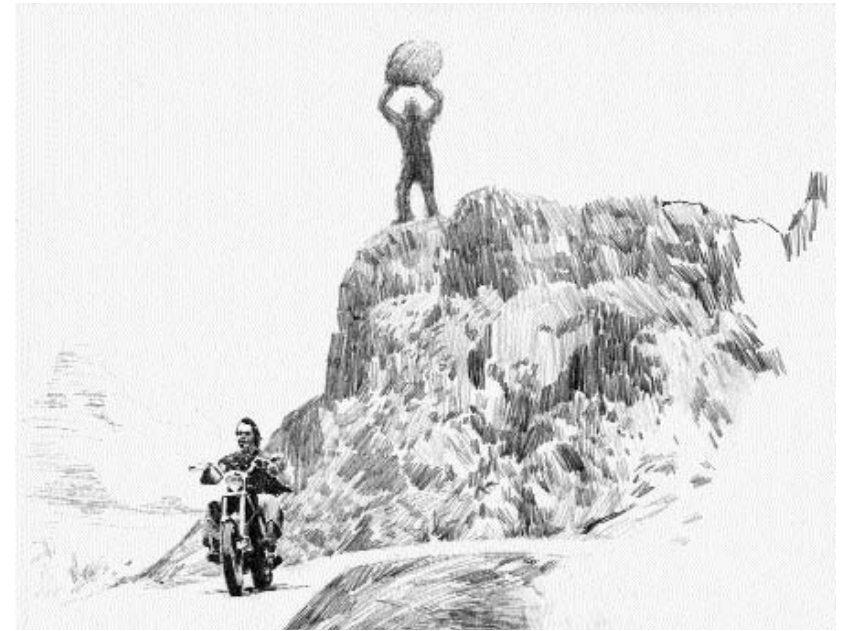


Figure 6. Documentary sketch and notes of Bigfoot encounter recorded by ASA members in 1974. Also from *The Sasquatch in History*.

overcome the concrete channel architecture. And the animals bite back too. Mountain lion attacks have become near-commonplace occurrences. Coyotes routinely navigate their way through the storm drains into urban backyards to dine on compost and domestic pets. Just off the southland’s sandy beaches, great white sharks put on a show for the news channels’ choppers. And when off-roaders aggravate Bigfoot, they get a pile of rocks thrown at them.

Or so was the connection made by Antelope Valley’s Bigfoot enthusiasts. Keenly aware that they were the vanguard of massive human immigration to the area, many ASA members thought of Bigfoot as something of a mascot for the home team in what would become an ecological turf war. Whether or not the physical evidence of Bigfoot was conclusive, most of those encounters documented by the ASA and other groups were interpreted as environmental messages. For them, Mother Nature finally had a voice in the forest. “They’ve lived here for a long time,” said Bigfoot observer John Warnine in an ASA sighting report. “They

know their habitat is in danger, and it's a warning — not just for their sake, but also for ours.” Warnine also saw stacked stones, and interpreted their significance as a very specific warning about our current ecological path.

Along these lines, ASA researchers were particularly intrigued by one Bigfoot who came forward in 1975. Jim Mangano, described in the ASA's documentation as “tanned, blonde, and introspective,” had been camping with friends in the Angeles National Forest when he went off to meditate upstream by himself. “We knew Jim liked to be by himself sometimes,” said his friends. “He liked to listen to things, like sounds of the forest.” What happened to Jim that night is a mystery. He said that “the mood of the forest felt weird” and that it seemed he'd been “called” there. Mangano sat on a rock, Indian-style, but he couldn't remember how long. Trance-like, he wandered back to camp and immediately fell asleep. In the morning, a sole 19-inch footprint was found in the sand near Jim's rock.

The ASA arranged a meeting with a psychiatrist who invited the youths to his Palos Verdes office. Also present was a hypnotist, Donna Welke, director of the School of Applied Hypnosis. The recordings from the taped session, the ASA believed, may shed some light on Bigfoot's motivations or at least the witness' interpretation of the encounter. As the session progressed, Mangano described how something “big” approached him in his dream-state. It put a “strong, hairy hand” on the his shoulder and “communicated with his eyes.”

As the hypnotist probed further, Mangano became more emotional. His voice rose slightly and became animated. It seemed as if Jim had been chosen as a spokesperson by something not otherworldly, but innately of this world.

“What is it they are trying to tell us?” asked Welke.

Mangano: *They're saying to tell people... tell people they were here first!*

Welke: *They were here before we were?*

Mangano: *Yes!*

Welke: *What else?*

Mangano : *They said we're ruining their planet.*

## Taxonomy Trouble: A Look At The Hominid Family Tree

*Since Karl Linnaeus first developed comparative zoology in the eighteenth century, the world has been fascinated by humanity's relationship with our primate cousins. Of particular interest is the question of whether there are additional primates, including large, nonhuman hominids, waiting to be discovered. Indeed, Linnaeus himself created the taxonomic category Homo troglodytes for the hairy “man-apes” assumed by Enlightenment scientists to exist in the wild.*

*The best-known of these, the yeti of the Himalayas, is only one of the many mystery primates reported from every continent except Antarctica. These creatures go by dozens of names and are described with an array of characteristics: as huge anthropoids; as small sylvan bipedalists; as intelligent pongids, or great apes; as primitive humans. Some are said to be friendly, others aggressive. The wide variation has made for classification difficulties among those who study cryptic hominids ever since Howard Bury became the first Westerner to see the yeti (translation error in his dispatch back to India made the creature known as the Abominable Snowman). This month, Yeti Researcher assembled its editors into a forum to provide some insight into the taxonomy and evolutionary origins of these animals. It is a difficult but necessary task; as John Napier, the Smithsonian primatologist who investigated cryptic hominids in the 1970s, once said, “It's hard to count the leaves on the family tree, but that doesn't mean I'm not going to climb those branches.”*

GREG MOORE: Let's talk first about the name of the field itself. There's some overlap out there, with cryptozoology and hominology and so on.

BRENT HOFF: Cryptozoology is the study of animals yet to be described by science. The word was coined by Bernard Heuvelmans, a Belgian zoologist who was well respected for his rigorous application of the scientific method. His book *Sur La*

*Piste des Bêtes Ignorees, or On the Track of Unknown Animals*, was the first dedicated to the topic of cryptozoology. It came out in 1955.


TRINIE DALTON: Although the term itself isn't in that book. It appears a few years later in an article.

BRENT HOFF: Cryptozoology can refer to animals of all types. The search for the ivory-billed woodpecker, which was thought to gone extinct in the 1920s but may now be turning up in some of Louisiana's swamps, falls under the rubric of cryptozoology.

TRINIE DALTON: As does the Tasmanian tiger. And the Loch Ness Monster, for that matter.

BRENT HOFF: Which is why it's important to distinguish the

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yeti and Bigfoot from the rest of the pack. The core of the Bigfoot research community is much more scientifically aligned than the Nessie crowd.

TRINIE DALTON: But hominology hasn't yet been fully accepted.

BRENT HOFF: That's partly geographical. Hominology is typically associated with the Russian school of cryptozoology interested in cryptic hominids. If Heuvelmans is the father of cryptozoology, Boris Porshnev would be the father of hominology. Porshnev was the Russian anthropologist who investigated the surge in *Alma* sightings in the 1950s. He saw compelling evidence after several expeditions to the Pamir Mountains, and he revived Linnaeus' *Homo troglodytes* taxon to classify these animals. He and his disciple, Dimitri Bayanov, carried on their work for decades, and Bayanov later started calling their work hominology.

BRYAN GARDINER: Bayanov has some very precise reasons why he's dissatisfied with all the compound terminology, like "bipedal anthropoids" and "cryptic hominids." Because anthropoids suggest apes and hominids technically includes humans. So he created the new taxon *homin* to mean "nonhuman hominid."

GREG MOORE: It seems the term "hominology" is only catching on slowly over here.

TRINIE DALTON: But I think it will eventually. Within ten years, "hominology" will probably be the preferred term of art.

GREG MOORE: Bayanov's *Alma* relates to the classification debate too. Because the *Alma* are distinct from the yeti, and yeti are distinct from Bigfoot, and so on —

TRINIE DALTON: It's all part of what's called "the lumping problem." If these animals do exist, are they all the same? The evidence suggests they might be different. There are so many regional variants that "the yeti" and "Bigfoot" don't provide enough description. Is it possible that there are multiple types of unknown primates or hominids — or homins, to use Bayanov's term — in all

different parts of the world? If so, would they be separate species? Or even genera?

BRYAN GARDINER: Ivan Sanderson thought so. And he was the first to propose a classification system. His had four parts: the sub-humans, the proto-pygmy, the neo-giants and the sub-hominids. Napier called Sanderson's model a "real eye opener for anyone who imagines that the yeti of the Himalayas is the only manifestation." The sub-hominid included the yeti. The neo-giant was where the sasquatch fit in. The proto-pygmy are the smaller-sized creatures known from several continents. And the *Almas* were included with the sub-humans, which were the "most manlike."

BRENT HOFF: The *Almas*, also called *Almasty*, are interesting because they seem to be very common. By 1985, there were 5,000 *alma* sightings and fifty footprint casts on file with the U.S.S.R. Geographical Society. Throughout Central Asia, there have always been consistent reports of creatures that are very human in appearance except for being very hairy, strongly built, and capable of only a grunt-like language.

BRYAN GARDINER: And the *Almas* are similar to the three borders area of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, where there is a strong oral history of the *Nguoi rung*, which means "wild man" in Vietnamese.

GREG MOORE: But that's different from the term "wild man" when referring to China.

BRENT HOFF: Yes — those would be the *yeren*. In Chinese, *yeren* also literally translates as "wild man," but the creature they're referring to is bigger, less human, and stronger than the *Alma* or the *Nguoi rung*.

GREG MOORE: More like the yeti.

TRINIE DALTON: Closest to the yeti, yes. One problem is that a lot of different vernacular is used to describe the same creature.

The yeti, the *yeren*, the snowman, the *feifei*, the "manbear" all refer to similar creatures in high-altitude Asia. [See sidebar, p. 48, and "A Brief Bestiary of Chinese Hill Monsters," p. 51.] They're really all the same thing.

BRENT HOFF: But then "wild man" can mean very different things, as in the case of the larger stature *yeren* and the diminutive *Nguoi rung*.

TRINIE DALTON: And the European wild man. Until the middle ages, Europeans encountered "wild men" who were manlike, but not quite men to their observers. They're all over medieval art and literature. In Scotland, a member of the Murray clan claimed to have captured a wild man in the Craigebarrows Rocks, and the chained creature still appears in his family's heraldry to this day. But what the Europeans called "wild men" wielded clubs, and wore bark loincloths, so they were more similar to human aboriginal tribes than to the *yeren*. As [anthropologist Myra] Shackley, Heuvelmans, and others suggest, these wild men were not apes or even man-apes, but more likely relict Neanderthals who escaped extinction until only very recently.

GREG MOORE: All the more reason for the classification system.

BRYAN GARDINER: Yes. Sanderson's *Systema Naturae* for the field really got things going. And it's led to a lot of elaboration since.

TRINIE DALTON: Including Loren Coleman's latest system with as many as nine different classes of mystery primates.

GREG MOORE: Well, that's probably too many.

TRINIE DALTON: Plus he includes chupacabras, which is a stretch.

GREG MOORE: And "mer-beings," which are just plain silly. Coleman's *Field Guide* has drawings of sea hags and mermaids that look like something out of the *Fiend Folio*. He can believe in

sea hags all he wants, but it doesn't belong in a Bigfoot field guide. I think that sort of thing does a disservice to the believing skeptics like [Grover] Krantz.

BRENT HOFF: Aside from that, from a scientific viewpoint, Coleman's system becomes the opposite of lumping, which is a "splitting problem." Are there really nine entirely discrete types of large bipeds habituating in secret with humans on the planet? It's more likely that there are at most a few, with some geographic variation.

BRYAN GARDINER: Shackley even proposes a three-part typology: Siberian wild men, or *chuchunaa*, which she thinks are on the verge of extinction, if not already extinct; sasquatch and yeti, which she uses interchangeably and which includes what others might specify as the *yeren*; and the *almas*, which she believes to be Neanderthals.

BRENT HOFF: Although that remains controversial. Neanderthals were probably not hairy, like the descriptions of *Almas*. And they had a stone tool culture as well as language. So that makes sense for the European wild man, which was always described as more advanced. But *Almas* and the *Nguoi rung* don't fit as Neanderthals, unless they somehow lost their tools and language and grew hair. It seems *Homo erectus* would be a more likely candidate in those cases.

TRINIE DALTON: Instead of Shackley's Neanderthal theory, some prefer to use Bernard Heuvelmans' original taxon *Homo pongides* for *almas*, which as the trivial nomen suggests, is more of an apelike human than a human ancestor.

GREG MOORE: Was that how Heuvelmans classified the Minnesota Ice Man?

BRENT HOFF: I believe so.

BRYAN GARDINER: Krantz, of course, narrowed the whole thing down to one category. He thought Bigfoot and yeti were the only

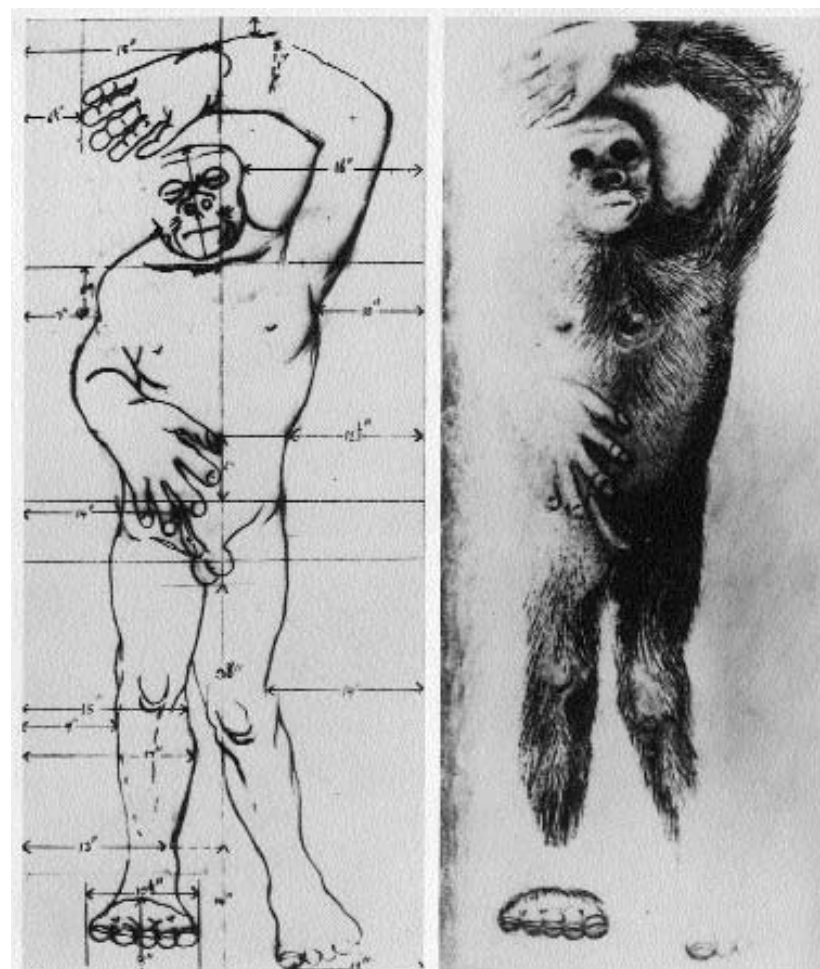


Figure 1. The Minnesota Ice Man was a hairy humanoid corpse frozen in a block of ice that belonged to carnival impresario Frank Hansen in the late 1960s. Bernard Heuvelmans, along with Ivan Sanderson, examined the creature in 1968 and came away from three days of study convinced that it was genuine, and probably represented a "Neandertaloid creature," as Heuvelmans described it in his paper for the Institute of Natural Sciences in Belgium, "Preliminary Note on a Specimen Preserved in Ice; Unknown Living Hominid." The specimen's provenance, however, remained unclear; Hansen told three different stories about where he got the Ice Man, including one about American soldiers in Vietnam having killed the creature in the jungle and shipped it back to the United States hidden in a body bag. Heuvelmans took a particular interest in this story, as it meshed with his research in Southeast Asia about the "forest people" encountered during the war. Shortly after Heuvelmans and Sanderson's examination, the Minnesota Ice Man disappeared. All that remains is their anatomical sketches.

creatures with enough evidence to be classified at all.

TRINIE DALTON: And he proposed that they were both the same animal, descendants of *Gigantopithecus*.

GREG MOORE: Let's stick with Bigfoot for a minute. Because that creature's sightings are fairly consistent and common. The characteristics of prints tend to be similar. And it's the most well known in the United States aside from the yeti. Now, there are several prevailing points of view on the thing — that it's an ape, or a bipedal descendent of prehistoric apes, or a primitive human.

BRYAN GARDINER: Or it's some combination of supernatural and/or extraterrestrial forces —

TRINIE DALTON: Which is an unprovable assertion —

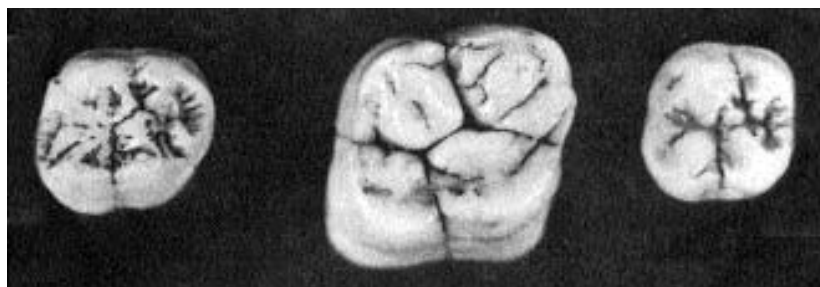
GREG MOORE: And really unnecessary.

BRENT HOFF: In absence of material data, there is a tendency to fall into mankind's imaginative trap — that phenomena not understood must be otherworldly. But as Napier said, "If it exists, it must be part of nature."

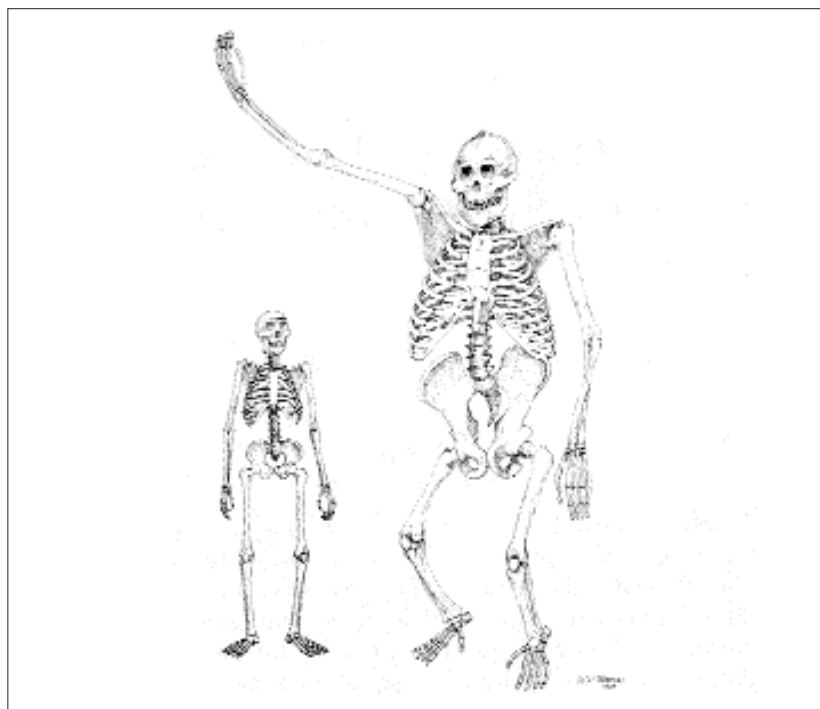
TRINIE DALTON: Remember that the greatest living pongid, the gorilla, was long thought to be a myth in the west, and a supernatural being by African tribespeople. It was first photographed little more than a century ago. So it's not too far-fetched that there are modern apes — or *Gigantopithecus*, or some other hominid, depending on your theoretical school — at large in North America, and that although they're now considered mythical, they'll one day be proven to exist.

GREG MOORE: But Bigfoot is almost certainly not an ape.

BRENT HOFF: Right. Almost all Bigfoot sightings, including the misnamed Florida Skunk Ape, describe bipedal locomotion. Pongids, or apes, would be knuckle-walkers. Bipedal Bigfoot is more likely a hominid.



Figures 2 and 3. In 1935, German paleontologist Ralph von Koenigswald came across an unusually large molar while looking through fossil teeth in a Hong Kong apothecary. (Comparative dentition above: from left to right: 1. Orang utan 2. *Gigantopithecus* 3. *Homo erectus*.) He realized that the tooth belonged to a new primate species, a ten-foot-tall extinct ape he named *Gigantopithecus blacki*. (Comparative skeletal size with humans below.) Over the next four years, von Koenigswald searched many more pharmacies, finding three more *Gigantopithecus* teeth. In the seven decades since, over a thousand teeth have been recovered, along with a few full jawbones, not only in apothecary shops but also in situ. *Gigantopithecus* was herbivorous, and ranged across much of Asia for much of the Pleistocene Era. In most taxidermic recreations of *Gigantopithecus*, the massive ape is golden-haired.



GREG MOORE: What does that say about the Giganto theory?

BRYAN GARDINER: Well, a number of researchers conclude that *Gigantopithecus* makes a good Bigfoot candidate.

TRINIE DALTON: Sanderson and Napier considered it as well. Sanderson a little earlier.

BRENT HOFF: I think even [German primatologist Richard] von Koenigswald supposed that his pharmacy finds might have had some relation to the stories of the yeti he heard while in Asia. And Geoffrey Bourne, one of the most respected primatologists in the world, talked about this in his book *Gentle Giants*. That work is mostly about the lowland gorilla, but in there Bourne also suggests that Giganto populations may have survived in the Himalayas and the pacific northwest. He also speculated that Giganto might have migrated to our hemisphere from the Himalayas via the land bridge.

BRYAN GARDINER: That's pretty much where Krantz falls too.

TRINIE DALTON: But Giganto only fits Bigfoot's description if you believe that *Gigantopithecus* walked upright, and that's not entirely clear.

BRENT HOFF: That was the basis of Krantz's theory. He thought Giganto was bipedal, making it unlike today's apes, and more like a hominid.

GREG MOORE: Although that conclusion is disputed.

TRINIE DALTON: Fiercely, in some circles.

BRENT HOFF: Yes. Krantz himself tried to be careful about drawing conclusions from the fossil record, and we have no post-cranial bones from Giganto. But Krantz was a trained anthropologist, and a great deal of information about morphology is contained in the jaw. First off, if you start with the supposition that

*Gigantopithecus* could theoretically have had any mode of primate locomotion, several of these — vertical clinging and leaping, arboreal quadrupedalism, and so on — can be ruled out simply because of Giganto's massive size. That leaves terrestrial bipedalism or quadrupedalism, which is knuckle-walking. The extraordinary breadth of the back of Giganto's jaws suggests that the head was carried vertically, so the neck was largely between the two halves of the lower jaw rather than behind it. This argues for erect, bipedal locomotion. And then you have to deal with evolutionary speciation. If bipedalism actually was the first trait that separated hominids from pongids, then the semi-human dentition of *Gigantopithecus* indicates that they are on the hominid side of this locomotor split. Giganto is already the largest primate in history. If Krantz is right, Giganto would be the largest hominid to have ever lived.

BRYAN GARDINER: Or currently living.

TRINIE DALTON: Yes.

BRENT HOFF: Some have also proposed that Giganto is the source of Bigfoot, if not in reality than in our collective consciousness.

TRINIE DALTON: Russell Ciochon talks about this in *Other Origins*. He's an anthropologist at the University of Iowa whose done years of field work excavating *Gigantopithecus*, and he writes about whether Bigfoot is a collective myth stemming from a shared past with Giganto — as if Bigfoot is in fact a manifestation of a collective unconscious that was programmed into our culture from having lived for so long prehistorically alongside a ten-foot-tall ape.

GREG MOORE: How does that explain the myths enduring if Giganto has indeed been extinct for 500 millennia?

BRENT HOFF: Well, Giganto and *Homo erectus* spent a lot of time together. They lived contemporaneously — their bones are found at the same cave excavations — for a million years or more.

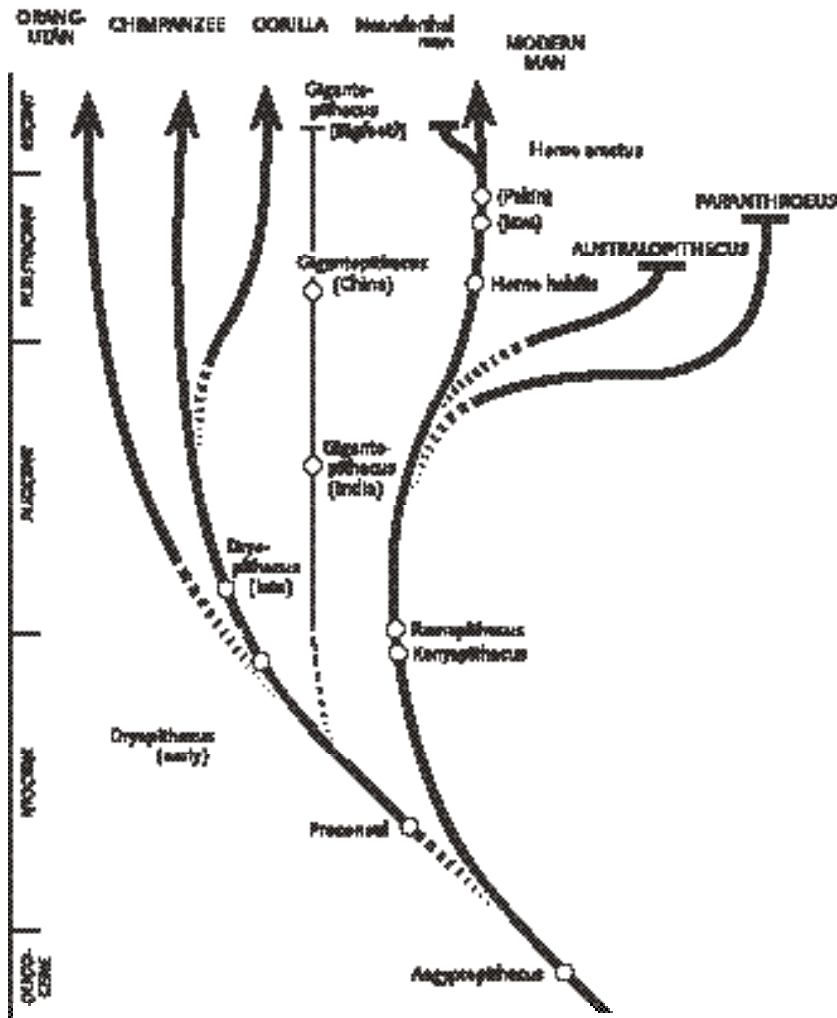


figure 4. Hominid phylogeny

And we know from anthropology that a lot native lore and oral tradition can transcend vast swaths of prehistory.

TRINIE DALTON: Fifty thousand years at least, which seems to be the case with the aborigines of Australia.

BRENT HOFF: Their oral tradition dates at least to when they arrived on the continent, and that was around 50,000 years ago. And it's well documented that Australian aboriginal mythology features a cast of bizarre creatures that sound very similar to animals that have been extinct since the last Ice Age. Like the *bunyip*, which is a big beast, a man-eater, which in the aborigines' description fits the *Palorchestes*, a massive and well-armed marsupial as big as a bull that is known from the fossil record. Similar instances of distant mythology coinciding by physical evidence exists all over the world. The Great Flood from the Bible is perhaps the most well known to Westerners.

TRINIE DALTON: Natives in Patagonia talk about a big nocturnal animal "as big as an ox" with short legs and long hair. They're probably referring to the *Megatherium*, which was a fifteen-foot ground sloth that lived in the South American cone until about 15,000 years ago.

GREG MOORE: And so our ancestor's half a million years living side by side with Giganto could account for why there is a universal giant ape in human mythology.

TRINIE DALTON: Claude Levi-Strauss and others talked about this, although not relating to apes. They looked into collective myth.

BRENT HOFF: It's what Jung called "imaginal symbols of wholeness." In other words, mass shared hallucinations.

TRINIE DALTON: A skeptic's position.

BRENT HOFF: Basically. Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious has often been used by skeptics to explain away

Bigfoot sightings based on the enduring archetype of the “primitive hairy monster lurking just beyond the safety of the village.” But this is a bit of a red herring, in my view. Remember, Jung first used his theory to describe the massive wave of UFO sightings that suddenly sprung up across the globe following World War II. At that time everyone from British housewives to isolated Peruvian tribesmen began seeing these classic saucer UFO’s in the sky and claiming to have been abducted by these particular gray aliens with big bug eyes and no nose. It was a sudden pandemic with little historical precedence.

**BRYAN GARDINER:** Like the Loch Ness Monster, which was only first reported in the 1930s.

**BRENT HOFF:** Yes, that’s a very recent thing, as are most of the other so-called “paranormal” phenomena. Whereas sightings of the yeti, Bigfoot, and the rest have a long tradition, dating even to the earliest written literature. Enkidu, of course, is the name of a wild man who appears in the Gilgamesh Epic. And that type of account has remained constant since.

**TRINIE DALTON:** Which is why the “man-ape” myth is not so easily explained. It’s not a fad. Hodgson and Waddell hadn’t been watching *The X-Files*.<sup>3</sup> The historical universality of our belief that we share the planet with someone else has to be accounted for. And the idea that every Bigfoot sighting in the woods of Ohio is an artifact of *Homo erectus* seeing Giganto in China half a million years ago — well, honestly, it’s just not as convincing as the explanation that maybe some of those sightings mean that people actually saw something out in the woods.

1. B. H. Hodgson, British Resident of the court of Nepal, made the first English reference to the yeti in 1832. Writing in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Hodgson recalled a specimen-collecting trip in a northern Nepal province when his native hunters encountered an erect, tailless creature with long, dark hair all over its body. “Taking it to be a demon,” Hodgson wrote, “they fled in terror.” Sixty years later, Major L. A. Waddell became the first Westerner to document a yeti footprint. “The belief in these creatures is universal among Tibetans,” Waddell wrote in *Among the Himalayas* (1899).

## [Reference]

# A Brief Bestiary of Chinese Hill Monsters

*In 1976–77, the Chinese government sponsored a large-scale expedition to the densely forested Shennongjia Nature Reserve in Hubei Province in an effort to locate the Yeren — local “Wild-men,” or hairy anthropoid creatures long reported to live in the region’s woods. The 110-member research party was organized under the auspices of the Chinese Academy of Science’s Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, a “highly sober and conservative institution” in the words of American anthropologist Russell Ciochon, and one that is the primary academic center for mainstream field work in Asia.*

*The group, led by the Beijing Museum of Natural History’s Zhou Guoxing, spent eight months collecting information, from encounter histories to physical data such as hair, prints, and suspect scatological samples. Although the party included photographers and soldiers armed with tranquilizers, no specimens were found. But Guoxing, along with Professor Yuan Zhenxin, who participated in the expedition and today heads the Academy’s Committee for the Search of Rare Creatures, believe they collected substantial evidence for the yeren, including important details about habits and diet. Zhenxin today estimates that there are 1,000 to 2,000 of the creatures in Shennongjia’s woods.*



**Figure 1.** The original publication featured the title illustration “A Challenge to Science,” a woodcut originally published in the Chinese Academic Journal *Hua Shi* (Fossil), No. 23, 1980, issue 1.



**Figure 2: Dr. Zhou Guoxing, searching for man-beasts in the Shennongjia Nature Reserve, in 1977.**

*The materials produced by the expedition were unavailable in English until an excerpt was translated by British Bigfoot researcher Steve Moore in 1981 and published in a 23-page tract titled Wildman: China's Yeti. As part of Yeti Researcher's serial reprint of this important resource, this month we present the invaluable appendix: "A Brief Bestiary of Chinese Hill Monsters."*

Notes: 1. Only anthropoid monsters have been listed. 2. With the exception of the name Peking, new Chinese phonetics have been used in the transliteration for personal and place names. (Diacritical marks were omitted.) 3. Parenthesis with numerals, e.g. (2), refer to entries within the "Bestiary." References beyond expedition materials identified by author and listed in bibliography.

**DAMAOREN** (9): 'Big Hairy Man'; 'Giant Hairy Men'. While this term may refer to a specific monster in some regions, it seems to be used much more for large anthropoid beasts in general. See also Maoren.

**FEIFEI** (11): The structure of the Chinese characters used for this

beast suggest to the editor that there might be an alternative pronunciation, to wit, Fufu (q.v.), and that these two monsters may in fact be the same, but for variations in dialect.

According to the Er Ya, an old dictionary compiled between perhaps the 12th & 3rd Centuries BC, the Feifei resemble men, wear their hair disheveled (fu), are good runners, and eat men. According to the Ji Zhong Zhou Shu (allegedly composed pre-3rd C. BC), the Feifei have human bodies, walk on their toes, raise their lips over their eyes when they laugh, and eat men. A commentary to the Er Ya written by Guo Po (4th C. AD) says that the Feifei have long lips, a black hairy body and their heels in the front, living in the mountains of Guangdong, Guangxi and Jiangxi provinces of Southern China. The tallest are over a zhang in height (3.3 meters), and they are also called 'Hill-Du'. From the Shu Yi Chi by Ren Fang (460-508 AD): the 'Hill-Du' live in Nankang, shaped like men but upwards of 2 zhang tall (6.6 meters); colour black, eyes red, with yellow hair. They build egg-shaped nests in the trees, copulate like humans, transform themselves and become invisible. Said to [be] the same as the Xiao (7). Duan Chengshi (9th C. AD) in his Youyang Za Zu, adds that the Feifei are strong enough to carry 1,000 jin (500 kg) on their backs, have a bird-like voice, foreknow births and deaths, and that one who drinks their blood becomes a ghost-seer.

He reports that they have heels in front, and no knees. The Er Ya Yi (a commentary work on the Er Ya, written by Luo Yuan, 12th C. AD) says: when the Feifei catches a man, it laughs for joy, folding its upper lip over its head, and then devours him. So men wear bamboo tubes on their forearms and, when seized, draw out their hands and nail the beast's lip to its forehead, letting it run around blindly until it dies. (All from De Groot, Bk II, p507-509).

**FUFU** (8): Literally, beings with disheveled hair, a common trait of most of our anthropoid monsters. Possibly the same as Feifei (q.v.).

**FUJIAN APES:** We have a minor tale which we give here briefly for the sake of completion. It is perhaps less than reliable, for it comes from the traditions of the martial arts, and the source is an article 'Two Apes of the southern Shaolin monastery bravely fought against the Ching Army', by Hsuan King Tze, in Secrets of Kung Fu (2nd Series, Vol 1, No 1, August 1976, HK) which says, in substance, this:

Soon after the establishment of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 AD), a group of patriots supporting the old Ming dynasty established themselves at Mount Jiulian in Fujian Province (E. China), setting up the 'Southern Shaolin Monastery' (this should be distinguished from the main Shoalin monastery in Honan Province). There the occupants practiced martial arts. One day, a

monk found two giant apes in the forest, being attacked by wolves. The monk drove the wolves off with his staff, and then returned to the monastery with the wounded apes, who were doctored as if they were humans. Cured and released, the giants returned leading a horde of small monkeys carrying bananas, then themselves took up residence in the monastery. Watching the monks, the apes began to imitate their martial arts drills, and were then taught the art, given Buddhist names, and put to work guarding the gate. When Qing dynasty troops made a night attack on the monastery, the apes resisted, using staves, and allegedly killed 28 troops, before being shot to death with numerous arrows. The Qing



**Figure 3. The Fufu.**

troops then destroyed the monastery, only five monks escaping. This story seems fairly insubstantial.

**JUE** (2): Mathews' dictionary defines the Jue as a 'large ape found in west China', but there seems to be no known zoological equivalent. De Groot (Bk II, p201) translates Jue as 'certain large gibbons' and gives a passage from the Shu Yi Chi (by Ren Fang, 460-508 AD): 'Monkeys, when 500 years old, change into Jue; Jue attaining the age of 1,000 years, become old men'. It was a common belief in old China that animals gained transcendent powers and the ability to take on human form when they attained a supernaturally advanced age, such as a thousand years. This notion applied as much to mundane animals such as the fox and tiger, as to hill-monsters.

**JUEYUAN** (12): The character yuan means 'ape', so this is probably simply a variant of Jue. A passage from the Sou Shen Chi (attributed to Gan Bao, 3rd-4th C. AD) tells us that beings of the monkey-tribe called Jueyuan, 7 chi tall (2.31 meters), live in the mountains of Sichuan (W. China). They can assume human shape, are excellent runners, and chase men. They waylay female travelers and kidnap the beauties among them, distinguishing the women by their smell, and never abducting males. Having captured a 'wife', the Jueyuan builds a house for her. Should she not bear a

son, she stays with her captor for good, and after 10 years her shape becomes like his, and she no longer thinks of home. If she has a child, she is sent home immediately. The child always has a human shape, and when grown is not unlike ordinary men. Mothers who decide not to raise the child usually die (De Groot, Bk II p258-259).

**KUI** (3a, 3b): There seems to be some confusion about this word, going back to ancient times. De Groot (Bk II, p496) quotes the old dictionary Shuo Wen (1st C. AD) in defining the character Kui (written as 3a, which is the character used by Wang Fu in the article), as a one-legged dragon, and this has remained the most common meaning down to the present, when the



Figure 4. The Jue.

word was transferred to the walrus. However, the Shuo Wen also gives, immediately before this entry, and having the same pronunciation, the variant character (3b), which it defines as 'a greedy quadruped, generally stated to be a she-monkey resembling a man'. This would seem to be the animal in question here.

De Groot (Bk II, p498) also refers to a commentary on the Guo Yu ('Discussion of the States') by Wei Zhao of the 3rd C. AD, that the Kui existed in Yue (Zhejiang & Fujian Provinces, E. China), living in Fuyang (approximately modern Hangzhou). They had a human face and an ape-like body, and were able to speak.

**MAOREN** (10): A 'Hairy Man'. Used generally for mysterious anthropoids. This is also the usual modern Chinese term for atavistic humans born with full coat of hair (For a round-up of cases see FT 30, p45-47).

Ge Hong (c280-340 AD) gives a tale of a hairy person from the Qin dynasty, in his Bao Pu Zi. During the reign of Emperor Cheng of the Han (r. 32-6 BC), hunters in the Chongnan mountains (Central China) captured a naked woman whose body was covered in black hair. She told them that she had been a concubine of Prince Ying of Qin, at the time of the fall of that dynasty (207 BC). She fled to the hills, where, on the point of starvation, an old man taught her to eat the leaves and seeds of the pine.

Eventually she became inured to hot and cold, hunger and thirst. Brought to Emperor Cheng's court, the odor of normal food nauseated her for several days, but she got used to eating it. After two years, she lost her hair, grew old and died. (De Groot Bk II p298, Ware, p194) Willoughby-Meade (p295) tells of a panic in 781 AD, when stories spread through the Yangtze valley that a horde of cannibal demons of Hairy Men were approaching from Hunan Province. Fires were kept

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alight at night, and a clamor raised on copper pans to drive them off.

**MUKE** (5): 'Guests of the woods', a name for the xiao (6) or xiao (7). This may be a localized term specific to the area occupied by the ancient state of Chu, in central China. The term might equally well be taken as 'strangers in the woods'. Whether there is any euphemistic intention (such as the Irish calling the Fairies the 'Good People') is uncertain.

**RUREN** (13): A 'Like-a-man'. Our illustration is from the San Cai Tu Hui by Wang Qi (16th C. AD). The distended mouth might suggest a relationship to the Feifei and the xiaoyang. Liu Yiqing (403-444 AD) says, in his You Ming Lu, that



Figure 5. The Ruren.

beings 'resembling men' (Ruren), live in Shandong Province (N.E. China) 4-5 chi in height (1.32 meters), going naked, with disheveled hair 5 or 6 cun long (16.5-19.8 cms). They utter screaming and whistling cries and, unseen, fling stones. They roast frogs and crabs for food (De Groot, BK II, p509).

**SHAN GUI** (14): A demon or ghost of the hills and mountains, or mountain-demons collectively. All the 'species' mentioned in this bestiary could be classified as differing forms of Shan gui.

Ref the poem Shan Gui by Qu Yuan: the Chinese text of the article carries, as well as the paraphrase in modern colloquial Chinese, the seven lines of the original poem, in the much terser classical language. This, being substantially the same as the paraphrase, has been relegated to this note.

Lines 1-4 and 21-23 are given. Complete translations of the poem may be found in Hawkes, p43, and in Waley, p53-56. These gentlemen differ widely on the interpretation of certain words, and are perhaps most interested in making literature of the poem. We are more interested in the literal meaning, so here is a bald translation of the seven lines quoted:

*There seems to be someone  
in the hills  
With clothes of Lichee-leaves, a  
woman girdled with vines  
Now she gives a glance and*

*seemly smile.*

*Each of us desires the other, but  
she is modestly shy.*

*The mountain-dweller is fragrant  
as a russet pear.*

*Drinking from a spring in the  
rocks, shaded by pines and  
cypresses,*

*The Lady thinks of me, yet  
doubts still rise.*

(Editor's trans.)

I follow Hawkes in making the 'someone' female: Waley agrees with the paraphrase in making her male, though I confess the reasoning behind this escapes me. Both Hawkes and Waley agree in interpreting the poem as referring to a shaman's encounter with a numinous being and, in context with the rest of the poem, the notion that it refers to the 'Wildman' seems, to me, rather inventive.

**XIAO** (6): A local name, specific to the area covered by the ancient state of Chu in central China, having the same pronunciation but a different written character to the xiao (7), with which it is apparently identical. The character does not appear in any of the dictionaries available to the editor.

**XIAO** (7): The term is applied very generally to the mountain-monsters. According to the Shem Yi Jing (attributed to Dong Fangshuo of the 1st C. BC, but probably 4th or 5th C. AD), xiao are human beings living in the western mountains, more than one zhang tall (3.3

meters). They go naked, and capture frogs and crabs, occasionally accosting travelers in order to roast their food at the fire, or to steal salt. They can be scared off with fire-crackers, but when attacked give their assailants fever. They are also called xao, and can take other forms (De Groot, Bk II, p500).

Xiao is used synonymously for Kui (q.v.), and tales of xiao frequently describe them as having one leg. The confusion probably arises from the same source.

**XIAOYANG** (4): Literally means an 'owl-goat', but Hawkes (p139) gives it as an anthropoid monster inhabiting wild places, whose upper lip covers its face when it laughs. Morgan (p266) adds that it has a man's body, long and big, a



Figure 6. The Xingxing.



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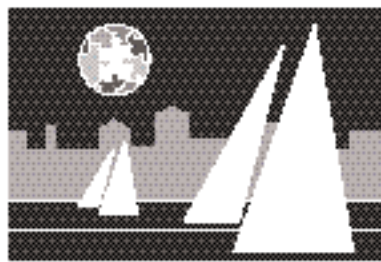
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black face covered with hair and the feet turned backwards. It laughs on seeing men. The same characteristics are recorded of the Feifei (q.v.).

**XINGXING** (15): Our illustration is from the San Cai Tu Hui by Wang Qi (16th C. AD). The caption reads: 'Mount Que has wild beasts of the monkey family, like Mi-monkeys with human hair, living in secluded palaces by the Yangtze. In the eastern mountains they are known as Xingxing, and are able to talk' (Editor's translation). In modern usage, Mi-monkeys are translated as 'macaques'.

According to the Shan Hai Jing (quoted by Edwards p144) the Xingxing are like monkeys with white faces and pointed ears, walking upright like men and able to climb trees.

Tchernine (p83-86) mentions a Xingxing Xia, the 'Ravine of the Xingxing' in N.Q. Gansu, close to the Mongolian border, where it is recorded that the Xingxing came down from the surrounding mountains to drink, and goes on to quote a description from the 18th-Century Kangxi Dictionary, that the Xingxing had the build of a man and the face of a dog, with a cry like the wailing of a small child.

Tchernine also goes on the quote (p86-87) a story from the Peking Daily of 29 January 1958 that a Chinese film director, Bai Xin, working with the PLA in the Pamir Mountains in western Xinjiang, encountered 'wildmen' in 1954. On the first occasion, he and

his colleagues saw two short 'men' with backs hunched, climbing a nearby slope. They shouted and fired shots in the air, but the 'men' continued climbing and disappeared among the rocks. On another occasion, Bai and a photographer followed large footprints for 1 1/2 km, and found some traces of blood, before darkness forced them to give up the pursuit. And on a third occasion, near mount Muztagh Ata in the Pamirs, Bai was staying with some frontier guards who threw out some meat thought to be tainted. During the night, the guards reported seeing a 'wildman' in the bright moonlight, apparently wrapped in white fur, pick up the meat and run off with it.

In modern usage, the name Xingxing is applied to the orangutan.

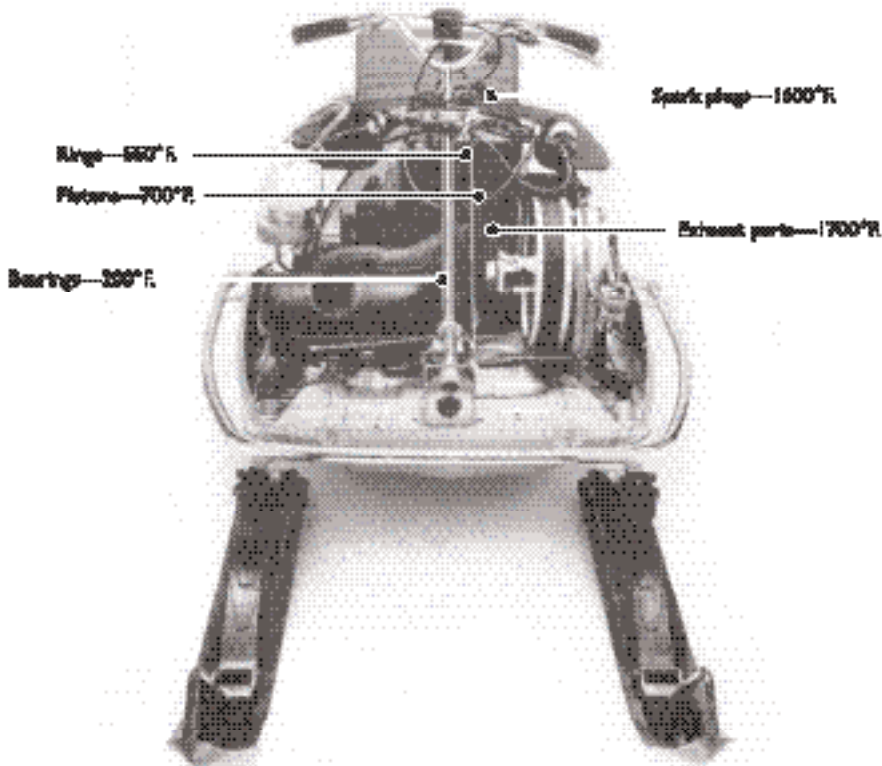
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### Glossary of Chinese characters

1. Yeten	野人
2. Jue	獾
3a. Kui	夔
3b. Kui	夔
4. Xiaoyang	梟陽
5. Muke	木客
6. Xiao	獾
7. Xiao	魃
8. Fufu	髡髡
9. Damaren	大毛人
10. Maoren	毛人
11. Feifei	狒狒
12. Jucyuan	獾猿
13. Ruren	如人
14. Shangui	山鬼
15. Xingxing	猩猩

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[Viewpoints]

## Gunning For The Martyr: A Look At Bigfooting's Biggest Controversy

John Silver

Joshuah Bearman

Over the twelve years Rusty Garold has looked for sasquatch, he says he has seen hundreds of footprints, dozens of scats, even a couple of nests. He has spread jerky baits from "Ann Arbor to Anchorage," fingered the dermal ridges of the "Skookum Cast," and tracked Willow Creek beginning to end. He has worked as a cavern tour guide, a campground ticket taker, and a seating host at a family restaurant, but now Garold considers himself a full-time professional bigfooter. He spends long stretches on the road, finding itinerant employment only to fund the next expedition. In the field, Rusty travels light: stored neatly behind the seat of his pickup are a one-man Rainier, Coleman single flame burner, GPS and goggles, tripwire filaments of varying gauges, and his trusty HK MSG-90A1 Marksman hunting rifle.

Garold's Marksman puts him at the center of what Cryptid Research Society Director James Akin calls "the hottest issue in all of sasquatchery," otherwise known as the Kill Controversy. It is a question that divides the community into adversarial camps, from Bigfoot symposia on down to weekend sasquatch societies. Whereas much of Bigfoot research is concerned with the past — What made these tracks? What created that noise? — the more critical question may about the future: What is one's tactical and, by extension, philosophical approach to the eventual encounter with the creature itself?

If the opportunity arises, the Kill camp advocates shooting a Bigfoot. According to this camp, the world will only believe in the creature when there is a corpse to display. Most of the pioneering Bigfoot and yeti expeditions in the 1950s were organized as traditional hunts for very elusive game. By the 1970s, however, the rise of amateur Bigfoot enthusiasts combined with the environmental movement created an entirely new approach. "We see Bigfoot as our sylvan ally," says Michael Rugg, who recently opened a museum called the Bigfoot Discovery Project, in Santa

Cruz, California, as an institutional display of the intersection between Bigfoot and conservation. “Why on earth would you want to hunt him down?”

For Grover Krantz, the answer always came back to science. Krantz, an anthropologist at the University of Washington who devoted his life to the study of Bigfoot, was one of the first to propose the scientific value of killing one. In his 1986 masterwork *Big Footprints: A Scientific Inquiry Into the Reality of Sasquatch*, Krantz argued that the scientific community needs a type specimen, as the only viable method for taxonomic verification. For Bigfoot hunters wanting to prove the creature is real, he offered the following infamous advice: “If you see one, kill it, and cut off the biggest piece you can carry. Be sure to bring back the jaw.”

So determined was Krantz to find his Bigfoot specimen that he advocated mounting a military-style strike force. In *Big Footprints*, Krantz imagined a squadron of Bigfoot hunters: “armed men ... lined up for 60 miles across the base of the Olympic Peninsula ... spaced about 10 feet apart. They could then move north, sweeping the entire peninsula for 60 miles up to the sea.” John Green, another legendary bigfooter, once wrote that “the more quickly [someone produces a body] the better,” and hinted at an added financial incentive: “The successful hunter should find it very profitable as well.”

The No-Kill Bigfooters view this approach with alarm. Dmitri Bayanov, Chair of the Hominology Department at the Darwin Museum in Moscow, says the “hunt mentality” is archaic, even inhumane. Bayanov has been advocating an unqualified No Kill pact among his all Bigfoot researchers since 1980. “It is sad to say that we still have to wage this fight,” he says about some of his American colleagues.

Bayanov’s view is gaining momentum. In 1995, when the Shiyan City government in China’s Hubei Province offered a reward for the capture of their local Bigfoot, the *yeren*, a group of Chinese scientists mounted a public condemnation that forced the government to reverse itself. In 1997, No Kill protestors shouted down legendary bigfooter John Green at a Bigfoot conference, calling him a “mercenary” and “paid glory seeker.” Today, the No Kill camp is putting up Web sites, publishing newsletters,

and gaining enough members to support several organizations dedicated solely to Bigfoot preservation.

One of these is the American Primate Conservation Alliance, founded by Chester Moore. Moore has recently published a book, *Bigfoot Lives! Deal With It!*, which he describes as a “bold declaration about how to share North America with this fascinating species.” In the book and in speaking engagements around the country, Moore argues that the new mission of the Bigfoot community should be “to prove this thing is real and protect it at the same time.”

Then there are people like Jon Erik Beckjord, who neither agrees nor disagrees with either side of the debate. Beckjord is part of the small, schismatic faction that says that the Kill Controversy is in fact moot, because Bigfoots are trans-dimensional shape-shifters and cannot be killed by humans at all. It is a position well outside the bigfooting mainstream, and Beckjord, according to noted cryptozoological investigator Loren Coleman, has been “arrested at, banned from, and thrown out of every seri-



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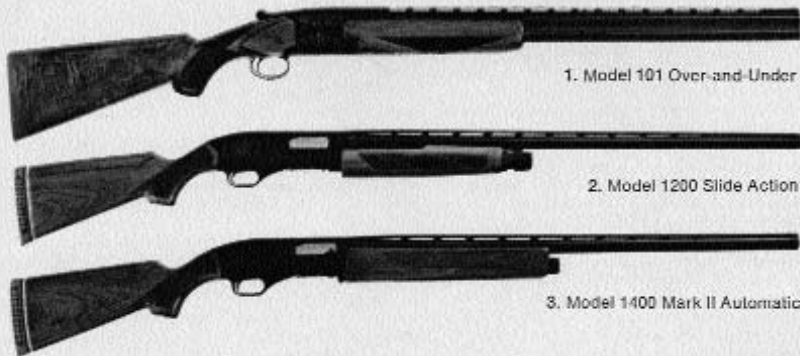
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ous scientific sasquatch and cryptozoology meeting he has attended." (Indeed, he was unable to enter the Stevenson conference.) Still, Beckjord always makes his views known, attacking what he calls the "entire myopic bigfooting paradigm." It's no surprise to him, he says, that the hunters have yet to bring in a Bigfoot. "Someone with a gun will never see one," he says. "Because Bigfoot is seen only when it wants to be. You think that a creature like that, with sense organs far more acute than anything we've got, is going to let one of these fools get the drop on him?" (When asked how he knows that Bigfoot is a paranormal phenomenon, Beckjord says, "Simple: *they* told me so.")

More authoritatively, world-renowned scientists such as Jane Goodall have publicly said that mainstream primatology does not need a dead Bigfoot for proof: film, observation, or capture would be effective. The No-Kill group itself is split between those who prefer peaceful observation à la Diane Fossey and a more aggressive branch that wants to catch one of the creatures alive by building traps in the woods.

Even Krantz was the first to point out that he didn't necessarily want to kill a Bigfoot; he would have been equally satisfied to find a Bigfoot that had died of natural causes. In fact, Krantz constructed a one-man infrared-equipped helicopter for this purpose, intending to fly low over the spring thaw hunting for the Bigfoot corpses. (The machine never flew properly, and Krantz died before it could be perfected.)

"Passive methodology has been plenty effective," says Michael Rugg. "In fact, not one bit of evidence for Bigfoot or any

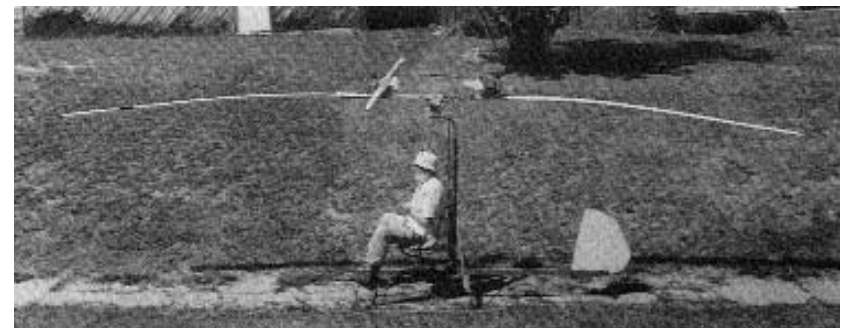
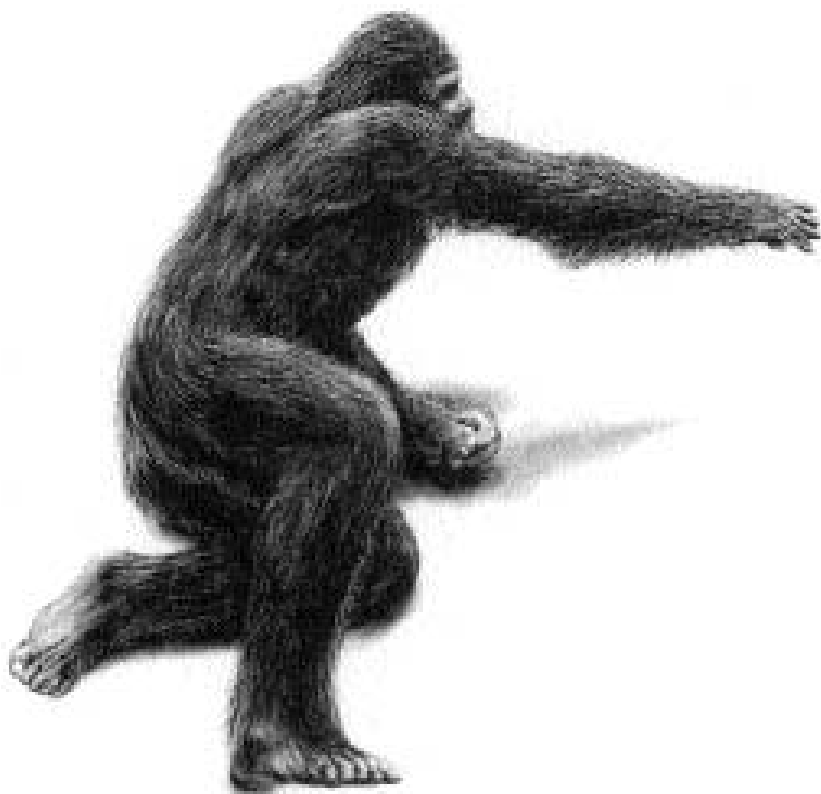


Figure 1. Dr. Krantz in his home-made helicopter.



**Figure 2.** Artist's recreation of skookum Bigfoot's reclining pose.

other hominid in the world has ever been collected with a gun.” That goes for the Skookum cast, which Krantz himself declared to be the most substantive addition to the evidentiary body since the Patterson film. The cast was made in 2000, when researchers left some fruit in a mud puddle near Skookum, Washington, hoping to lure a Bigfoot into very soft mud where good footprints could be obtained. Sometime during the night, they say, a juvenile male Bigfoot laid down at the puddle's edge, reaching toward the fruit, leaving a shoulder-to-knee impression of the side of his body in the ground. Later, researchers would extract fur from this mud — fur that could not be matched to that of any known primate.

It was an important discovery, “but it's still not proof,” says Garold. Garold is perfectly happy to collect hair samples and casts — “those are data too,” he says — but his ultimate goal is to fulfill Krantz's lifelong dream of setting a Bigfoot skull on the Primatology Department desk at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. (Krantz's own skull can be found today at the Smithsonian, where he donated his entire skeleton to show his commitment to science and sample collection.)

According to No-Kill advocates like Moore, they have the law on their side, claiming that it is illegal to shoot a Bigfoot. The claim has a cloudy history. Bigfoot has in fact been listed since 1977 in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Environmental Atlas. That same year there was a memo circulating around the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service about whether to cover Bigfoot under the Endangered Species Act, but they held off for lack of a formal description of the creature. Not wanting to wait for the federal government to take action, Washington's Skamania County, besieged by Bigfoot hunters with high-powered rifles, went ahead and imposed its own punishments: \$10,000 or a five-year jail sentence.

Garold recently got the chance to talk about this very issue in Stevenson, Washington, where Bigfoot researchers had gathered from all over to commemorate the anniversary of the Patterson film. The handbill for the event called Stevenson a “Mecca for all friendly Bigfoot researchers”; according to Garold, “friendly” in Stevenson means No-Kill. Indeed, Stevenson is in Skamania County.

But the atmosphere was mostly cordial, Garold says. “People tend not to do the real fighting at these things,” he says, suggesting that most of the No-Kill community are armchair bigfooters who never attend conferences or certainly don't spend much time in the field. Much of the controversy, Garold thinks, is fueled by the proliferation of Web sites and listservs devoted to Bigfoot where people spend a lot of time arguing. “It's on the net where you see all the mean-spiritedness. People will smile into your face at meetings, listen politely, go home, and get ugly in front of their computers, once cloaked in anonymity. Unfortunately, there's a lot of that stuff in sasquatchery — it comes with the territory. Before a hunting rifle, the first thing a Bigfoot hunter needs is a functioning bullshit detector.”

For example, Garold thinks that the Skamania County fine is meaningless. “If Fish and Wildlife won’t touch it, the locals certainly don’t have any jurisdiction.” In his presentation to the Stevenson Conference, Garold sided with Grover Krantz, who thought that Bigfoot has no special rights under the law.

Bayanov disagrees, arguing in his lengthy treatise, *Bigfoot: To Kill or to Film? The Problem of Proof*, that the Pro-Kill position amounts to speciesism. Bayanov makes a passionate, well-sourced philosophical case for protecting Bigfoot, generously citing Peter Medawar’s groundbreaking 1975 book, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*, and borrowing Jeremy Bentham’s famous nineteenth century dictum: “Animal Liberation is Human Liberation Too.” Bayanov, along with the rest of the No-Kill camp, even speculates that the animal rights terminology may be misplaced; depending on the Bigfoot’s phylogeny, it may turn out that it is protected under existing *human* rights statues.

For their part, Pro-Kill bigfooters like Garold say that their aims are equally noble. His message is also about conservation, he says, because the only Bigfoot that will garner endangered status is a dead Bigfoot. Krantz advocated the same position: “If [Bigfoot] is really endangered, then it makes taking a specimen all the more important, because the government is going to do nothing unless you prove the animal exists.” For the sake of the species, one must fall. This sacrificial Bigfoot is known in known in Pro-Kill circles as “the Martyr.”

Yet the Martyr has remained elusive for several decades of concentrated Bigfoot hunting. And he may continue to do so, as long as there are trees left in this world to hide behind. In the meantime, the Kill Controversy continues to split the bigfooting community. Garold knows where he stands, and intends to settle the controversy, as well as the larger question of the creature’s existence, with a single bullet.

“Once we prove this animal exists,” Garold says, “and the world unwraps its hairy surprise, I’ll be the first one out there protecting it. Pro-Kill can also be Pro-Bigfoot! I don’t let any of these Skamania granola munchers get to me. When they go home to argue with each other on the Internet about some tuft of fur, I’ll be back out there, looking through my scope for any eight-foot-tall heat signatures.”

## “Uncouth, Ferocious Glee” Teddy Roosevelt and the Wendigo

Mark Sundeen

By age twenty-five Theodore Roosevelt was a haunted man.

As he finished his second year in the New York state legislature, Roosevelt had gained a reputation for his unimpeachable integrity and bare-knuckled swagger. His crusade to fight corruption in his own Republican Party and the Democratic Tammany Hall machine was on occasion satisfied by fisticuffs. But not even Roosevelt could entirely rid the Gilded Era’s tarnished democracy of greed, graft, and blackmail. In 1884, after failing to derail the presidential nomination of party hack William Blaine, Roosevelt was sidelined by the GOP old guard.

That same year, Roosevelt suffered a staggering personal loss. While in Albany, dire news arrived from home: “There is a curse on this house. Mother is dying, and Alice is dying too.” On Valentine’s Day, February 14, 1884, the day after his first child was born, Roosevelt’s wife and his widowed mother both succumbed to illness. He drew a cross in his diary and wrote: “The light has gone out of my life.”

Having transformed himself from a spindly, asthmatic child into a robust outdoorsman, Roosevelt again tapped into his reservoir of willpower. He never again mentioned his wife. As biographer Edmund Morris notes, “all love-letters between himself and Alice — with four trivial exceptions — were destroyed. Whole pages of his Harvard scrapbook, presumably containing souvenirs of their courtship and marriage, were snipped out. Photographs of Alice were torn out of their paper frames. Here and there, handwritten captions that doubtless referred to her are erased so fiercely the page is worn into holes.” Years later, Roosevelt wrote his autobiography without a single reference to the mother of his daughter.

Grief-stricken, the young legislator quit his seat. He lit out for the Dakota territory and embarked upon a killing spree. On August 17, his diary records: “My battery consists of a long .45 Colt revolver, 150 cartridges, a no. 10 choke bore, 300-cartridge shotgun; a 45-75 Winchester repeater, with 1,00 cartridges; a 40-



Figure 1. Roosevelt in hunting regalia, 1884.

90 Sharps, 150 cartridges; a 50-150 double barreled Webley express, 100 cartridges.”

Over the next 47 days, Roosevelt would kill 170 animals and birds: elk, bear, buck, rabbit, and grouse. But Roosevelt may have been looking for something more out in the woods. Anyone familiar with the armaments of the period can tell you that such firepower is far more than what’s needed for bear. And in addition to shot placement guides for Ursidae and Ungulates, Roosevelt brought along a Royal Society publication including new anatomy charts for the recently discovered African Gorilla.

In his diaries, Roosevelt always extolled the huntsman’s journey to “the border-land between savagery and civilization,” where, “the veil of the past has been lifted so that he can dimly see how, in time immeasurably remote, his ancestors — no less remote — led furtive lives among uncouth and terrible beasts.” And it may be that the future President pursued the greatest

beast of them all, a specimen yet to be posed in any museum diorama: the mischievous Monster of the Minnesota North Woods, also known as the Wendigo.

The Wendigo was the nineteenth century’s common appellation for the North American cryptic hominids known colloquially today as Bigfoot. Tales of the Wendigo predate the arrival of white men on the American prairie. Unlike today’s conception of these creatures as mostly mild-mannered, the Wendigo, by legend, was dangerous. The Indians told of a creature — as much as fifteen feet tall in some accounts — with glowing eyes, fangs, and a dangling tongue, whose name translates as “the evil spirit that devours mankind.” Some accounts described a jaundiced beast with tufts of hair, while other claimed that the creature was a paper-thin apparition that could only be seen from head-on. In either case, the Wendigo was seen as an ill omen, and was even reputed to feast on human flesh.<sup>1</sup>

The most prominent Wendigo was reported to haunt the Minnesota town of Rosesu at the turn of the twentieth century. A Cree Indian named Jack Fiddler boasted that he had hunted and killed 14 of the creatures. However, his fourteenth and final prey was determined by a jury to be a human being — a Cree Indian woman — and the 87-year-old Fiddler pleaded guilty to murder. The killing was justified, he told the court, because the woman was possessed by the Wendigo, and was in the process of physical transformation. The only way to stop her from devouring other tribe members was to destroy her first.

Many of the early, fantastic descriptions of the Wendigo are clearly exaggerations, but one of the period’s more sober, and sobering, accounts comes from Roosevelt himself. By age twenty-one, Roosevelt was already renowned as chronicler of wildlife. Upon naming a species of elk *Cervus Roosevelti* in 1897, the con-

1. Ogden Nash composed a stanza in 1936 that poetically articulates the creature’s dread:

*The Wendigo,  
The Wendigo!  
Its eyes are ice and indigo!  
Its blood is rank and yellowish!  
Its voice is hoarse and bellowish!  
Its tentacles are slithery,  
And scummy, Slimy, Leathery!*

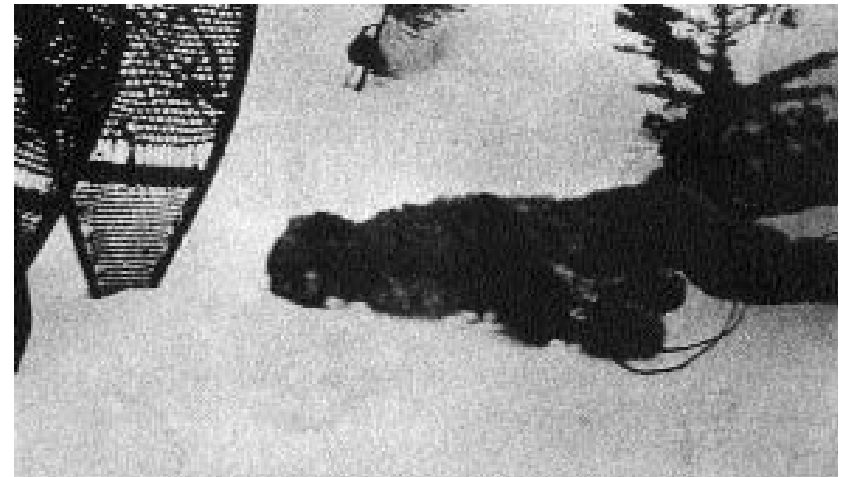
*Its lips are hungry blubbery,  
And smack, sucky, rubbery!  
The Wendigo,  
The Wendigo!  
I saw it just a friend ago!  
Last night it lurked in Canada;  
Tonight, on your veranda!*

summate mammalogist C. Hart Merriam declared: "It is fitting that the noblest deer of America should perpetuate the name of one who, in the midst of a busy public career, has found time to study our larger mammals in their native haunts and has written the best accounts we have ever had of their habits and chase." Among these works is Roosevelt's famous volume *The Wilderness Hunter*, an 1893 collection of frontier tales that recounts the story of "a grizzled, weather-beaten old mountain hunter, named Bauman" who was stalked in the Bitterroot Mountains by "some great Goblin-beast."

Bauman and another trapper, the story begins, were camped near the Wisdom River when they returned to camp to find that "something, apparently a Bear, had visited camp, and had rummaged about among their things, scattering the contents of their packs, and in sheer wantonness destroying their lean-to." The two men thought so little of the incident they examined the tracks. "Bauman," the trapper's companion noted with alarm, "that Bear has been walking on two legs."

That night, the Wendigo returned. Bauman was awakened by "some terrible savage noise," and sat up in his blankets. "His nostrils," writes Roosevelt, "were stuck by a strong, wild-beast odor, and he caught the loom of a great body in the darkness at the mouth of the lean-to. Grasping his rifle, he fired at the threatening shadow, but must have missed, as the thing, whatever it was, rushed off into the blackness of the night." After a second night of harassment, the men decided to break camp. But while Bauman was out collecting the beaver traps, his traveling companion met his doom. Bauman returned to camp and found his friend's dead body, still warm, the neck broken. "The footprints of the unknown beast-creature, printed deep in the soil, told the whole story ... [The creature] had not eaten the body, but apparently had romped and gambolled round it in uncouth, ferocious glee."

As one of the earliest detailed records, Roosevelt's account has long been an inspiration for today's Bigfoot trackers. Coming from such an esteemed source, *The Wilderness Hunter* sits atop the canon of Bigfoot documentation. The report also originates from a region quite active with sightings: Albert Ostman's infamous 1924 abduction and seven-day incarceration by a pod of sasquatches (he escaped, he said, by enticing the lead male to eat



**Figure 2. Unidentified animal killed by trappers near Canadian border. The specimen's whereabouts are unknown today.**

an entire can of snuff); that same year, the capture of a four-foot tall hirsute creature by a train crew, who named the beast "Jacko"; and the encounter shortly thereafter in which several trappers shot, killed, and photographed a creature matching Jacko's description. All encounters occurred within a hundred miles of Bauman's location.

In fact, the only dubious aspect of the account is the identity of the protagonist. Who is this so-called "Bauman"? No record of the man exists, either in the form of a birth certificate or any other mention in the area's history. And readers of Roosevelt's story are often struck by the tale's authenticity of detail. "You can tell that it was observed," notes Russell Woods, West Coast liaison for the Bigfoot Field Research Organization. "It really sounds *exactly* like what would happen if two trappers ran across the kind of hominoid creature known in that region." If Bauman was not real, argue many Bigfoot scholars, it's because Roosevelt created him as a proxy for his own eyes.

Further evidence that Roosevelt likely tracked the creature also comes from his writings. In 1908, Roosevelt penned "Hunting the Grizzly" for the *Fitchburg Sentinel*, an account of a bear hunt that would remain unremarkable if not for some odd details, like "huge, half human footprints" and a "grunting or

roaring whine” coming from the woods — details which, a century later, possess uncanny familiarity for sasquatch hunters. Later, Roosevelt’s episode amidst the screams and squawks of the forest led him to accept the unexplainable. “There are plenty of phenomena,” he wrote, “unquestionably proceeding from natural law which nevertheless have in them an element totally incomprehensible to, and probably totally incapable of comprehension by, our intelligence.”

In 1887, the fiercest winter in recorded history blasted across the Dakota territory, with temperatures plunging to forty below. Four-fifths of the stock perished, and during the spring thaw, ranchers looked on in horror as a river of dead cattle rushed into the valley: “Countless carcasses of cattle [were] going down with

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the ice, rolling over and over as they went, so that at times all four of the stiffened legs of a carcass would point skyward.” When Roosevelt returned West, he found a wasteland of rotting skeletons and grassless flats.

Thus was born the American conservation movement. Back in New York, Roosevelt assembled a circle of hunters, scientists, and politicians, forming the nation’s first conservation group, the Boone and Crockett Club — named after his heroes Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett, with whom he shared an affinity for donning the pelts of large beasts. Roosevelt understood that wilderness needed to be preserved, if only as habitat for majestic game. Perhaps that hunter’s environmentalism extended to the Wendigo; if he was to one day find the creature, Roosevelt knew it would be in virgin hills. Over the coming years, Roosevelt and the Boone and Crockett Club would set the foundation for a century of conservation. All the while, of course, Roosevelt continued his hunts, reaching ever-further into the country’s remote landscapes.

In 1889, after being appointed as Civil Service Commissioner by President Benjamin Harrison, Roosevelt found himself locked in battle with corrupt bureaucrats and their “mean, sneaky little acts of petty spoilsmongering.” That summer, Roosevelt was eager to leave Washington. He took to the Badlands and proclaimed himself “especially hot for bear,” promptly downing a monstrous grizzly with a bullet straight through the mouth. The griz, he described, rushed him and swung a “vicious blow” before lurching forward into a “bright pool of blood.” The bear head became one of Roosevelt’s most prized trophies. But the ultimate quarry still eluded him.

Throughout the 1890s, Roosevelt continued his mission of reform. As Police Commissioner of New York City, he cracked down on corrupt cops and outlawed Sunday beer and liquor sales. He was equally vigilant when such transgressions seeped into his own family. His younger brother Elliott, injured in a startling trapeze accident, sunk to the depths of alcohol and narcotic addiction, and soon thereafter impregnated the maid. Showing no leniency, Theodore had his sibling committed to a sanatorium. After a failed rehabilitation, Elliott died in 1894 of an epileptic fit brought on by delirium tremens.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt reverted further toward the primitive when in the wild. After a boar-hunting excursion to Texas, he remarked, “There was a certain excitement in seeing the fierce little creatures come to bay, but the true way to kill these peccaries would be with a spear.” Perhaps referring again to the Wendigo, Roosevelt began to extrapolate a regressive political philosophy that “the most ultimately righteous of all wars is a war with savages.” He also diarized about brutal death as the intent of nature:

Death by violence, death by cold, death by starvation — these are the normal endings of the stately and beautiful creatures of the wilderness. The sentimentalists who prattle about the peaceful life of nature do not realize its utter mercilessness . . . Life is hard and cruel for all the lower creatures, and for man also in what the sentimentalists call a “state of nature.” The savage of today shows us what the fancied age of gold of our ancestors was really like; it was an age when hunger, cold violence, and iron cruelty were the ordinary accompaniments of life.

Roosevelt’s sportsmanship led him to Cuba, as colonel of the Rough Riders, where during the Spanish-American War he bagged the most forbidden of all quarry: “When I took [my revolver] to Cuba I made a vow to kill at least one Spaniard with it,” he said upon his triumphant return to New York. “And I did.”

One of the most-repeated Roosevelt tales is the episode that led to the “Teddy Bear” phenomenon. In 1903, Roosevelt had come up empty-handed on a hunting trip in Mississippi. His companions and a pack of hounds subsequently pursued what they assumed was a bear through dense forest for several hours; upon reaching the exhausted creature, which had destroyed one of the dogs, they gave it a hard blow to the skull with the wooden end of the rifle. Not wanting the president to leave Mississippi without a trophy, the fellows tied the beast to a tree and sent a messenger: “They done got a bear out yonder about ten miles and ‘Ho’ wants the Colonel to come out and kill him.”

But when Roosevelt arrived, he refused to shoot, condemning such tactics as beneath the dignity of a sportsman. A cartoon of this incident spread throughout the nation’s newspapers, and



Figure 3. 1908 edition of the *Fitchburg Sentinel* in which Roosevelt describes a “grizzly” hunt.

Roosevelt’s rare show of compassion became part of his iconic reputation. A toy manufacturer quickly launched a line of stuffed bears and called them “Teddy Bears.”

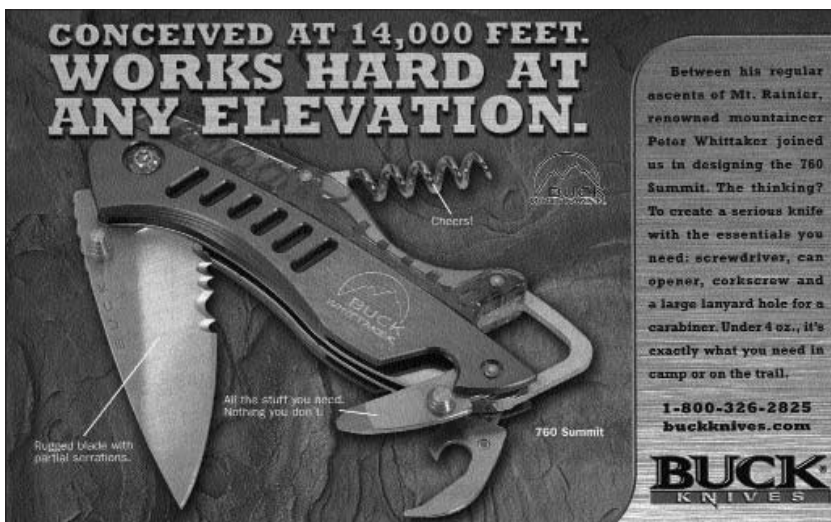
Often thought to be apocryphal, the story is true. However, Roosevelt’s preoccupation with bipedal beasts suggests a deeper interpretation. The Mississippi woods where this hunt was led were well-known as the habitat of an unidentified hairy creature, locally known as the Billy Holler Bugger. Perhaps Roosevelt’s party had not captured a bear at all. When the president rushed upon that clearing, the helpless brute he found may likely have been a sad specimen of the elusive humanoid creature Roosevelt had sought since his early frontier days.

It was a moment for which Roosevelt was well-prepared. The novelist Owen Wister once reported that he saw the president stalking behind Secretary of State John Hay on tiptoe, making bizarre, “Oriental” movements as he crept. Roosevelt had begun the practice of jujitsu, perhaps having decided that if he were to someday engage the Wendigo, the proper mode would not be with a rifle, but rather *mano-a-mano*.

Such a fight was at hand. According to Morris, the animal Roosevelt stood before was “not much bigger than he ... a stunned, bloody, mud-caked runt tied to a tree.” We can imagine Roosevelt eying the beast, his companions unaware of what they had captured. His breathing slowed as his fingers clutched his rifle. The creature gazed back at him, dazed and anguished, yet resigned to its fate.

But Roosevelt was not the impetuous, grieving young man of the 1884 killing spree. He had made compromises. To become governor of New York he had cut a deal with the despised city bosses, and to become president he had joined his longtime adversaries in the party establishment. Whatever Roosevelt found in that Mississippi clearing, he took pity on it. The President was no longer interested in defeating savagery in the woods; he’d seen plenty of it in the urbane halls of politics. By then, Roosevelt was the creator of the National Park system, the man who institutionalized civilization’s responsibility to the wild. After all, he might have thought to himself, it is only in America’s untamed wilderness that we understand the promise of freedom. And that freedom was not only about victory, but also a fair fight.

The president ejected the cartridge from the chamber, sheathed his rifle and, with heavy steps, slipped back into the woods.



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## The Tengpoche Fragment



*This is the infamous fragment from the notebook recovered from a storage chest in the monks' prayer room in the Tengpoche Monastery (above) in August of 1971. The Tengpoche Monastery, of all the Himalayan monasteries, contained perhaps the most extensive network of secret catacombs, in one of which the Lama Chhemed Riglizin Dorje Lopen, known as Lama Lopen, claimed that he was allowed to view the mummified remains, in rough sarcophagi, of what the monks called “the uncatchable icemen.” He recorded his experience of the mummified faces in his poem “Malice.” The catacombs were sealed off by the chamber’s collapse during an earthquake in 1956.*

*The fragment totals fourteen smallish pages and is part of the Special Collections Archive in the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts. I came across it one*

*windswept, rainy, and lethargic afternoon in November of 2004 when researching something else. The papers themselves, stored in a largely airtight box within a box, give off the most extraordinary smell. The consensus of those willing to get close enough at the Institute favored a mixture of camphor, dung, and metal.*

*No amount of subsequent research on my part has so far been able to recover a record of the expedition described, in order to corroborate the account, although I have been able to document each of the four principals with their respective alumni offices. All four offices report that Robert B. Tetlow, Dartmouth '48, James J. Burdick, Princeton '49, F. Andrus “Andy” Bunce, UCLA '50, and Theodore Lockwood, Pepperdine '50, have been out of all contact since early 1953.*

—Jim Shepard



tablet he'd brought. The old man drew a stick figure sprouting hair with rake-like hands and two giant knobs atop the head. "What're those?" Bunce wanted to know. "Eyes," the sherpas said.

"You just keep writing, Burdick," Tetlow told me a minute ago. He's beside himself with frustration. We're so close.

"Hey, it calms me down," I told him. I kept telling him.

Outside the last village a kind of hermit or outcast hailed us and asked the sherpas if we still wanted to see the Snowman roaming around the high mountains. He said it was a night creature that came down into the valleys to steal from the herds and drag what he stole back up to his caves in the glacier.

We hired him on even though the sherpas said not to trust him. He led us into an area the sherpas hated that he called The Devil's Angry Uncle. Tetlow chuckled each time he thought of the name but the sherpas had changed overnight. They changed even more when we passed an abandoned settlement made up of three empty mountain huts and a broken-down corral. Doors were still swinging in the wind. Food, some grayish mush, was frozen in bowls on the tables. The air inside still smelled of wood smoke and melted fat. Coats still hung on their pegs. A firewood pile had been kicked and scattered like someone had just waded through it.

We started up the glacier just after that. On our way up we found three large footprints on the snow



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islands in the glacial streams beside us.

The hermit took off the night we'd finally found a flat place with firm snow that would work as a camp. He took the compasses and Bunce's wristwatch with him. A day farther up we came across a big oval, fourteen inches long and seven wide, with that protruding big toe. Tatlow snapped it from every angle, the measuring tape alongside. The sherpas disappeared two nights later.<sup>1</sup>

#### May 6th

Begun travelling lighter. Besides our sleeping sacks, only our flashlights, bacon and hard bread, tiny camp stove, the pot for melting water, the pocketknives, tent and ground cloth, the two cameras.

#### May 8th

It was only after we were out of the tent and moving around to warm up that we noticed a ring of footprints around us, three or four feet from the side of the tent. The diameters the biggest yet. The toes unmistakable. Fitting our boots into the depressions was like stepping into a wash bucket.

#### May 9

Middle of the night we heard it and all rushed out. Moonlight on the snow. Up above us it was crossing some kind of track. It looked like one of our shadows projected on the

snow. Tetlow started to charge off after it but the snow was so deep.

#### May 9

No idea of the time. Trying to conserve light. Another one atop the ridge, hurrying through the snow.

#### 5/13

Bacon finished. Breathing more difficult. Exhaustion more pronounced. The whistling again, even over the wind. We can't tell if it's far off or nearby.

#### 5/14

More whistling. Tetlow gets dressed, goes out with his flashlight, comes back, undresses. Everyone freezing. "Tashi delek?" Bunce calls out: Hello? He learned it from the sherpas before they left. "Tashi delek?" he keeps calling from inside his sack.

#### 5/15

Awake all night listening.

#### 5/17

Flashlight failing. Tetlow's still working. Plenty of gas in the camp stove canister. No moon. No wind. Pitch black outside. We can hear the smallest displacements of snow off on the ridges around us.

#### 5/18

Day of sitting around. Arguing about the way out.

1. Here the color of the ink changes, and the penmanship deteriorates, the text at times running off the page. —Ed.

Lockwood and I think up by the V notch. Tetlow nearly the opposite direction. Two days either way. Bunce no opinion. Some frostbite setting [illegible].

5/19

Tetlow's direction.

5/21

Found them found them found them found them

Backtracked some. Sun setting. Bunce still talking to self. Lockwood in shock. But photos, both cameras. Got to the ridge top midafternoon heard a noise and fifty yards away on a lower ledge we saw them. Sun in our eyes so it was hard to make out detail. They shuffled around on this flattish shelf. They had to have seen us. We grabbed each other and tried to get low and not go nuts and Tetlow and Lockwood scrambled their cameras out and snapped away. We must have 70 pictures if they come out. Every so often the things looked over at us like they were admiring the view. One finally moved over to our side of their ledge and we panicked and tumbled and skidded back down the inside edge of the ridge.

5/22

Outside our flap we found a bone and something frozen that might have been dung. Tetlow said he woke up from the smell. Bunce hasn't said a word all day. Heading for the V shaped notch. Not making the time we want. Pitched camp finally in the dark.

5/22

It sounds

5/23

No time. B + L won't search for T. Went out last night again to investigate never came back. B-L wouldn't go then, won't go now. We can see in all directions to the ridge lines, anyway. Shouted ourselves hoarse. Caused a small snowslide with the noise.

By sundown we'd only made a half a mile toward the notch. Think my right toes are frostbitten. Haven't taken off inner sock to see.

5/24

[illegible] yellow teeth yellow eyes flat nose

Afternoon. Brightness Snow unbearable. Bunce won't come out of his sack. Lockwood lashing cameras into a bundle with the waterproof oilcloth. Ice crystals on everything.

Flashlight gone Stove gas gone Won't be able to write tonight

New sound: hissing Other sides picking it up

Some kind of calling back and forth

The fingers longer than human f L wrong about their gesturing The hair must be protection against the winds

[Review]

## Ecce Chemo What Did the World's Most Famous Mountaineer Discover in the Himalayas?

Jim Ruland

Reinhold Messner has spent more time above 20,000 feet than any other man in history. He was the first to climb Mt. Everest without the aid of bottled oxygen — a feat many consider the single greatest achievement in climbing history — and he repeated it five years later. Messner was also the first to traverse Everest, that is, to climb up one side and down another. In 1986, he became the first person to summit all fourteen of the world's peaks that rise above 8,000 meters. Messner frequently heads off into the Himalayas by himself, adding to his mystique. When Messner, who makes his home in a 700-year-old castle in the Tyrolean Alps, isn't climbing mountains, he likes to trek through the rest of the world's most inhospitable terrain. He crossed Antarctica alone (another first) and on foot — or, rather, on three-tenths of his feet, since he'd by that time already lost seven toes on Nanga Parbat, "The Killer Mountain," after an avalanche. His mountaineering achievements were as difficult as they were pioneering, which is why Jon Krakauer calls Messner "the Michael Jordan of climbing." In climbing circles, Messner is a bona fide living legend.

So when Messner announced that he intended to follow up his many mountaineering volumes with *My Quest for the Yeti: Confronting the Himalaya's Deepest Mystery*, there was cause for excitement. After all, Messner has logged more hours in yeti territory than any other living explorer, but he has only briefly alluded to these encounters in a handful of interviews. Unfortunately, *My Quest for the Yeti* offers little more than that. The book is scarce on facts, and lacks the focus of scholarly research. However, where Messner fails to shed light on the yeti itself, he makes a significant, if inadvertent, contribution to the historiography of yeti research. Messner's biggest discovery turns

out to be a man, a long-forgotten early yeti investigator, whose career and contribution to the field has been as unknown to the world as the creature itself.

Messner opens with his first accidental encounter with the yeti. He was trekking without a permit “somewhere in Tibet,” trying to dodge the People’s Liberation Army while en route to Lhasa, when he found himself lost and alone at nightfall. “Something large and dark stepped into a space thirty feet ahead,” Messner says. “The fast-moving silhouette dashed behind a curtain of leaves and branches, only to step out into a clearing some ten yards away for a few seconds.” This was no yak, Messner noted; the creature walked upright on two legs, and made a strange whistling sound that Messner interpreted as a warning. “Noiseless and light-footed,” Messner writes, the creature, “raced across the forest floor, disappearing, reappearing, picking up speed ... It was as if my own shadow had been projected onto the thicket.” It stood motionless, and in an instant was gone, disappearing into the dusk.

The yeti left Messner mesmerized but disoriented, and he wandered back to Lhasa in a fugue state. Upon reuniting with his girlfriend, all Messner could talk about was the dark shape he’d seen marauding at the treeline’s edge. When Messner moved on to Katmandu, he found the yeti everywhere he looked: from Tibetan lore to the supposed yeti-scalp relics to the T-shirts peddled to eco-tourists. Messner sought the expertise of an old Tibetan friend, an acquaintance of the Dalai Lama, who told him that in the mountains of Eastern Tibet the yeti is known as *chemo*. To Tibetans, “the *chemo* is an animal imbued with human characteristics, not with human features.”<sup>1</sup>

From that moment forward, Messner says, he sought the *chemo*. Between his other adventures, like the Antarctica crossing, Messner returned repeatedly to Tibet, where he claims to have seen the yeti on four occasions. But for all his mastery of the mountains, Messner proved to be a poor specimen collector. His sightings

1. To account for varied yeti nomenclature, Messner, as do professional researchers, uses much of the terminology interchangeably. Names preferred by locals in legends and sighting accounts are used where applicable, and yeti is applied as a general category for all cryptic hominids in the Himalayas.

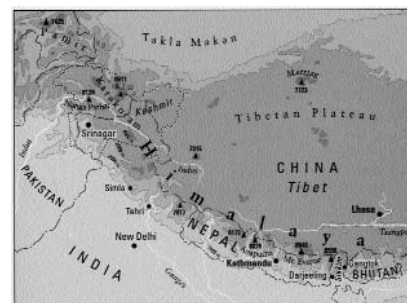


Figure 1. map of Tibet.

are poorly documented. There is no methodological approach to the material, the photographic prints lack dates or geographic labels, and — curiously — the book contains no index. It’s no wonder then that Messner’s “expeditions” yielded so little data: no conclusive photos, no hairs, no samples.

For Messner, turning up yeti evidence proves more difficult than braving the world’s meanest mountains or transecting a frozen continent.

*My Quest for the Yeti* contains none of the bombshells that were hinted at in interviews Messner gave prior to publication. Like a yeti skeleton he supposedly purchased from nomads on the Ladakh plain in the summer of 2001. Or a photograph of a mother yeti tending her child. In an interview with London’s *Daily Mail*, Messner estimated that his evidence showed “there are thousand yetis in the Himalayas.” Disappointingly, none of this finds its way into the book. In the table listing his expeditions, there is a postscript marked “Fall 1998: Reinhold Messner presents all his yeti material (precise maps, details, addresses) to a team of scientists,” and yet Messner fails to present that material to the reader.

Messner’s *My Quest for the Yeti* is dilettantish — mostly a collection of familiar anecdotes: local accounts, Sherpa tales, and dubious monastery relics. Messner cites, for instance, a letter he received from a well-meaning fellow who asserts that the yeti are the offspring of Cro-Magnon man and the ice bear, which Cro-Magnons kept as a domesticated pet and would lay down with at night to keep warm. Entertaining yes, but hardly an advance in solid yeti scholarship.

Perhaps this is because Messner ultimately takes the easy way out by resorting to the *Ursus Hypothesis* — the argument that the creature is neither a mass hallucination nor a mysterious hominid, but rather a case of mistaken identity. What locals call the *chemo*, he says, is actually an alpine bear. Although Messner does briefly discuss *Gigantopithecus* and other evolutionary theo-

ries about the yeti's origin, it quickly becomes clear that Messner has little faith in the creature as a cryptozoological animal. By the penultimate section, "The Pieces Fit," Messner claims that what the world calls the yeti "correspond[s] to the brown bear."

The problem is that the pieces don't fit. Characteristically lacking in precision, Messner mistitles the bear he fingers as the yeti, using the term *Ursus arctus* when the proper specific name is *arctos*. Moreover, the bear in question — a Tibetan variant of the Asiatic black bear, which has a telltale soft, white tuft at its neck and nape — belongs to a different genus altogether: *Selenarctos thibetanus*.

The more outstanding incongruency comes from Messner's own sightings, which seem to defy description as bears. At the start of the book, we're introduced to a creature that moves swiftly and upright through the forest. Although bears do rear up when provoked, and may even traverse small distances in that stance, no bear can move "with great agility and power" up a Himalayan escarpment. And Messner's explanation of bipedal print patterns in the snow — that the bears sometimes put their rear paws in the prints made by their front paws — is speculative at best. This would not be possible if the animal is moving at quickly. Nor is the shape of the prints — oversized, hominid-like impressions — accounted for. Messner's treatment of the prints is like his entire argument: tidy, brief, and ultimately unconvincing, the kind of thin conclusion that Ivan Sanderson warned against back in 1951 with the dictum, "Explaining something away is not the same thing as explaining it."

In addition to leaving many questions unanswered, the yeti-as-bear explanation is nothing new. It has been considered (and ruled out) in most of the important books on the topic, stretching all the way back to Sanderson's original text *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life*.

However, Messner does present an interesting historical facet to this theory: the yeti-bear connection was in fact first proposed decades earlier by a little-known German scientist and explorer named Ernst Schäfer. In the end it is Schäfer, more than the yeti, the Tibetan bear, or Reinhold Messner himself, who becomes the most interesting figure to emerge from Messner's quest.

Ernst Schäfer was an ambitious zoological doctoral candidate from Goettingen University, who first traveled to Tibet at age twenty. Specializing in ornithology, Schäfer was an able explorer and a crack shot. Messner first heard of Schäfer when he received a letter from the elderly scientist in 1991, after Messner had appeared in a television documentary about Tibet. Schäfer told him about his early zoological expeditions, first in 1930 and then in 1934–35, during which he surveyed the Himalayan habitat, recorded local customs, and collected numerous wildlife specimens. (It was during the first expedition that Schäfer became the second person ever to kill a giant panda.) In one of his letters, Schäfer explained to Messner how in 1934, while en route to Lhasa, Schäfer's party secured passage by local warlord General Liu Hsiang by promising to acquire a pair of yetis for display for Hsiang's private zoo.

Thus did Schäfer become the first scientist to investigate the yeti phenomenon. He recorded the locals' accounts, and while cataloging the region's birds and mammals he pondered the origins of what he called "troll stories." Early in 1935, Schäfer was high in the mountains, near the origin of the Yangtze River, when he came across a Tibetan man who said he was missing several animals from his flock and had tracked them to a cave inhabited by a snowman with "an enormous head, covered with long, whitish hair." The man led Schäfer to the cave, where Schäfer promptly shot the beast.

It was, as Schäfer later said he suspected all along, a bear, but not one from the Ursidae family of the brown and grizzly bears. This new species, Schäfer concluded, was particular to Tibet, and had a telltale collar of long white hair about its neck. Schäfer describes the beast as a "massive, powerful, and mighty primal wild predator; when shot, it rises to its full superhuman stature, turns a few times growling, and then falls forward." With one shot, Schäfer had discovered *Selenarctos thibetanus*, and placed it at the center of the yeti question.

Around the same time, British climbers Frank Smythe and Eric Shipton published the first photographs of yeti footprints in the *London Illustrated News* and *Paris Match*, which generated extensive European interest in the Himalayas. When Schäfer returned to Germany, Smythe and Shipton pleaded with him not

to release his findings. The yeti, they explained, was making it easier to fund expeditions to Everest, and they worried that an explanation of the yeti mystery (however unsatisfying) would sever those purse strings.

Schäfer's book, *Unbekanntes Tibet (Unknown Tibet)*, was published in Berlin in 1936. An instant success, the book made Schäfer a minor celebrity. It also captured the attention of an unlikely audience: In 1936, Schäfer was summoned by Heinrich Himmler, the Nazi Reichsführer and head of the SS. That October, Germany's premier agriculture, botany, ethnology, zoology and Tibetan studies expert found himself assigned to Heinrich Himmler's personal staff in the Natural Sciences Sector of the Ancestral Legacy Division, a special SS department dedicated to finding physical proof for Aryan supremacy in the natural world.

In 1939, Himmler sent Schäfer and four other scientists on another extended trip to the Himalayas. That January, the five members of Schäfer's team left Sikkim, the tiny mountain kingdom on the border of India and Nepal, and journeyed across the mountain passes to Lhasa, the Holy City of Tibet. The group took 60,000 photos and more than 120,000 feet of movie film, all of which was kept secret on order from Joseph Goebbels, perhaps because military reconnaissance was part of the mission.

But there was another likely component to the research. Himmler was a deeply absorbed occultist who believed, among other things, in a glacial cosmogony in which creation had resulted from a cosmic battle between fire and ice. Himmler's Teutonic anthropology claimed that the Aryan race had arrived on earth from heaven "fully formed," and he dispatched SS groups all over the world to look for remains of the *Herrenvolk*, or Germanic master race. (In one letter, written in 1940 while Germany was at war, Himmler requested an urgent investigation into the connections between the lineage of the House of David, and the "records of the Kings of Atlantis.") Tibet was of particular importance to Himmler as the origin of the Aryans. It was, he thought, the cradle of mankind, the possible refuge of an Aryan root race. Opening a strange new chapter in yeti historiography, Messner suggests that an interest in the yeti may have helped motivate the expedition. Himmler believed the Himalayan snowman could be the missing link in his Nazi mys-



Figure 2. *Selenarctos thibetanus*.



Figure 3. Comic book version of the proto-Aryan beasts believed to exist in the Himalayas by Himmler's Ancestral Legacy Division of the SS

Although Messner observes that without Himmler's approval, "expeditions abroad would have been impossible," it is also worth nothing that Schäfer had joined the SS immediately after the Nazis came to power in 1933. Once Schäfer met Himmler in 1936, the two carried on a lengthy correspondence. By the time he set out for Lhasa in early 1939, Schäfer's title was SS Hauptsturmführer, a high rank. British diplomats who encountered Schäfer in India and Nepal later described him as a Nazi "first and foremost," an "out and out Nazi," even a "priest of Nazism."

During his de-nazification after the Nuremburg trials, Schäfer told his interrogators that he thought Himmler's racial mysticism was ridiculous and unscientific, even though this was the explicit mission of the *Ahnenerbe*, in which Schäfer headed an entire department. Bruno Beger, the anthropologist who accompanied Schäfer to Tibet in 1939 (and is still alive today), wholly subscribed to theories about "Nordic spiritual aristocracy" and

ticism. Messner even links this idea with Schäfer's later visit to Dachau, during which he observed medical experiments conducted by SS doctors to measure human reactions to freezing temperatures and altitude. "Perhaps," Messner wonders, Schäfer's Nazi superiors hoped he would uncover evidence that the yeti was a "cold-resistant proto-Aryan."

It was a strange fate for a field scientist of Schäfer's meticulous, sober style. The debate over whether Nazi service was a matter of survival or career opportunism or fascist sympathies is a familiar one for an entire generation of German scientists.

believed that Tibet's high mountains indeed housed the distant relations of Aryans.

Schäfer's own journal of the 1939 expedition, however, suggests a straightforward interest in common flora and fauna, with hundreds of painstakingly recorded pages about birds and animals, mountains, and clouds. His intentions are not revealed, and there is certainly no mention of Aryans or any racial theology as it relates to the yeti. Nevertheless, Schäfer's reputation as a scientist was forever tarnished after the war. He decided against exile in the United States, spent a few years in Venezuela creating a wildlife park, and slipped quietly back into minor scholarship in Germany at a museum in Hanover. Schäfer eventually returned to Tibet, the land that he loved, in 1959, but his days of pioneering exploration were long over.

Schäfer died in 1992, not long after he began writing to Messner. Throughout the book, Messner maintains a curious relationship with his new correspondent. He never explicitly credits Schäfer for being the first to posit the *Ursus Hypothesis*; he discredits Schäfer's scientific achievements while relying on them for his own conclusions. It's as if Messner senses he has been fighting a losing battle. He starts on a grand quest, set against the backdrop of Tibetan demons, filthy hominids, wild ape-men, lost specimens of *Gigantopithecus*, and in the end re-treads ground made by a much more systematic scientist six decades before. For the first time in his career, the great explorer reaches the summit only to discover that someone else was there first.

On a lonely Himalayan ridge, Messner saw something. It almost doesn't matter what he thinks it was. A door in Messner's imagination was thrown open and something slipped through. If Messner so easily prove the *chemo* to be a bear, why keep up the search for another decade and a half? Perhaps Messner is more interested in the heroic expedition than its outcome. He repeatedly casts himself in the role of the abominable snowman: his girlfriend teases him about his grizzled and frosted appearance; locals shout "yeti" and throw stones at him; even the cover shows a close-up of Messner's bearded face enshrouded by the fur of his parka. Unwilling to share the spotlight, Messner's figurative mirror as the monster may be more solipsistic than philosophical: in the end, the legend Messner wants to perpetuate is his own.

## Recording Forest Sounds for Under \$100 (Part I)

Although few conclusive photographic or film records of the yeti of Bigfoot have been captured, there is plenty of audio evidence. Going back to Richard van Haarden's acetate impressions of distant yowls at 17,000 feet on his 1934 Himalayan expedition, audio recordings are the principal body of archival evidence for cryptic hominids. Since then, Alan Berry got his several hours worth of Bigfoot chatter in the Sierras in 1972, the Tahoe Scream has been codified as the best "sound blast" or vocal response bait, and enough variety of vocalization recordings exist that they've been classified into a typology of Whoops, Knocks, Howls, Growls, and Whistles. In January 2005, "Expedition Guide" provided a manual for assembling sound blasting equipment as part of our ongoing vocalization series. This month, veteran expedition leader Starlee Kine (*Swamp Echo*, *Operation Primate Web I and II*) introduces her affordable system, "Recording Forest Sounds For Under \$100."

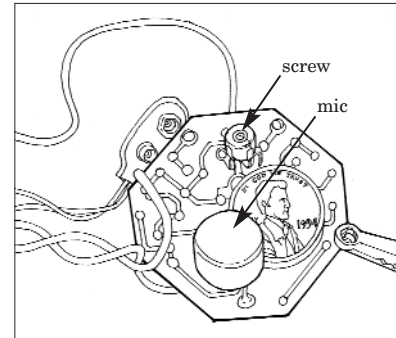
The reason for better success with aural evidence is largely technological and logistical: video equipment relies on line of sight, whereas a good audio setup can pick up sounds as far as several miles away. Today, many night-time expeditions now focus on vocaliza-

tions only, often deploying a wide range of high-tech audio devices, such as the Garmin Rino 120 with boom-mounted DowSys Bionic Ear Enhancers. However, you don't need to spend that kind of money for good results. In fact, some of the best vocalizations were recorded with cheap, easily available equipment. Marlin Ayer's Puyallup Screamer was captured on a 1970 dictaphone. The Snohomish screams were the result of improvisation at the edge of a gravel pit with a walkman and Radio Shack microphone. Mine is a slightly more advanced system, but still very accessible. I've spent ten years tinkering, and the setup is highly effective. This month is "Part I: The Transmitter." As usual, suggestions are welcome; I'm always looking to fine tune. —Starlee Kine

### What you'll need:

- \* wireless microphone kit
- \* leather boot lace (long)
- \* plastic funnel
- \* candle wax
- \* rubber tubing to cover screw
- \* camo duct tape
- \* alligator clips
- \* glue gun & glue sticks
- \* soldering iron & solder
- \* FM walkman & AA batteries
- \* 9-volt battery

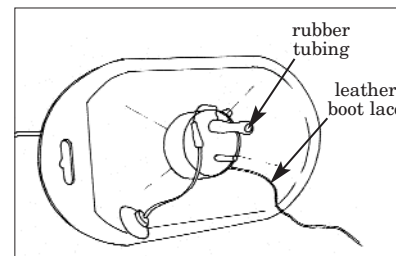
### Step 1



Small, inexpensive wireless mics can receive a range of frequencies and record at a distance. Information Unlimited in New Hampshire offers a good model, FMV1K, for \$39.95. FCC regulations require it to be shipped in pieces.

Moderate soldering experience is necessary to assemble the kit. (Shown above; penny for scale.) Be sure not to solder the microphone or screw that adjusts the wireless transmission frequency. Attach 9-volt battery, and glue it to the back of the circuit board. Use the screw to tune the transmitter to a dead spot on the dial, such as 87.5 Mhz.

### Step 2



The mic won't survive long in the field unless it is weather-

proofed. Start by sealing the circuit board with candle wax and applying rubber tubing to the frequency screw. Once that's done, insert the electronics into the kit's microphone housing, and then seat the entire assembly inside the funnel. (I use the leather boot lace as a strap.) Generously apply glue and more candle wax to coat the funnel interior and provide a mount for the microphone. (Note: the funnel is intended purely as a rain and snow hood, and not as a parabolic sound reflector. The mic is sensitive enough to pick up distant sounds from all directions in any position.)

### Step 3



The environment demands specialized techniques for disguising the microphone. This is my own camouflage concept, which works well in the Pacific Northwest. I use camo duct tape, creating a "feathered" look for the finishing. The antenna wire can be affixed to a tree branch. You will then be ready to pick up the signal with an FM walkman up to three miles away. Wiring the walkman to a VCR enables you to record good quality audio for up to six hours. Full details on the recording assembly will appear in the following issue.

# Classifieds

## events

**SOUTHERN CRYPTO CONFERENCE.** With host, Chester Moore Jr., a.k.a. "The Cryptokeeper," Experience debut of the "Interactive Cryptozoology Museum," an exhibit featuring life-sized replicas of cryptids ranging from Yeti/Bigfoot to Mokele Mbembe. June 18, 2005. Lone Star Expo Center, Conroe, Texas June 18, 2005. VIP tickets available upon request. Website: [www.cryptokeeper.com/conference.htm](http://www.cryptokeeper.com/conference.htm).

**PENNSYLVANIA BIGFOOT CONFERENCE.** Featuring panel discussions, demonstrations, paraphernalia, raffle and auction. New section for Bigfoot art! Jeannette, Pennsylvania September 24, 2005. Website: [www.pabigfootsociety.com/events.html](http://www.pabigfootsociety.com/events.html).

**5TH ANNUAL TEXAS BIGFOOT CONFERENCE!** Hosted by the Texas Bigfoot Research Center (TBRC). October 14-16, 2005. "The best damn Bigfoot Conference of the year!" Featuring renowned Bigfoot researchers Rick Noll, Loren Coleman and Chris Murphy. Conference to be held in the commons area at Jefferson High School. 1 Bulldog Dr., Jefferson, Texas 75657. Website: [www.texasbigfoot.com/events5.html](http://www.texasbigfoot.com/events5.html)

**INTERNATIONAL CRYPTOZOOLOGY ART SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION.** Exhibition featuring the finest examples of cryptozoological art from around the world: native works, eyewitness drawings, forensic sketches, paintings, models, and sculptures. October 28-30, 2005; Lewiston, ME. Contact: Loren Coleman, Director, International Cryptozoology Museum, PO Box 360, Portland, ME 04112.

## books & publications

**MY SECRET FRIEND:** Bigfoot coloring book. Color in the beautiful pen and ink illustrations while reading about a young girl's journey to discover the existence of a huge, hairy "manimal" in the woods behind her home. Perfect for the young Bigfoot enthusiast. My Secret Friend color and keep storybook: \$7.00 + \$3.50 shipping. Order: [www.oregonbigfoot.com/artists/sail\\_sw.php](http://www.oregonbigfoot.com/artists/sail_sw.php).

**BEYOND THE PRICKLY THICKET: IN SEARCH OF NORTH AMERICA'S APEMAN.** Renowned author and Bigfoot expert Johnny Tableau takes you on a breathtaking cross country adventure in search of the elusive Bigfoot. Published by the cryptopress. <http://www.cryptopress.com>; Order online or call (800) 934-9431.

## artwork & gifts

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## guide services

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## software

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## miscellaneous

**PRECISION GASOLINE CALCULATOR.** Indicates gallons in advance required for trips, computes actual consumption. Not a gadget! \$15 ppd. Segesmans, 2367 Peach Tree Dr. Van Nuys, CA, 91404.

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## public notice

I, Howard Eames Jr., of 1612 Chestnut Street, Oroville, Calif., am hereby no longer liable for the debts and expenditures of MaryAnne Collins Eames, address unknown. She is not authorized to write checks from the account of Howard Eames and MaryAnne Eames (Union Bank of California) nor from the account of Gold Country Guide Services LLC (Bank of America). Bills and expenses in her name and Signature will not be paid or honored at this residence. Signed and dated by Howard Eames, Jr.: March 17, 2005. Witnessed by David Eames (my brother): March 17, 2005.

## for sale

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