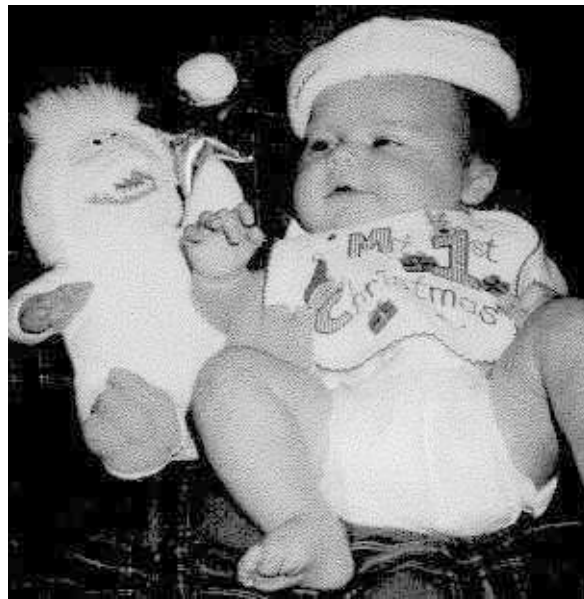


CRYPTO

Crypto: Hidden or Secret, from the Greek kruptos meaning hidden

“Rumors of panthers persist, and reports of sightings are continually received at the Department. Often these originate with apparently reliable, intelligent persons, some of them with considerable knowledge of wildlife and woodsmanship.”

—*Helenette Silver, New Hampshire Game and Furbearers: A History (New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, Survey Report No. 6, November 1974, 2nd Edition)*



The Abominable Bumble Girl Cheyenne

Cheyenne Autumn Heinselman

Born October 14, 2000

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Cryptofiction:

Cameroon Calls

By S. Aaron Spriggs

The brass plaque above the doorbell read “That which is understood internally becomes that which is observed externally”. Below the doorbell was a badly weathered, hand-written note (in both English and French) taped to the door frame. Barely legible, it read “Ring the damn bell.”

There’s only two types of people in the world; those that knock and those that ring the bell. I reached out, and just as my finger brushed the plastic button, visions of electrocution danced through my brain. Perhaps it’s a means of getting rid of unwanted callers.

I pressed the button without hearing any bells, neither heavenly nor physical. I adjusted my backpack and waited several minutes in the heavy drizzle. I had anticipated rain before the trip and was not disappointed. The door finally opened and I was face to face with whom I assumed to be Dr. Levis Novo. My assumption turned out to be correct.

He is a tall man, almost a foot taller than my five foot, ten inch frame, and far more slender than myself. Pale for an Egyptian, but I come across quite a few pale scientists sequestered away in their labs. What amazed me was how anyone could be so driven by their work that they would ignore the tropical jungles to sit in a lab. Why even set up a lab here if you aren’t going to indulge in the environment?

I smiled and extended a wet hand. “Hello, I’m Dr. Morgan. I trust you are Dr. Novo.”

His heavy eyelids smiled faster than the rest of his face as he replied, “Ah, Dr. N. E. Morgan. Yes, I’ve been looking forward to our meeting ever since you started e-mailing me. Please come in out of the rain.” His words were syrupy but not slow.

From the outside, I could tell his complex was a dome despite the thick, encroaching jungle. The hemisphere was covered with an off-white membrane. It was a giant, pale bat squatting and hiding secrets. Upon entering the bat, we walked down a short, narrow corridor passing through an airlock. I dropped my gear and dried off quickly with a towel of hospitality. He lead me deeper into the bat’s bowels where we entered the main room which was the center of the dome. We spent most of our time there during the lengthy discussions which would ensue. To say the room was cluttered would be an insult to chaos theorists the world over. All of his equipment, desks, computers (confusers as I refer to them), bookcases, hanging plants, chemistry glassware, clothes line, and a few chairs all vied for space. Light streamed in through numerous skylights but did little to make the room feel open. Smoke from strawberry incense snaked through the beams of light, cluttering even them.

I picked my path carefully to an offered chair while recently vacated books teetered in a stack next to it. “So you have come all the way from the U.S. of A. to my little rain-forest looking for a green mammal.”

“That’s right. Since there are already two known greenish mammals in the area, I thought I’d start looking here for more.”

“What do you mean by greenish?”

“Well, both the Small Green Squirrel and Cooper’s Green Squirrel are found in this neck of the woods, and while neither is truly green, I anticipate that the same selective pressures which resulted in their green coloration could have resulted in a mammal with true green pigmentation.

Thus a real green mammal.”

“So you seek purity. I thought as much from your e-mails. That is why I have extended a cordial hand to you. You see, I too seek purity but on a far different level.” His eyes never left me while we talked even though I rudely sat and gave myself a visual guided tour of the room, only glancing in his direction from time to time.

He continued, “If you wouldn’t mind, I am fascinated by your quest, but being somewhat removed from the field of biology, I am not grasping the finer, mercurial points which I am sure exist.”

I settled into the chair more and made the conversation a contact sport visually for the duration of our discussion. “Several years ago, while studying bats, it occurred to me that I couldn’t think of any green mammals. Two bats which have been called green, the African Yellow-winged bat and the house bat, both have olive green tints to their hair, but neither have any green pigment cells.

“On the other hand, there are green fishes, green insects, green amphibians, green reptiles and green birds. Why? I began to ask around but none of my colleges were of any help. Then I stumbled upon the International Cryptozoological Society.

“The ICS are biologists who have specialized in tracking down hard to find animals, or cryptids. From the Loch Ness Monster, to coelacanth and everything in between. Often the searches border on the mythical and much of the research is done in libraries just to see if there is enough second hand evidence to warrant an expedition. Of course, there are those that get a bee up their bonnets and have to go out looking and shouting to the world that *they* are going to bring home Big Foot — and it’s just that kind of sensationalism which has given cryptozoology the rep it has with the rest of biologists.

“Anyway, I reasoned that since there are two separate squirrel species in this area that have evolved with a greenish coloration, there may be other mammals that have real green pigmentation.” I paused giving him a chance to join back in the conversation.

“So these squirrels you mention, Dr. Morgan, how are they green if they do not manifest the sought-after pigmentation?”

“Please call me Morgan, everyone I know simply calls me by my last name. I’ve not seen them yet, but I understand their pelt is a blend of black, grey, yellow and white hair which gives them a mottled, drab green coloration. It’s just a trick of blending the differing hairs to achieve a green result.”

“And all of the other non-mammals you mentioned have green pigment?”

“Yep. Some of them achieve green through means other than pigment like light refraction, or ingesting plants and sequestering the chlorophyll just beneath their skin, or having moss grow in their hair, but most of them are honest while achieving dishonesty for camouflage.” The last phrase brought a smile, ever so slight, to his lips.

“Honest while achieving dishonesty. Nice. Not to change the subject, because I am nowhere near done listening about what you seek, but you have given me the perfect segue into my own line of research.”

I thought I was into an odd line of work - odder than a friend of mine who is a perfume model - but Dr. Levis Novo (I later simply started calling him Novo, since he wasn’t too formal once you got to know him, and he didn’t mind) beat us both like we were the meringue for a pie. He is a modern day Alchemist, but instead of simply playing with bricks of lead, he deals with the subatomic bordering on the metaphysical. He’s a Quantum Alchemist.

Researching for my trip involved days of internet scouring. One of the many searches for info on green mammals turned up a result of ‘green tablets.’ Out of curiosity I followed that lead.

There are ancient emerald tablets carved by a philosopher, Hermes Trismegistus, and they are inscribed with knowledge all but lost to mankind. “Let obscurity flee before thee” is the opening line of the tablets. They have connections to the Egyptian god Thoth, the Masons, and even the Rosicrucians (Knights of the Rosy Cross sought out the tablets in the early 1700s for arcane purposes...). After briefly checking up on these tablets which are perhaps green with envy of the Philosopher’s stone, I contacted a name linked to them. I was just making absolutely sure there was no connection to mammals. The man I contacted was Dr. Novo, the Grand Wazoo of modern alchemy.

It rained steadily for several days and I spent that time getting to know him and his work. Novo seeks purity at the quantum level of matter. He attended Paracelsus Collage, Australia (PCA) which is taught strictly verbally. No notes allowed, and no textbooks to purchase, which explained the lack obnoxious “used” stickers on the books on his shelves. Apparently, he excelled in both sacred geometry to demonstrate the principles of space as well as the process of resonant creation and cycles and astrology to incorporate the principles of time and psychology. If you understand any of that, you are doing far better than myself. Like I said, I had several days to take all of this in.

Sacred geometry and cycles and astrology both get tied into lay lines of the earth. Taoists call it Dragon Magic and the Chinese have over twenty centuries of documented practice with it - according to Novo, that is. I know there is some weird shit in the world. Heck, I’m looking for some of it. But a lot of what he’s into sounds, and looks, like mumbo-jumbo. It got even better though when he wore his dark red fez with the gold stars, moons, and comets on it. The tassel would sway back and forth while he worked, like a gold fly looking for spilled sugar. Personally, I think he wore it for my amusement, but he seemed a bit too comfortable with it on for me to be sure.

He showed me several different translations of the *Illustrated Tao Te Ching* (Lao Tzu’s “naturally”) which tied in with what ancient Britons called geomancy. At that time, I had lived for almost thirty years ignorant of the fact that the earth has energy coursing through it like a decentralized nervous system. If you are smart enough, knowledgeable enough, and talented enough, you can tap into these energies. Some lines are weaker than others and some cross each other. If you can find several powerful lines all crossing at the same point you’ve got quite the little power-grid at your disposal. It doesn’t end there though.

Geomancers can move, or redirect, these lay lines and they have given this little talent the euphemism “Slaying the Dragon”. Once they have redirected the energy, they must pin it in place to keep it flowing there. An *omphalus* is used for just such a task. There were several photos of various *omphali* (or is that *omphaluses*; heck I don’t know) in his books and all of them looked like large, bullet-shaped granite stones to me.

One thing which I never got fully explained was what exactly they use the energy for or how they tap into it. Novo was quite good at redirection of the conversation when I asked him about these points. I marked that info as ‘trade secrets’ and didn’t press him. I was his guest after all.

“So, why did you build here? Is it a nexus of earthly energies?”

“In part, yes. However, the dynamics of the energy interested me far more than the amount. Situated between one of the last healthy rainforests of the world and the burgeoning oil industry with their drilling and refining. I chose to do my research at the world’s pudendum . It is beautiful and horrific and perfect for my studies.”

Purity doesn't stop with the inanimate though. Mankind can gain this cosmic balance too. All this energy-flow stuff tied in with Chi Kung (also called Qigong) which deals with meditations to achieve balance in both mind and body, internal and external. Spiritual enlightenment to become an "Authentic Man," as he dubbed it.

"The cosmos originally arises from non-existence. What we perceive today is the final stage stemming from a series of spontaneous transmutations." Liquid amber flowed in the form of his voice while he wore the fez, and I was trapped. "This original Primal Unity separated into two complimentary principals known as yin and yang (he pronounced it as ye-ong rather than ye-ang as I've always heard it pronounced).

"Ye-ow" was my witty interjection, which he politely ignored.

The gold fly circled as he continued. "The reunification of these two principals generates the cosmos. Once the cosmos is completed, it is subject to the laws of cosmology."

"Makes sense to me" I lied.

"Alchemy can take on many varied forms of study, as we've discussed. External or internal are the two main types of alchemy and either one can lead to *Heaven spontaneously revealing its secrets*, as one of these texts puts it," he said as he waved his hand over his shoulder. I wasn't sure if he was shooing away his fly or gesturing to his stacks of books.

"Heaven and not you?" My eyebrow raised and pulled that impish question out of me on its own accord. I had nothing to do with it.

"It is the alchemist's task to trace the process of the cosmos' reunification backwards, yes. But, if done properly, the path reveals itself."

"So, what have you got to show for applying cosmological laws to the cosmos?" I think I was beginning to get the hang of this.

"I thought you'd never ask." I felt like Little Red Riding-hood by the size of his grin.

He had to search for a short while until he finally found the proper library books from Glasgow (the finest alchemical library existing today) to move aside. Their titles included words like super-symmetry, quantum gravity and unified field theory. Under them was a small cylindrical case made of stainless steel or titanium, I couldn't tell which. He unscrewed the well-sealed lid and using a pair of tongs, fished out a sphere from mercury and held it forth using both hands (I would later learn just how heavy it was). The highly polished orb was dark silver and less than an inch in diameter.

"This is my 'more solid than solid' ball of matter."

I squinted and leaned in a bit closer. "More solid than solid? O.K."

"There are engineers who have been able to create false atoms. Atoms with no nuclei; their electrons are held together with magnetic forces. I've taken the other approach and have created an atom which is basically only nuclei. To keep the concept simple anyway." I think he noticed my eyes were beginning to glass over again. "Matter is mostly space, correct?"

I nodded yes. This sounded like familiar science to me.

"And most of this space is created from the electrons in their orbitals, or clouds, if you will. I've compressed the atom down while removing the electrons. I precipitated anything heavier than an electron out and kept the far heavier components. It's all done on the sub-atomic level, of course."

"Of course. So how is it stable? Or is it?"

"Oh it's quite stable. In fact, it is too stable. It causes everything around it to become less stable and that is why I keep it in the mercury. The liquid metal seems to have a shielding effect

upon its properties, but I have not yet ascertained why and how this is so.”

“Entropy. You’re saying it causes increased entropy in things around it.” At least I could follow some of his science, but only some.

“Not just entropy and not just things, but in all matter. In the immediate cosmos. I think I have tapped into one of the spontaneous separating factors for the primal Unity. But now my studies have taken me elsewhere and I doubt I will ever get back around to this aspect of perceived existence. I created this sphere over four years ago and only get it out every now and then for entertainment purposes.”

What do you say to a guy who creates an entropy sphere just out of curiosity and then only plays with it when he’s bored? I still don’t know, but when I do, I’m going to e-mail him the response.

After a few days of such discussions (or was it the entropy orb effecting me?), it was no wonder my dreams became erratic. I was back on the transport swinging into the Cameroon airport past the black-sand beaches, active volcano, Mount Cameroon, and the more active oil refineries. From the sky, the city looked like any major port city. Tall, shiny buildings huddling close together. There were ships moving about in the Gulf of Guinea and steam billowing from brick chimneys. I was trying to look around the plane without letting anyone know what I was looking for. I saw a green monkey once, but it ended up being an old teddy bear from my childhood. Then I was walking through the streets and leaving the city for the jungle. There was a market of freshly butchered meats all hanging out in the open. At one point I swore some of the meat came from green squirrels, but real green, not the fakes I already knew of. I tried to talk to the stand attendants, but then they were trying to sell me green eggs and ham. Green pigs! Why had I not thought of green pigs in the underbrush? As soon as I asked myself that, I was swinging in my hammock, back in Novo’s pale bat and there were green pigs grunting and nosing in and around the electronic cables from all of the equipment in the dome.

There are only two types of people in the world, those that pull the sheets up over their heads, and those that get out of bed. I woke up and couldn’t help but look around in the dark, but there wasn’t a single verdant squealer to be found.

The morning after the dream, I asked him about the meat market. He told me that the locals hunted the game and shipped most of it into the capital via the trains. They would kill, butcher, and wrap the meat up out in the jungles, then pass the bundles through the windows to others riding the trains. They in turn would make the deliveries to the vendors at the market. Apparently poaching is still a major problem and *any* meat can be purchased.

When not in mind bending talks, I kept at my journal and let Novo do his research. I’ve always had a love for dog-eared, yellowed pages filled with smudged ink, postcards, and memories. Unfortunately, I can’t keep a pencil or pen to save my life, so I keep my travels logged on my palm-personal confuser -3(PPC ® MEGA-Corp, Inc. and yes, I know how horribly outdated it is, but it suits my purposes just fine). That’s also how I’ve been able to recall my discussions with Novo after all these years.

The weather finally gave me a break and I was off with a guide, or guides really. Novo helped me there too. He knew of a few brothers that would get me out in the bush and back again without robbing me. They were small, dark-skinned Muslims and I couldn’t keep their names straight to save my life. The fact that they spoke French and very little English didn’t help either.

We made week long excursions deep into the jungle only to return to Novo's bar for a few days to resupply and shower. I wasn't having much luck, but I didn't expect instant gratification. This went on for several weeks. One morning I heard the oddest bird calls. A high pitched ululation with an eerie power behind it. The guides were gone before I had a chance to ask them what animal made such a sound. After I caught up to them on the trail heading back, they informed me that hearing those wails brings dire consequences. They issued forth from an animal which could easily kill an hippopotamus. I pointed out the fact that there were no hippos here to be killed, but that only proved their point more and made them walk faster. There are two types of people in the world, those that go home and those that keep going. While making my way down to the water I couldn't help but dig at a memory about hippo killing cryptids. The thought nagged at me, but I wasn't able to recall it until later. I made it to the banks moments after hearing several loud splashes of submerging animals. The wakes left behind were all quite large. I stayed in the area for the rest of the day, but found nothing to explain what the animal, or animals, were.

While staking out the area, I got out ol' -3® and started scrolling through the data banks. I had scanned in every book on cryptozoology at my disposal prior to the trip and it didn't take long for me to find what I was looking for electronically, if not in the flesh and blood. The animal was known as Mokele-Mbembe and it was a brontosaurus-like dinosaur. All reports on it stemmed from the Congo, in central Africa, but that was over one thousand miles away. Nothing remotely like it was ever mentioned in these necks of the woods.

Pygmies first described an animal about the size of an elephant with a long flexible neck, a tail like an alligator's, and large, clawed feet. This was way back in the late 1700s. Since then only a few expeditions have actually looked for them, and all with no success. Attempted evidence includes such highlights as shaky aerial film footage from an old combustion engine plane flying overhead and photographs of the dark side of a lens cap.

The locals also claimed that any human who gets too close to the Mokele-Mbembe is killed, but not eaten, since they are herbivorous. Curiouser and curiouser. I stretched the elesto-crystalline screen out to its maximum size on my ppc to get a better look at the various artists' renditions of MM (usually I keep the screen small to save on the vigor cells, but I was engrossed at the time).

One expedition headed up by Roy Mackel (a cryptozoologist like myself) cited an account of a tribe killing and eating MM. Pascal Moteka lived near Lake Tele. His people built a spiked fortification across the river to keep Mokele-Mbembes from spoiling their fishing. One beast ended up entangled in their construction and the villagers were able to kill it with spears. But MM was still able to kill any human who got too close because, according to Pascal, everyone who partook of the cooked dinosaur meat died soon thereafter.

I was able to find some large tracks along the banks later on that day, but they were unimpressive in their lack of details. I recorded them anyway with -3®. This probably wasn't my green mammal, but it was just as good and it would keep me coming back.

The jungles of Cameroon called and now I found myself listening to the calls of Cameroon. I had been staking out the river banks on and off for two more weeks before the eerie, yet melodic, bellows returned. Through that stretch of waterway, the underbrush was thick and quite often I could not reach the spots I wanted to. Brawling bushes got the best of me more times than I care to admit. Once, Novo even joked that I looked like I had been spending my time at a local brothel rather than along the river.

Like I said, the bugles returned. On more than one occasion I was left with nothing more than a large wake disturbing the river's flow, but most of the time I didn't even get that much from the elusive Mokele-Mbembe, or whatever it was I was now searching for. Perhaps the giant hippo hater (not to be confused with hippo hating giants) wasn't an extant dinosaur. Perhaps I had stumbled upon my green mammal after all and it was aquatic rather than terrestrial. I assumed I would eventually find out one way or another.

One strategy I adopted was to change my daily habits. I started to shift my wake and sleep cycles by going to bed just a few hours later each day. The guides were no longer accompanying me, so such time shifts were more easily done. Besides destroying my circadian rhythms, I got to see some beautiful sunrises.

The days wore on. And on.

At this point, I had been there for almost three months. In that time, Novo had loaned me his entropy bauble. I had seen how heavy it was for Novo to lift out of the mercury, yet I was still surprised the first time I lifted it myself. It probably weighed thirty pounds. I also learned not to have prolonged skin contact with it.

The skin is an amazing organ, the largest of the human body. It is composed of two layers of fat and they are bipolar in nature with one side repelling water and the other side attracting water (obviously I know there is far more to skin than that, but my anatomy was a long time ago and I'm not going to embarrass myself by trying to recall such fragmented knowledge). I had a blister for over a week when those organized, usually complacent, fat molecules decided to go their own way and sublimated after only a few seconds into what smelled like vanilla.

Not everything which came into contact with the orb responded the same way. There were times when I thought I heard radio stations broadcasting. I would see shattered rainbows from the normally non-visible light band erupt from around the orb. Crystals would temporarily grow and then vaporize. Plants would form cankers just as likely as fluoresce. All this with no commercial breaks. There was far more to this orb than just chaos. It first totally randomized matter while stripping it down to some sub-atomic level, then gave that matter a second chance at reorganization. Did it give the newly forming matter direction? I'd have to ask Novo more about it later.

One morning, I found some blood flowing along the river banks. I had been up all night and had never heard a sound (apart from the ordinary cacophony of the nocturnal symphony). I followed the hemophilic trail upstream with a growing sense of dread. I just knew that this was the beast I had been staking out. I wasn't disappointed.

I expected to find a large body of something, given the amount of blood I had been seeing, but there wasn't much left of the carcass. Just a scrap of skin and sinew, which hadn't been washed away, had been trampled into the muddy river banks. I carefully lifted the sample up with a pair of forceps. The outer epidermis of the sample was thick, almost half an inch thick, and its color was a washed out gray, not unlike a shark or manatee. There was also quite a bit of greasy, white fat attached to the underside. The whole piece was no more than a few inches square.

Pachyderm means thick-skinned and it was once a catch all category for more than just elephants. Early natural historians had lumped rhinos, hippos, elephants, and pigs all together solely because of their thick skins. Whatever I had just found the remains of would have fit nicely into their classification schemes.

After carefully putting the sample in a specimen jar, I checked the underbrush surrounding

the kill zone. Human footprints not my own carpeted the area. I then waded out into the river a short ways blindly groping with both hands hoping for bones, but was left with nothing but mud and weeds and parasites. I picked off the fresh water leeches once I got out. I'm no Daniel Boon and couldn't track the hunter's prints more than a few yards away from the muddy banks.

I spent a few more days at that very spot hoping for either the hunter's return, or another cryptid. In the meantime, I examined the skin sample closer. First, I scraped some of the fat deposit off and used that to begin a gas-electrophoresis test to get a DNA bar-code pattern of what I was holding. I could then scan the bar code to see what known creature this was, or what it was closest to. This would take several hours and the little GE couldn't be disturbed while it worked, so I set it down at the base of a tree out of harms way.

I then got out my pocket mag-lens and gave the sample a twice over. The skin had a very smooth appearance. There were pores to be found, but they were timid and scarce. On the other hand, the slim hairs screamed for attention. I was holding a skin sample from a mammal after all. The icing on the cake, however, was the ectoparasite.

Its body was very flat, but it had more than six legs, so I felt reasonably comfortable guessing that it wasn't a louse or a flea. I had to consult -3® for an arthropod identification table to find out exactly what I was looking at. There must have been some operator error, however, because the best I could do was confirm the fact that it wasn't an insect. Next, I scanned in its image (top, bottom and sides) and sent them to an entomologist back in the states. Dr. Gondradieff, even retired, was considered an expert in aquatic entomology the world over.

The allotted amount of time had elapsed and I checked out the DNA bar code. I scanned it with -3® and waited almost patiently for the results. Within two minutes I knew I would have to spring for the latest model because my ol' trusty -3® wasn't aiding me any longer with answers like "killer whales." Oh well, I knew it would come to this some day and it was my own fault I waited this long.

Like I said, I stayed there a few more days at that very spot, but with no luck, and so I had to return to Novo's bat for more food and to dry out. During the trek back, I obsessed over what I had found so far and compared it to the tissue sample. My only conclusion was that my expedition was turning into quite the fish story.

Once at Novo's, I shipped both the skin sample and the parasite off to the states for proper museum storage and so that Dr. Gondradieff could perform a proper inspection of the sample rather than just from scanned images.

"Here is the image of the footprint I found in the mud."

"Good resolution, especially for an older model like the one you are using." Novo paused in thought, then turned away from me as he asked me the next question. "What do you intend on doing with whatever mysterious animal you bring to light?"

"Well, there are two types of biologists. Those that want to kill what they are studying, and those that don't. The old school mentality is to either kill and study it or bring it back alive and study it to death. Now, however, you can electronically capture it as much as possible for study later. For several reasons I am in the last camp known as telebiology. It is reasonable to think that any animal not yet known by man has a small population to begin with. They may be going extinct for all we know. Killing an individual could be the nail in the coffin for the species. Also, our technology is so much better than what biologists had a' hundred years ago that I think I can do just

as good a job without killing the specimen as they did while killing or capturing. Besides, it works best on a shoe-string budget.”

My answer seemed to please him, but I wasn't positive. He didn't bring the matter up a second time.

That day, I got word from retired Dr. Gondradieff. I had collected a new species of louse after all, but it was from the *Cyamus* genus, which are actually crustaceans, not insects. I had been half right. *Cyamus* are found on whales. So where did this leave me? Had I found a fresh water, river whale? Its description didn't fit any known whale even slightly. I got to thinking that perhaps the parasite was yet another example of convergent evolution, and that it resembled a whale's louse because of the aquatic conditions and the hair type. That made sense since my newly “found” cryptid was a large, aquatic creature of some sort.

On yet another return trip to Novo's albino bat, it occurred to me how the central chamber never changed. Sure, the stacks of books got shuffled about, dinner plates appeared and vanished over the course of days, experiments came and went, but in general the overall clutter remained the same. For a scientist devout to change, this was rather humorous. He thought so too, once I pointed it out to him.

Thanks to Novo and his equipment, there was one more point of info I felt confident in; that there was only one individual creature I was looking for. It was a quick decision to make after his artistry separating the differing types of calls I recorded with an oscilloscope, graphing them with his harmonic modulation equipment and plotting them (bringing into play his math skills). We were both satisfied that there was only one animal. One animal calling out, but was it calling to me?

It was my very next outing to the river when I saw the giant cryptid for the first, and last time. The sun was setting, the gnats were swarming, and I was settled down for another long wait through the night. I missed the water ripples, but I did notice the large head full of teeth emerge when it shattered the water's surface. That image will be forever burned in my memories. At least I didn't freeze from fright or awe, despite feeling both. I quickly got out -3®, punched in the light conditions and started recording images. Trusty ol' -3® was quietly whining away when the neck of the ancient creature erupted in a geyser of blood and flesh, which I was doused in despite my distance.

There was an explosion of sound at the exact same moment and I couldn't hear anything after that. Poachers had ambushed me and my cryptid and they were after meat. Apparently they didn't realize I was there. I moved away from the water's edge a short distance and spotted them. Three men, all small and dark. The rifle looked like an elephant gun, and one of them was aiming it again. I knew I couldn't hesitate if I wanted to save the animal.

I was hoping their ears were ringing as bad as mine as I ran through the bushes to circle around and behind them. On the way I dropped all of my packs using the quick-release buckles and I grabbed the first stick that wasn't soft from jungle rot. I charged into the blue exhaust cloud from the rifle just as the second shot assaulted my ears.

I'd been in a few fights in my life and I have had some martial arts, but those lessons were a long time ago and I hadn't kept up with anything remotely like practice. I also knew that the poachers might not hesitate to kill me along with the proto-whale. I hit them hard and fast.

The one with the rifle was standing in front of the other two. While charging in, I swung the branch like a baseball bat and hit a line drive with the back of a head. I then used my momentum to crash into the rifleman before either of the remaining two could react. We ended up several yards forward and in a mud bath. I was on top and brought my native truncheon around and down a few

times before worrying about the third man. That's when I felt the mud wash up from behind me.

I rolled to the side, scrambling to my feet as his machete chopped into the legs of his recently battered companion. We both floundered out of the sludge with me trying to keep a healthy distance between us. As soon as we were clear of the tropical health spa, mud flew as the foot race commenced. We thrashed and crashed through the underbrush and many saplings gave their lives for mine.

We ran through my equipment more than once, and that is when I had the idea to introduce him to the golf ball of cosmic whimsy. I threw my club and tripped him, buying myself enough time to scoop up my trampled fanny-pack imprisoning Novo's toy. Unscrewing the lid and running at the same time wasn't easy, but I was motivated every time I had to dodge his jungle knife. Finally, the lid was off and I was ready.

I spun and splashed him in the face with the mercury while keeping the sphere in the cylinder. That got his attention and stopped him where he stood. Then, while he was bent over and sputtering French curses, I rolled the ball out and down his pants. The spasms started after just a few seconds.

He staggered towards me and I could just make out his screams over the ringing in my ears. I'll never forget the look on his face, but I just remind myself that he was trying to kill me moments before. He staggered and jerked forward while I kept retreating until we got to the banks of the river. He staggered past me and past the shot leviathan only to belly flop and float face down. That's when I had a chance to catch my breath and get a good look at the cryptid.

It fit the descriptions given by the Congo pygmy tribe. It had a long neck and an equally long tail and from end to end, I would guess it was seventy feet long. Its body was about the size of an elephant's, but unlike the pygmy's MM, this animal was not herbivorous. Its mouth was open as it gasped for breath and I could easily discern two types of large conical teeth in its head (which, by the way, was well over five feet long!). Only mammals have dental differentiation, so this confirmed that I had found a new mammal. Its skin was the washed out grey color just like the sample I had found earlier.

The wounded cryptid was slowly sinking down. To keep its head above water, it would drag its body up onto the river bank using both front feet. The feet were large and clawed with webbing between the digits. Not for the first time, I thought of the missing link between ancient and modern whales.

As for its wounds, it had been shot twice. Its neck and side each had caves of pulpy flesh large enough to house a small boy and his arthropod friends once they left their giant peach. It was partially beached and breathing heavy. I had to try to help it. I left and gathered moss, lichens, large leaves and some of the mud I had wrestled in earlier, and hurried back. It almost ate me in a single bite when I got close to it. My career as the world's only Cryptozoological Veterinarian ended before it began.

My only other option was to record it as much as possible and go get help. I figured I could prop up ol' -3® to record it while I left.

My heart was to be broken three times that day. The first was when the proto-whale was shot. The second time was when I found -3®. It had given its life in the line of duty. It looked like it had tried to trip the poacher during my big chase scene. I had no idea how little of its data would later be accessible, but my hopes were high.

My third heart break came when I went to fish the poacher's body out of the river to retrieve Novo's pearl. His entire body was a topiary growing in the river. The orb of unity and chaos was no where to be found.

After the sun rose, I began a hasty return trip to Novo's so that we could get some hired help in bringing back the creature, dead or alive. I pushed myself and got back in just over two days. It took us less than a day to organize and get going back into the wilds of Cameroon. I was devastated to find nothing left at my overly traversed site. Our guides informed us it looked like poachers had come and gone. Whether they had butchered my cryptid or not, we couldn't be sure, but they had removed their dead.

Novo wasn't upset in the least, or at least he didn't show it, when I told him of the fate of the 'more solid than solid' sphere.

"Do not fret over your actions. It was meant to be. Destiny can not be bribed," was his response.

I was forced to impose even further on Novo since I was now without trusty ol' -3®. Using his state of the art confuser, I accessed some info on ancestral whales. There are two types of whales, those with teeth (Odontoceti) and those with baleen (Mysticeti). Why, oh why couldn't I have found an ancestor to the baleen whale lineage?

Basilosaurus cetoides was a whale ancestor about thirty-five to forty million years ago. Most of the fossils from these marine animals have been found in the United States where the Mississippi used to flow. They had a wedge shaped head full of two types of teeth - which I can vouch for. Since the specimen I ran into was fresh water, it probably wasn't *B. cetoides*, but it could have been a close relative.

Before leaving Cameroon, I went back to the meat market under the hot, tropical sun. I browsed for a long time, ate a meal of mystery meat (no green ham), then left without ever seeing anything that looked like my *Basilosaurus*.

Emotionally, I was spent. Financially, my private grant-giver from CSI wanted to see me and my "results." I just wanted a few nights in my own bed. If my green mammal was here, it would just have to wait for me to come back someday.

The west coast of Africa was once called the White Man's Grave because of the hoards of biting flies and parasites. Early explorers often died in these jungles. The graves were still being dug, but for the local fauna, not me. I still had my life and my quest.

Novo met me at the airport and gave me a going away present. The entire time I invaded his bat, he had been pleasant, even friendly, but emotional he wasn't. I unwrapped the package and held up a vest made from green-squirrel pelts.

About the Author:

S. Aaron Spriggs is in his mid 30's and sickeningly happily married for about a year now. His degrees, which aren't being put to use, include a Certificate in Hazardous Waste Management, an Associate in General Science, and a B.S. in Entomology/Zoology. He is taking some time off from working on his M.S. in Entomology (with a focus on fossil insects) since he was perpetually getting distracted from his studies with his writing, his wife's band, and annual trips to Burning Man.

"*Cameroon Calls*" is the first of a series of Cryptofiction. Currently, he lives with his young bride, Hilary, in Ft. Collins, Colorado along with a small menagerie of walking sticks, Dermestid beetles, a tarantula and the Lord of the Ferries, Oberon; who was transformed into the guise of a cat several years ago and has been mooching off of Aaron ever since.

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News Notes: South Island Kokako Search

In *CRYPTO Volume 1, Number II (December 1998)* an article was written dealing with an endemic bird of New Zealand, the bird in question being the South Island Kokako (*Callaeas cinerea cinerea*). In 2000 a new search was put forth to prove the continued existence of this bird from New Zealand's South Island. Funded jointly by the Maruia Nature Catalogue and the Ecologic Foundation. Additional financial and/or logistic support is being provided by way of private donations and Earth Sea Sky (clothing manufacturer) and the Department of Conservation (DoC). The "Kokako 2000" search is being headed by Rhys Buckingham, a veteran searcher for the bird.

The search began in October in the Kahurangi National Park and then proceeded through parts of Nelson Lakes National Park, Canterbury, Buller, Westland and Fiordland. It is scheduled to end in January of 2001 and cover many parts of South Island and Stewart Island. Some tentative findings have come from the expedition, these are the tantalizing response calls to juvenile North Island Kokako recordings as well as small moss grubblings found in the Glenroy River area.

Whether the ongoing search is successful or not remains to be seen. Regardless of the outcome the chapter on this "grey ghost" from New Zealand is far from over. With circumstantial evidence growing and reports coming in (the publicity of the search has brought in well over 20 unrecorded sightings) the finale proof of the birds survival may not be long away.

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Beston, Anne, Hunt in wild south for elusive kokako, *The New Zealand Herald*, October 10, 2000

Clarkson, David, Hunt for the Grey Ghost, *Christchurch Press*, November 25, 2000

Kokako Search 2000 website <http://www.nznature.co.nz/nwatch.htm>

News Notes: Nightcap Oak Discovered

Although not a zoological discovery, the discovery of a living organism dating back millions of years is still an intriguing side note to mention.

To date the trees that botanist Robert Kooyman found, in August 2000, have not had a scientific name applied to them. However, these 23 known trees are known unofficially as the Nightcap Oak. The trees, the largest of which is 75 centimeters in circumference (29.5 inches) and roughly 40 meters tall (131 feet). Found in rainforest of the Nightcap Range, close to Byron Bay of New South Wales, Australia, the trees exact location remains a secret as the government decides on how to protect this relic species, which may stretch back over 65 million years. With such size and appearance of macadamia size nuts and white clustering flowers, the tree is indeed a sight to behold.

With the work of Kooyman and Dr. Peter Weston, the tree has been placed into the *Proteaceae* family and may be of the genus *Eidothea*, a new genus established in 1995 to describe the Queensland Mount Bartle Frere. Interestingly as well, the saga of the Nightcap Oak may stretch back over 100 years. When in 1875 Baron Ferdinand von Mueller dealt with a fossilized nut of an estimated 15 to 20 million years of age. This fossil nut and the Nightcap Oak's nut have a similar structure, and may well be relatives to each other. Even if this lead does not pan out, the legacy of the Oak does stretch back at least 30 years when unknown leaves were collected in the region by botanist Jeff Tracey. Then in 1988 Kooyman himself found more of these mysterious leaves in the area.

We can only hope that the trees are granted protection by the government, and they can reside in their location among the ancient lands of Australia.

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Tait, Paul. Botanists find 'living fossil' tree, *Reuters*, December 15, 2000

Woodford, James. Discovery of second living fossil elate botanists, *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 15, 2000

Ancient oak offers branch to the past, *Illawarra Mercury*, December 16, 2000

News Notes: New Flycatcher Described

In Volume 112, Number 3 of the *Wilson Bulletin* a new avian species of flycatcher was formerly described by Paul Coopmans and Niels Krabbe. The bird was first noticed in June of 1992 when an observation of the bird and a tape recording was made (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology LNS number 60232) in southeastern Ecuador. In the next few year Coopmans compared his earlier recording to similar species of birds, but the vocalization recorded did not match any on record he could identify. In October of 1994 a pair of the birds were obtained from Zamora, Ecuador and systematically started comparing the specimens, and latter two more obtained in 1996 from the Volcan Sumaco from northeastern Ecuador. Additionally while performing comparisons at the American Museum of Natural History another specimen was found that was collected from southern Peru, it had been identified then as a specimen of *Myiopagis gaimardii*.

The new flycatcher has been given the common name of the Foothill Elaenia and the scientific designation of *Myiopagis ollallai*. The name of the bird was granted in appreciation to Alfonso Manuel Olalla who collected a wide grouping of Neotropical avian species. At present the external morphology is all that differentiates this new bird from previously described flycatchers, such as *Myiopagis caniceps* and *Myiopagis gaimardii*, the closest relative apparently being *M. caniceps*. Future biochemical tests are expected to be done, and perhaps this will shed light on the precise genealogy of the Foothill Elaenia.

Sources:

Coopmans, Paul and Krabbe, Niels, A New Species of Flycatcher (Tyrannidae: Myiopagis) from Eastern Ecuador and Eastern Peru, *Wilson Bulletin* Vol. 112, No. 3, 2000

News Notes: Northern Pacific Right Whales

Research, headed by Dr. Howard Rosenbaum of the Wildlife Conservation Society and with the help of researchers at the American Museum of Natural History, has been able to isolate a third species whales. Using a new technique of mtDNA (mitochondrial DNA) evaluations from new and old samples of baleen 380 whale samples were evaluated starting in 1997. As mtDNA looks at maternal lineage it is a useful tool to identify the flow of genes in an area as well as identify genetic isolation. Based off of this testing the two known species of right whale are distinct and that a third genetic group is present, this brings the total known species to three, the Northern Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*), the Southern right whale (*Eubalaena australis*) and the proposed Northern Pacific right whale.

Interestingly, prior to the DNA testing it was theorized that the whales from the North Pacific were of a distinct species, called *Eubalaena japonica*.

Sources:

Rosenbaum, H.C., Brownell, R.L., Brown, M.W., Schaeff, C., Portway, V., White, B.N., Malik, S., Pastene, L.A., Patenaude, N.J., Baker, C.S., Goto, M., Best, P.B., Clapham, P.J., Hamilton, P., Moore, M., Payne, R., Rowntree, V., Tynan, C.T., Bannister, J.L., and Desalle, R., World-wide genetic differentiation of *Eubalaena*: questioning the number of right whale species, *Molecular Ecology*, Vol. 9, No. 11, November 2000.

News Notes: Loch Ness Environmental Panel

In January 2001 it was announced that the Scottish Natural Heritage was setting up a panel to review applications to search Loch Ness for its creature, Nessie, as well as create guidelines for the protection of the Loch and its inhabitants. On the surface this appears like a good plan, however laws and codes protecting wildlife in Scotland are present already, and although they may not directly apply to an unknown animal, such as Nessie, these laws have been applied in that situation previously. Consequently, it is feared by some that applying these new guidelines may impact both the economic foundation of the area, in part due to the lake's infamous "maybe" occupant, but also make researchers less likely to seek permission to search the lake officially. Instead these researchers may choose to perform low profile and more risky research that may endanger the ecological foundation of the area even more.

The formation of this panel comes about it seems in part due to two separate situations. One being the finding of an alien flatworm species in the Loch, that may have been inadvertently brought there by researchers. Similar cases of foreign organisms are present throughout the world, for example the zebra mussels in North America that wreck havoc in the waterways especially in Lake Champlain, home of Champ, and other large water bodies. The second reason seems tied to the allowance of the Scottish Natural Heritage allowing for the Swedish researcher Jan Sundberg, and his team, to place traps/cages in the water of the Loch in an attempt to obtain biological samples of Nessie.

Based off of the news reports, as Scottish Natural Heritage did not respond back to any postal, e-mail, fax or telephone messages, the panel will meet in August 2001 to begin draft procedures. The panel it seems is to be made up of representatives from the Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Loch Ness Project, Ness River Fishing Board and the Highland Council. Representatives from research organizations such as the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club and solo researchers like Steve Feltham have at present not been approached by the Scottish Natural Heritage for contributions or suggestions. Even Jan Sundberg, when questioned about the proposed panel knew nothing about it at the time, and his research team was supposedly part of the reason for the panel creation.

Time will tell whether this new panel will fly or not. But researchers, at least those locally, need to be involved in the decision. They understand the research and history of the research, and as such can be of invaluable information and benefit to the proposed panel.

Sources:

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Campbell, Gary, Personal Communication, January 8, 2001
Roos, John, New Beastie Brings Rules for Loch Ness, *The Scotsman*, January 5, 2001
Sundberg, Jan, Personal Communication, January 6, 2001
Sundberg, Jan, Personal Communication, January 7, 2001
Watson-Smyth, Kate, Heritage Panel Rules on How to Hunt for Nessie, *The Independent*, January 5, 2001
Nessie Protection Plan Drawn Up, *BBC Online*, January 4, 2001

News Notes: Vizcacha Rats

In a recent Occasional Paper of the Museum of Texas Tech University two new genera of rodent are described. These rodents, called the golden vizcacha rat and the chalchalero vizcacha rat were found in the Catamarca province of Argentina in 1999 and 2000 respectively. Interestingly, part of what led up to these animals was the known find of a rodent from another region of Argentine in the mid-twentieth century. As this rat was found in a valley with salt-flats, it was theorized that other valleys with these flats might harbor more of the same species or new ones altogether. Their discoverers theorize that the rodents share a common ancestor, but have specialized themselves to their unique habitats and geographic isolations.

Sources:

Mares, Michael, Braun, Janet, Barquez, Ruben and Diaz, Monica, Two New Genera and Species of Halophytic Desert Mammals from Isolated Salt Flats in Argentina, *Occasional Paper 203 of the Museum of Texas Tech University*, 2000
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News Notes: Sodwana Bay Coelacanth

On October 28, 2000 in Sodwana Bay (a bay in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) three men made an amazing find. These men, Pieter Venter, Peter Timm and Etienne Roux, were not looking to find anything, they were just pleasure divers in an area renown for its diving delights. The men made a deep dive to over 300 feet, and what should Venter see but a large fish, a coelacanth. The coelacanth is a well known animal to zoologists and lay-person alike, as it is renowned for being the ultimate "living fossil." The men, knowing what they had seen was not supposed to be there returned with a small group, calling themselves the *SA Coelacanth Expedition 2000*, on November 26, 2000.

Subsequent dives, each over 300 feet in depth, found a small group of the animals. On November 27, 2000 Gilbert Gunn, Christo Serfontein, Pieter Venter and Dennis Harding recorded on film a group of coelacanths at a depth of 350 feet after only 12 minutes of an allocated 15 minutes of bottom dive time. Using various mixes of gases the divers were able to obtain 134 minutes total of dive time from diving to rising and a set amount of bottom time. However, problems befell the party, one man (Christo Serfontein) went unconscious after the filming, in aid of his fellow diver Dennis Harding dragged the man to the surface. At the surface Harding made comments about pain in his body, and died shortly thereafter of an embolism. Although a tragedy comes with this discovery, it nonetheless makes an important statement as to the endeavors of men.

There are now three known groups then of coelacanth, the original discovered group from the Comoro Islands, the Indonesian group discovered a couple years ago and now the Sodwana Bay group. Although further study as to the lineage and grouping of this third group is still needed, and hope is that more groups of these fish are found throughout the world.

Sources:

www.dinofish.com

Living Fossils Discovered off South Africa Coast, *Reuters*, December 1, 2000

Fossil Fish in Dramatic Sighting, *BBC Online*, December 1, 2000

Tragedy Mars Historic Discovery, *Panafrican News Agency*, December 1, 2000

News Notes: Irish Elk Late Survival

In what may seem a compliment to cryptozoological research there is now official scientific data that the Irish elk, *Megaloceros giganteus*, survived at least 1500 years longer than previously thought. This animal, more truly a deer than elk, was the largest deer known with antlers of nearly 12 feet in size it would have been a truly magnificent animal to behold. Ranging through Europe the animals thrived during the Ice Age in the Pleistocene, this was the time of the so-called mega-fauna that lived throughout the world and included such animals as the giant ground sloths, mammoths, saber-tooth cats and so forth.

Based on radiocarbon accelerator mass spectroscopic (AMS) dating from samples taken from the Isle of Man (in the Irish Sea between Ireland and Britain) survival of the species until 9225 (+/-85) years ago was shown. Additional tests from an antler found in the River Cree in Scotland showed survival of the Irish elk on the mainland to 9430 (+/-65) years ago. These dates are un-calibrated, and as such the actual dates may fall slightly lower or slightly higher than the ones listed here. Likewise the Isle of Man sample dated to 9225 years ago showed a significant size difference than the normal population of Irish elk, to the degree of over two standard deviations.

Similar shrinkage of animal sizes has been seen in late survival mega-fauna species, such as the Wrangel Island mammoths. Wrangel Island is the island located at the border of the Chukchi Sea and East-Siberian Sea and situated roughly 85 miles off the coast of Siberia. It was here that samples were dated using a varied method from around 2000 years to 3500 years ago, a substantial late survival wherein elsewhere in the world the dates were from 9000 years and up. These tests showed that a population of mammoths, smaller in size than the standard mainland form, lived until relatively recent times.

These examples of later survival of species show that based on fossil records the know demise of a species is not always set in stone. These tests also aid in the research of various cryptozoologists who have theorized that such animals did survive latter than acknowledged based on testimonial and circumstantial evidence.

Sources:

Gonzalez, Silvia, Kitchener, Andrew and Lister, Adrian, Survival of the Irish Elk into the Holocene, *Nature* 405, June 15, 2000

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News Notes: Dracula Ants

The first complete colony of "Dracula" ants has been found in Madagascar. This group of ants, originally described in 1993, offers interesting connections to both the ant and wasp families that are not seen in other species. Additionally these ants have different anatomical characteristics than more modern ants, showing a more ancient history. For example there is but one joint connection between the thorax and abdomen, wherein in modern ants there are either two or three joints. This single jointing is more in tune with the wasp family than modern ants. Also of grisly interest is of the feeding habits of the ants, they will actually feed on the "blood" (actually called hemolymph) of their own larvae, they do not kill the larvae, only "suck their blood," hence the name "Dracula" ants. Further study is to be done to show how these ants relate to the development of the modern ant colonies.

Sources:

"Dracula Ants" May be Key Evolutionary Link, *Reuters*, January 9, 2001

Grimaldi, David, Agosti, Donat, Carpenter, James, New and Rediscovered Primitive Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) in Cretaceous Amber from New Jersey, and Their Phylogenetic Relationships, *American Museum Novitates* 3208, October 1997

Ward, P. S. Adetomyrma, an enigmatic new ant genus from Madagascar (Hymenoptera: Formicidae), and its implications for ant phylogeny. *Systematic Entomology* Vol. 19, 1994

News Notes: Gunnison sage-grouse is a Different Species

Research conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey, University of Denver, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Western State College of Colorado and the Colorado State University show that the Gunnison sage-grouse is a separate species than the Greater sage-grouse, of which it was grouped. Tests on the genetic structure showed that gene flows from the two sage-grouse groups was non-existent, hence the two are distantly related but not of the same current genetic make-up. The research also showed that the Gunnison sage-grouse's populations were isolated genetically, meaning breeding was retained with small numbers, a condition that can and has led to population extinction. Protection plans are underway to help the survival of the new species, deemed *Centrocercus minimus*. General morphological examinations also hinted at the population difference prior to the genetic testing.

Sources:

USGS Press Release December 7, 2000

Young, J. R., Braun, C. E., Oyler-McCance, S. J., Hupp, J. W., and T. W. Quinn. A new species of Sage-Grouse from Southwestern Colorado. *Wilson Bulletin* Vol. 112, No. 4, 2000

Oyler-McCance S.J., N. W. Kahn, K. P. Burnham, C. E. Braun and T. W. Quinn. A population genetic comparison of large- and small-bodied Sage Grouse in Colorado using microsatellite and mitochondrial DNA markers. *Molecular Ecology* 8, 1999

News Notes: Thailand Mammoths?

In Thailand's Omkoi district a group of elephants have been seen. These elephants were first seen and documented via photographs and film in 1984 by Princess Rangsrinopadorn Yukol while performing a forestry survey from helicopter, but it was the sighting of a group of conservationists of these animals that made the Princess come forth. According to news reports the Princess described the animals as large and had visible hair that moved as they ran. Although it sounds like an animal of mysterious origins, it may not be at all as some elephant researchers who have seen the pictures (which are blurry) describe the animal as a known species of elephant and nothing sensational at all. Others in the area know of the herd, for example district chief Samarn Prangeacharakorn stated that the animals did exist, and were left alone as they were wild.

Indeed on December 6, 2000 two teams of researchers, including elephant researcher, the princess, forestry officials and media representatives set off from Chiang Mai and planned on being in the area of the animals within a few days. However, on December 7, 2000 the Royal Forestry Department of Thailand requested all searches be stopped, and the two teams honored the request, for fear of security problems.

Further expeditions would be carried out by the Royal Forestry Department, however no such expedition has to date been launched. It appears that political turmoil surrounding the situation may be throwing problems into it and delays in searches and answers may be a while in the waiting.

Sources:

Bai-Ngern, Kamol, Teams Tracking Hairy Tuskers, *The Nation*, December 7, 2000

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Yaowalert, Hannarong, Personal Communication, December 9, 2000

Superman vs. The Cryptids

Cryptozoological Themes in the Cartoons of the 1940's

By Gary S. Mangiacopra¹ and Dr. Dwight G. Smith²

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Look!
Up in the sky!
Is it a bird?
Is it a plane?
It's superm ... a cryptid?!?!

Children cartoons with a cryptozoological topic are a rarity dimly remembered from the golden age of movie theater cartoons from the late 1930s to the late 1950s, when economic cutbacks and the need to push the paying audience out faster from the theater by eliminating these in-between-movie-fillers. This resulted in many cartoon studios to go out of business or turn to producing television cartoons on much tighter budgets and a shorter production time, resulting in a cruder stick form of animation on an assembly line basis.

During the prolific 1940s the major studios were producing some of their best cartoon features series. From Warner Brothers' came Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck; Disney had Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck; M.G.M. for Tom and Jerry; and 20th Century Fox's Mighty Mouse and Heckle and Jeckle. Yet, there is one theater cartoon series that is considered by film buffs to stand above all others for its refined animation during its brief nearly three years of cartoon production; Paramount Studio's SUPERMAN cartoon series produced by the Max Fleischer studios. Best known for their 1930s "risqu  " Betty Boop black and white cartoon series which was eventually destroyed by the growing nationwide censorship laws, they were supplemented by the late 1930s of the growing popularity of Popeye, the sailor man cartoon series.

During the Depression Decade, a superhero came into prominence of the minds of the children of America, that of the introduction in 1938 of SUPERMAN by Action Comics. This comic book hero quickly became extremely profitable for the company, and a well known cult figure to the general public, so a theater cartoon series was bound to follow.

By 1941, both Republic Studios and Paramount were trying to secure rights to the children comic book hero, SUPERMAN for a proposed cartoon series. Republic Studios, best known for their Westerns starring Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, lost their bid for the rights to produce a SUPERMAN cartoon series. Leaving one to wonder how such a cartoon series would have fared under a much limited production budget as this studio would have allowed. Fortunately, Paramount Studios won the SUPERMAN rights, which were given to the Fleischer cartoon studio to make. This studio, which was producing the Popeye cartoons, asked for an outrage at that time financial budget for each cartoon of the SUPERMAN series, \$100,000 to produce each

cartoon. Instead of the usual \$10,000 or less budget that a typical early 1940s cartoon would be produce for by the studios. The Fleischer Studio demanded this ten times than normal budget for this series and was given it by Paramount. With the final results shown on the movie theater screens with the best stylized and detailed cartoon animation and storyline that was presented in the films about seven minute running time. Fleischer Studios had the two cartoonist originators of SUPERMAN, Jerome Segal and Joe Schuster come to their studio and help their animators with the animation style that was almost identical to the style of the comic book drawings then being produced monthly by Action Comics. In all a total of 17 SUPERMAN cartoons were made during its three year run before being discontinued due to costs and the effects of World War II on the movie studios.

Of the SUPERMAN cartoon series, the story lines that began in 1941 and continued into 1942 had the best and diversified stories. After 1942 and instigated by the nations of Japan and Germany declaring war on the United States the SUPERMAN story lines concentrated on foreign spies in other lands and American saboteurs and became more static due to patriotic demand required by this world war.

Of the 17 SUPERMAN cartoons in this series, three had a strong cryptozoological component in their story line. Of the three each is listed below with an synopsis of its Cryptozoological story line:

TERROR ON THE MIDWAY -

Synopsis: Clark Kent and Lois Lane attend a circus that comes to Metropolis. The circus main attraction is the largest gorilla in captivity, “a la King Kong”. The gorilla escapes and wrecks havoc in the circus while Lois Lane tries to photograph it. The gorilla abducts her and Superman comes and rescues her and safely returns the gorilla to its cage. This has the classic 1940s stereotype mentality that symbolized the gorilla as the primordial beast that comes out to abduct helpless females of the human species. Though the story line is not completely Cryptozoological its elements of the gigantic size of the gorilla falls within the realm of this topic.

THE ARCTIC GIANT:

Synopsis: A truly genuine Cryptozoological story line with the wonderful science-fiction clichés abound within. An American scientific expedition in Russian Siberia icelands discovers a prehistoric dinosaur carcass frozen in ice. The frozen carcass is dug out and transported by cargo ship to the Metropolis Science Museum. There in that city. Perry White of the *Daily Planet* newspaper receives a telephone call informing him that the dinosaur in the ice may still be alive, in a frozen kind of suspended animation. He sends Clark and Lois to the Museum that houses the enormous dinosaur in the block of ice. While there the refrigeration generators that kept the block of ice frozen breaks down. The generator stops and the ice block starts to melt rapidly, ultimately freeing the encased frozen dinosaur, which is in fact still alive. Escaping from his frozen confines, the dinosaur in typical cliché fashion wrecks havoc in the streets of Metropolis. Kent changes to Superman to stop this carnage saving Lois from being eaten by the dinosaur. Superman then captures the dinosaur and deposits it in the Metropolis Zoo where it lives a long and safe life — and becomes a tourist attraction!

UNDERGROUND WORLD

Synopsis: The third in this cryptozoological cartoon series is considered by many cartoon film bluffs to be the best one of the 17 SUPERMAN animation features. Combining elements of Cryptozoology, lost mysterious civilization in the manner of H. Rider Haggard's classic "She," and pure nerve-rattling escapist adventure. A cartoon whose film running time should have been double to truly justify all of these elements together.

Perry White, editor of the *Daily Planet*, is asked to finance an expedition to further explore a series of underground caves, called the Henderson Caverns, that were discovered by his father some 40 years earlier. But Henderson explains that his father had also disappeared when he went to further explore these underground caverns. Henderson, who had recently discovered his father's lost maps that indicate the possible existence of additional unexplored caverns at the end of the known ones asks White to fund further investigations. Editor Perry agreed provided he gets the exclusive publishing rights to their expedition. Clark and Lois are assigned to be the news reporters to go with Henderson.

Arriving at the mouth of the underground caverns, Henderson and Lois go ahead in a float boat to the farthest known reaches of the series of caverns. While Clark readies a second boat to soon follow them. Reaching the end of the last of the explored caverns, which has a waterfall, the boat, containing explosives for blasting, gets away from them and explodes under the waterfall. At the base camp outside the caverns Clark hears the explosion and goes to help them. It is found that Henderson and Lois have been captured by a lost race of flying spear-holding eaglemen! These prove to be bird humanoid shaped flying creatures with a civilization that had developed while underground in the caverns. Both Henderson and Lois see a metal statue of a human being and realize that it is the image of Henderson's father who had disappeared four decades earlier. But, they are confused as to why the eaglemen would have a statue of Henderson's father adorning the cavern wall over the eaglemen's rulers throne? They quickly comprehend the meaning of the stature's existence, when they are tied together and the ground opens up, revealing a enormous cauldron of molten metal!. They are to be dipped into the metal to become living human statues as punishment for being intruders into the eaglemen's underground realm (as was done to Henderson's father)! Clark reaches them and sees this is a job for Superman, but just as he changes into his alter ego, he is attack by a squad of eaglemen. Breaking free, Superman swoops down and rescues Lois and Henderson before they plunge into the molten metal bath. Flying to the cavern opening that was open by the accidental blast, Superman flings dynamite into the opening just as the eaglemen are about to reach it, sealing them in their underground world.

Clark and Lois are back in editor Perry's office. Perry finishes reading their manuscript of their underground adventure, and then sets the manuscript on fire with a match. Explaining with the classic line, "*But no one would ever believe it.*" Leaving the eaglemen alone and undisturbed in their underground civilization same from further intrusions by mankind.

Editors Note:

The article your just read deals with a little acknowledged part of Cryptozoology and its cultural impact of humankind. In a previous issue Mangiacopra and Dr. Smith dealt with radio stories dealing with cryptozoological themes, and with this animation view the feeling of a better cultural understanding can be gleamed. Although the article originally had the synopsis for all of these Superman cartoons, only those with a connection to Cryptozoology have been printed here. The editor has on record the original manuscript for this article if anyone would like to see the remaining synopsis of the cartoon stories.

Hairy *Maeroero*

By Craig Heinselman

North America, South America, Asia, Europe, Africa, every continent (aside from Antarctica) has stories of hairy bipedal creatures from them. We know of many of these creatures these days through the research into such possible creatures as Sasquatch, Yeti, Yowie, Alma, Yeren, Orang-Pendek, and so forth. But, among these endless local and worldwide names there exists the stories of a hairy creature from the most unlikely of places, New Zealand.

New Zealand is perhaps the last place one would expect to find stories of hairy bipeds, or homins to use Dmitri Bayanov's word for such creatures as Hominology deals with. Due to its isolation massive avian outpourings populated the local fauna and not mammalian life forms. Indeed there are no known native mammals (note the word known, as conjunction can be applied in the case of the waitoreke and perhaps the *Maeroero*) from New Zealand. The bats and pinnipeds came by air and water, and settlers and the Maori brought rats, dogs, sheep and such. The only exception may be early monotreme animals as fossil finds from elsewhere indicate early forms of these animals were present at the time New Zealand separated from the other land masses. Yet, from these islands come the stories of a hairy creature, very man-like in appearances, a creature called the *Moehau*, *Maeroero*, or *Maero*.

The Maoris, the natives of New Zealand, tell of canoes arriving in what is now called New Zealand in a time before history. These canoes were named *Waka-orurea* and *Waka-atua*, and they each landed in a different area. For example the *Waka-atua* landed on the South Island, and the people of the canoe, *Pouakai*, *Pukutuaru*, *T Karara-huarau*, and *Kopuwai*, have become legendary giants. Wherein the chiefs in the *Waka-orurea*, *Te Potiki-tautahi* and *Huruhurumanu*, settled in what is now Christchurch, the region being called then *Whenua-o-te-potiji-tautahi* whilst the area to the west being called *Whenua-o-huruhuru-manu*. However, a third canoe is mentioned at times and is known as *Waka-huruhuru-manu*, and on this canoe the *Maeroero* were brought.

The *Maeroero* or *Maero* were the wild men of the woods, or so the Maori called the creatures when early researchers in the folklore and culture of the Maori started to learn of the peoples way of life. These creatures were described as hairy people with bony fingers that would stab their prey with the fingers. They were a solitary people, but would kidnap people if given the chance. They lived throughout the South Island, but especially in the mountain areas where they were known as the *Maeroero*, whilst in the interior of the island the word *Maero* was used for them. It appears that as the Maori came to the land the *Maero* were pushed further into the hills and mountainous areas of the land.

At this stage it should be remembered that like many cultures the Maori had a strong mythology to their past, which as was touched on briefly with the mention of the canoes arriving before history can aid in describing how various areas of New Zealand formed. For example legend has it that Lake Wakatipu was formed by the burning of a giant and Lake Waikaremoana was formed by the struggling of *Haumapuhia* as she fought her way to the sea as a water spirit (*taniwha*). Amongst these stories of the Maori past are the traditional monster style stories as are found in other area of the world, though unique to the Maori culture. We have the story of *Muturangi* a form of giant octopus, the *Moko-hiku-waru* reptilian creature, and the fairy people *Turehu* to name but a few. All these stories make up the culture of the Maori and show a mingling of fanciful and reality based stories, much the same as American culture has the tale of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox and our other "tall-tales."

The *Maeroero* story is of particular interest in the dealing of the creatures reported today, or recently, as Hairy Moehau. This interest is two part, namely the tying of the story to the ancient canoe arrivals before history of the Maori and secondly as it gives a general overview of the ideas of the Maori as to what the *Maeroero* were. They were the wild men of the land, savage creatures that would attack and spear you with their bony fingers. They were evil and feared. As has been seen in other cultures, what is feared is often embellished. Were the *Maeroero* truly a savage race of wild people, or were they a true mystery group of homins, or were they simply a racial memory of known animals from the Maori's predecessors native lands off of New Zealand.

To complicated matters even more there is a distinct lack of reports from prior to the early twentieth century, which makes one wonder if the *Maeroero* was an actual flesh and blood creature where did it go. Explorers and settlers stories seem to omit tales of these creatures, but references to New Zealand's other cryptozoological mysteries such as the *Waitoreke* and living moas are dealt with. Although these stories of the *Maeroero* may be there, they have yet to come to the surface in any number. More so, the matter in the mid-twentieth century further becomes complicated by a mixing of stories of red haired people found in a cave on Mount Moehau, the so called Coromandel Man. Based on Mount Moehau the more common name for the *Maeroero* also seems to have arose, the "Hairy Moehau." These red haired people were found in the Mount Moehau cave, two separate caves in fact each containing different sized people.

Much like reports of little people and giant people found in caves throughout the world, the case of the Coromandel Man has little to back it up. There is a lack of scientific examinations and there is a lack of proof of actual documented finds of these caves, at least in the New Zealand instance. Do we see a pattern of nothingness forming here? Likewise of confusing interest is the connection of an escaped gorilla from a ship moored off the coast of Wai Aro. The gorilla apparently got to shore and was seen, since that time (in the mid 1920's) the upsurge of Hairy Moehau stories has begun. Even more to the point the *Maeroero* was reported by the Maori as being from the South Island, whilst the Coromandel Man stories and Mount Moehau are from the North Island, where such stories are sufficiently lacking from the Maori reports!

In *The Taranaki Daily News* from February 5, 1952 a report of a sighting on the Coromandel Peninsula is recounted. The story deals with two pig hunters, Douglas Tainvhana and Roy Norman, who saw a fleeting image of a gorilla or hairy-man running along a track. Additionally mentioned in the account is the finding of a cave by an H. Beazley that contained evidence of a creature, or man, living in a primitive lifestyle. A recent report even details the killing of an ape-like creature in New Zealand during the 1930's, however the witness could not even say where in New Zealand such an occurrence has taken place as she was a small child at the time and very frightened.

Below are a few of the incidents reported dealing with the *Maeroero*..

1850's, A man reports being attacked by a large hairy creature in the Fiordland region of South Island.

1900 - 1905, An immigrant reports seeing a tall greyish creature covered with hair eating vegetables taken from his garden on the Coromandel Peninsula.

1930's, Jane Wilcox reported her father and uncles killing an "ape-like" creature.

1940's, A family reports seeing a hairy bipedal creature near Mount Moehau.

- 1947, A small group of hunters recall seeing two hairy creatures in the area of Dusky Sound.
- 1952, Douglas Tainvhana and Roy Norman report a glimpse of a creature on the Coromandel Peninsula.
- 1952, H. Beazley reports finding a cave housing a primitive living inhabitant
- 1963, Carl McNeil reports seeing an ape-like creature running along a track bed on the Coromandel Peninsula.
- 1969, Vera Marshall reports seeing a gorilla like creature on the Coromandel Peninsula.
- 1969, J.P. Grey organizes an expedition to search for the “Hairy Moehau.”
- 1970, County Councillor J. Reddy tells researcher Robyn Gosset that the “Hairy Moehau” was an exaggeration started from a joke.
- 1970, Bob Grey tells researcher Robyn Gosset that the term “Moehau Monster” comes from a name given to a Yankee steam hauler that was utilized for logging.
- 1974, Tracks are reportedly found but not photographed from the Dusky Sound area.
- 1980-1982, An Australian and Waikato radio station mount separate expeditions to find the creature. No results were found.
- 1985, Tracks and odd cries are reported from the Coromandel Peninsula.
- 1991, Lake Mahinapua pub owner Les Lisle reports a man-ape raiding his vegetable patch. He also is planning on arranging tourist flights to get the opportunity to see one.
- 1994, Australian Rex Gilroy mounts an expedition to find the creature.
- 1993, Several naked human-like tracks are found near Lake Manapouri.
- 1998, A man reports seeing an unusually large and hairy man outside of Christchurch. Oversize human-like tracks are found, but not photographed.

A pattern does appear to show in these few accounts, both published and unpublished that this researcher has uncovered thus far. The creature reported, if actually a creature and not a creation of the imagination or public foolhardy, is of a passive and non-aggressive being (except for the report from the 1850's). It does not seek out people, but rather seems to run from people as if to avoid contact altogether. This contradicts the Maori story of a wild people who were dangerous to humans. Even more problematic still are the number of reports from New Zealand's North Island, not traditionally part of the Maeroero habitat according to the Maori people.

If such a creature is still present in New Zealand it would be an interesting discovery due to New Zealand's long geographic isolation. How would such a creature get there? How did it survive for so long? If the creature was, or is, a member of a breeding population of escaped gorillas, how then did the gorillas in enough numbers escape?

The final solution is to look at the stories of the Maori. Although one can always hope for an actual homin living in New Zealand, the chances of it being there in the first place are slim, but not non-existent, after all we know introduced moose from North America survived in the Fiordland until very recently and possibly still today. The Maori used symbolism and naturalism as part of their key in their stories and native histories. As such one must ask the question, what then was the Maeroero? And then likewise one must ask the modern New Zealander's are the stories of Coromandel Man and the "Hairy Moehau" or "Moehau Monster" simply good old tales to scare the children with at night and increase the pocket books of the parents?



The Map to the left shows both the North and South Islands of New Zealand. Note the Coromandel Peninsula is on the North Island whilst the Fiordland area is on the South Island.

Map Used under the Ownership
Rights of the Software, *Rand McNally*
New Millennium World Atlas Deluxe.
Copyright to map is held by Rand McNally.

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Reviews

America's Loch Ness Monsters

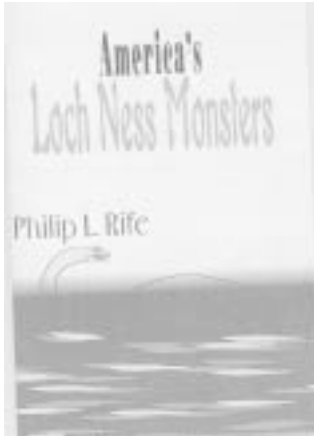
Author: Philip L. Rife

ISBN 0-595-12320-1

IUniverse.com, Inc. Lincoln, Nebraska, 2000, 118 pages, \$9.95



Available through amazon.com and other online bookstores.



Take as a whole picture Rife's book is an interesting read, but far from original in its construction. The reader is presented with case examples of water cryptids from North America, or as the author calls them "... *home-grown Loch Ness Monsters...*". The concept is fine, having been done numerous times before, but whereas many of these previous case studies have listed and shown some original research, Rife's book lacks originality in research.

Much of the book could have been written without the aid of any research texts or follow-up, strictly relying on Internet based ideas and reports. And as such the authenticity of many of the accounts comes into question, as Rife does not list where these Internet based tales come from, only a generic "*internet posting*" comment in the Notes - Sources end section of the book. One such example is the following quotation taken from page 9 of the book:

"The neighboring state of New Hampshire is not without its own legends of lake monsters. One involves Dublin Lake (near Keene). According to the story, a skindiver who'd set out to explore the lake's underwater caverns in the early 1980s emerged badly shaken and mumbling something about "monsters." A similar story is associated with nearby Spofford Lake. Around the same time as the alleged incident in Dublin Lake, another skindiver was reportedly searching the bottom of Spofford Lake when he decided to rest on a log. Lo and behold the "log" suddenly comes to life and reveals itself to be a 20-foot-long, gray snake-or eel-like creature that quickly swims off. (22)"

First off the source listed for this account (number 22 in the Notes-Sources section of book) is an ibid to an Internet posting. What posting? Who posted? Being a New Hampshire resident and hearing these stories word of mouth I can state emphatically that these two stories are based on nothing! The locals around the lake have not heard of any of it, and this is based on over 50 interviews with these folks over a course of several months! The only hard reference to the stories appears on the Internet. Are we to take such reports at face value without hard sources or harder researcher, the answer should be NO!. Afterall Rife just had to refer to reference sections on several lake creature books to see Moore Lake (actually Moore Reservoir now) in New Hampshire did have a documented and researched "creature" sighting in 1968, although more fortean related than cryptozoological, it is a documented case with hard references!

Rife's book isn't all that bad. It is a quick and easy to read book that could be used for someone just starting to enter the field of research. But, as for hard evidence and hard research, this book lacks it substantially.

Bigfoot Sightings of East Central Alabama (Chambers, Lee, Randolph & Tallapoosa Co.)

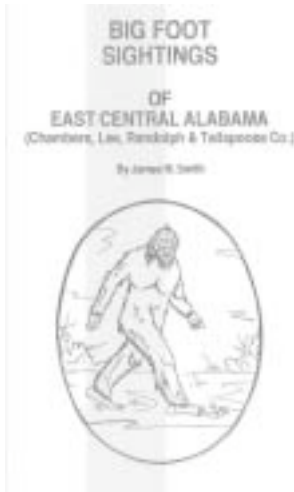
Author: James M. Smith

ISBN - N/A

Self Published, Wadley, Alabama, 47 (plus 5 note pages), \$10.00

☆☆☆

Available through James Smith directly at P.O. Box 6, Wadley, Alabama, 36276-0006.



Researchers of Hominology hear of encounters and reports of Bigfoot type creatures from all over the country. In the United States many stories come from the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest (especially areas like Ohio) as well as Florida for its "Skunk Ape." However, other parts of the country are relatively "virgin" in regards to information. Part of this may be due to diminished numbers of researchers in those particular areas, and also for a less density of Homin populations in those areas (assuming such creatures exist for this point to be made).

What Smith has presented is original research from four counties of Alabama, a state not high on the Hominology researchers list of "hot spots." Smith's book is not comprehensive, but what it does offer is the chance for an interested research to get an idea of the Alabama country and how it a) dealt with reports of Bigfoot (as well as UFO) reports, b) how the reports vary in that geographic area. The reader is introduced to such curious creatures then as the *Wampus* (or *Waupus* and *Waupus Cat*) and the school house sitting Bigfoot. Even though at first sight these are slightly humorous names, they are presented in a straightforward and serious fashion with no obvious embellishments, as can be seen in the following excerpt from page 24:

"The Bigfoot walked at a normal pace toward the police car as if he belonged there. Startled by the creature and not caring to encounter it alone, the policeman sped to town. After hearing of another sighting several people returned to the church yard with him to again search for the Bigfoot. This search lasted about two hours and as seemed to always be the case, nothing was ever found."

Although most of the book deals with Alabama reports, there are a few exceptions. These seem perhaps a bit out of place, but as they are from Smith's own research they do have a place in his book. The first "out of place" item is Chapter 2 of the book Biblical Bigfoot? In which a interpretation of various verses from the Bible are evaluated as possible Bigfoot style creatures, in particular the stories dealing with Esau and the book of Genesis. Smith emphatically states though that:

"Everyone has their own opinions and beliefs. The following is simply one possibility and in no way considered provable fact."

The other out of place item is a touching in of a theory of UFO connection. Now, Smith just touches on this as he also has researched into the UFO phenomenon.

In its entirety Smith created an enjoyable book, that is put together decently for a self-published tome. That when read gives one the idea and feel for the reports and stories from the geographic region.

How to Cook a Bigfoot

Author: Theata Iona Crowe

ISBN - N/A

Western Bigfoot Society Publishing Company, Hillsboro, Oregon, 2000, 56 Recipes ☆☆☆☆

Contact the Western Bigfoot Society at 225 N.E. 30th Avenue, Hillsboro, Oregon, 97124 or e-mail raycrowe@aol.com for more information on availability. Also check with Ray Crowe about his fictional novel Shaman from the East also published by the Western Bigfoot Society Publishing Company in 2000. Although not directly cryptozoological related, it does have a good anthropological and historical story contained within.



It is indeed a rarity when such a novel item as Mrs. Theata Crowe's book comes about. Filled with recipes all rearranged around the theme of Hominology with such titles as:

Creamed Dried Bigfoot in White Sauce

Spiced Yeti

Abominable Potato Salad

Yeti Spaghetti

Ground Woduwasa in Gravy

Chili Con Carne with Bigfoot

Bigfoot Meat Balls

And of course for non-Bigfoot eaters, there is the *Loch Ness Monster Casserole*.

The concept of the book is indeed unique and coupled with drawings by various people on the corresponding page to a recipe, one is treated to a visual as well as guttural treat. And for the added treat, there are little snippets of humor thrown in:

"To dry a Bigfoot, try using very rough towels...if they resist, give 'em a snap!"

"If Bigfoot resists castration, its best usually to just...run like hell!"

What more can one say, about the book but bon-appetite.



Cover of Ray Crowe's novel Shaman from the East
Contact Ray Crowe for availability information.

Big Footage: A History of Claims for the Sasquatch on Film

Author: Mike Quast

ISBN - N/A

Self Published, Moorhead, Minnesota, 2001, 132 Pages, \$18.00

☆☆☆☆

Order directly from Mike Quast for \$18.00 at 1302 19 1/2 St. S. #20, Moorhead, Minnesota, 56560



Mike Quast has presented several previous self-published books on Bigfoot in the past, including The Sasquatch in Minnesota, Creatures of the North: The New Minnesota Sasquatch Encounters, and a revised The Sasquatch in Minnesota (1990, 1991 and 1996 respectively). Likewise Quast ran the newsletter *Sasquatch Report* from 1990 to 1997. In that time he has gained the respect of many folks involved with Bigfoot research, and his newest book here being reviewed is indeed an intriguing addition to the library of anyone serious about reported images of Bigfoot (and related Homins).

To avoid copyright problems, the book is filled with Quast's own drawings based off of the actual images under consideration. Although they look remarkably like traces of the images themselves, certain aspects are different creating stylized artistic renditions. Coupled with evaluations of many of the images from researchers as well as Quast himself, the book offers a virtual tour of the filmography of Hominology.

Touched on within this work are such well known images as the Patterson-Gimlin 1967 Bluff Creek film from California (including a history and analysis of various discounting of the film and theories regarding the film), Dave Shelay's Skunk Ape images, the 1998 Internet film of "Bigfoot Killing a Cat", the Wild Creek Photo, and the Redwood's Image (yes, the one that had a *Playboy* Playmate as a witness). Each of these, a total of 35 cases are looked at and analyzed to various degrees. An additional "*Gallery of the Missing*" details 39 cases where the images are unknown as to location and in some cases origins or wherein the copyright holders would not allow for a graphic representation of their film. Yet another section of the book details the stories of Paul Freeman, Ray Wallace, and Ivan Marx.

Quast has tried to remain as unbiased as possible in evaluating the cases, he uses a classification system as follows from page 20:

"In some of the cases, fairly sound identifications have been made. Others remain open to interpretation, and the word "inconclusive" will appear often in the evaluations given here. These evaluations are my own, and readers are free to make their own judgments.

My categories of evaluations are as follows:

TENTATIVE ACCEPTANCE - Most likely a sasquatch.

COMMON ANIMAL - A known animal misidentified as a sasquatch

NATURAL FORMATION - An inanimate object misidentified as sasquatch

HOAX - Deliberate fakery; inanimate objects or costumed human portraying sasquatch

INCONCLUSIVE - Not of good quality and/or not enough information to make a firm evaluation.

A sixth category would be “DEFINITIVE EVIDENCE,” but I feel the 1967 Patterson film already discussed is the only example so far worthy of such a label.”

It can be seen then from Quast’s initial classification system that he does not accept all images as genuine, nor as proof positive of a real creature, except in the case of the Patterson-Gimlin creature. This reviewer ran the numbers of the classified cases (35 plus 3 “special cases” deemed hoaxes by Quast) and came up with the following numbers. Note, the reviewer may have the counts wrong from the book as to cases evaluated, but in any case the demonstration is to show how the cases were evaluated and statistically should still demonstrate a correct ratio even with some error in initial accumulations):

<i>TENTATIVE ACCEPTANCE</i>	<i>5 cases</i>	<i>total 13.16%</i>
<i>COMMON ANIMAL</i>	<i>3 cases</i>	<i>total 7.89%</i>
<i>NATURAL FORMATION</i>	<i>2 cases</i>	<i>total 5.26%</i>
<i>HOAX</i>	<i>11 cases</i>	<i>total 28.95%</i>
<i>INCONCLUSIVE</i>	<i>16 cases</i>	<i>total 42.11%</i>
<i>DEFINITIVE EVIDENCE</i>	<i>1 case</i>	<i>total 2.63%</i>

In total then 84.21% of the cases evaluated out of 38 were deemed anything except for *Tentative Acceptance* or *Definitive Evidence*, while only 15.79% were even marginally given a *Tentative Acceptance* or *Definitive Evidence*. One can see then based off the evaluations of Quast that he has been very forgiving in his evaluations, and looking at each case as a separate individual. For that Quast should be given a great deal of credit for giving for the most part an even and unbiased collection of filmography reviews. Quast has done an excellent job of collecting the films and images, and turning them into segmented evaluations. The book is a testament to hard work and research, and should become a handy reference guide to researchers in the future.

Reviewers Sought!!!!



Anyone interested in reviewing one of these books to the left?

They are from left to right:

Riesenkraken und Tigerwolfe by Lothar Frenz (Rowohlt, Berlin, 2000), Sauvages et Velus by Jean Roche (Editions Exergue, Chambéry, 2000), Animaux Mystérieux and Monstres Aquatiques by Jean-Paul Ronecker (Pardes, Puisseaux, 2000)

Caverns, Cauldrons and Concealed Creatures

Author: Wm. Michael Mott

ISBN - N/A

Hidden Mysteries, Yoakum, Texas, 2000, 127 Pages, \$21.95 for book, \$17.95 for CD ☆

Order www.hiddenmysteries.com or write to Hidden Mysteries at PO Box 950 Yoakum, Texas, 77995. Phone 361-293-7698. Available in print and on disk.



Undeniably this has to be one of the oddest books in some time. Don't get me wrong, I love the "Hollow Earth" and underground society stories and theories like Lena Ellen Rudder's *King of the World*, Eric Norman's *The Under-People*, Raymond Bernard's classic *The Hollow Earth*, Richard Shaver's *I Remember Lemuria* and David Hatcher Childress' *Lost Continents & The Hollow Earth*. These are guilty pleasures of a fascination with early fictional stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs and Jules Verne as well as modern stories like James Rollins' *Subterranean*. However, Mott has gone even further by combining UFO's, cryptozoology, ancient civilizations and alien structures and other esoteric things to a new coming of Jesus Christ and the revelation of "... shadowy "unseen empires..."."

Mott uses facts to prevent his case, however the facts are so far separated it's akin to the Earth turning backwards to the Sun and revolving around the Moon. I am not saying the book is idiotic or stupid, rather the facts are just not tied together tight enough to support a case. The situation is one of taking too much food with one bite, it is really hard to swallow! For example:

"So what's it all about? How do UFOs, USOs, cryptids and reptilian monstrosities or bipedal saurians, aliens and fairies, lost, sunken, and prehuman civilizations, titan-like suboceanic creatures, megalithic ruins on Earth, on Mars, and perhaps elsewhere, all fit together into one unifying theory, pattern or puzzle-picture? Why do these things exist or seem to exist, and why do they seem to vastly predate humanity on this planet or in this solar system, and to defy all human knowledge and reason, most of the time? Why do mysterious beings prey upon humanity, seeking to interbreed with us, terrify us, mislead us, and eradicate us?"

Answers to this exist in many ancient texts, but are aptly described and referred to in the Torah and New Testament of the Bible.

In the original Hebrew texts, the word YOM is used for the word "day" in the Genesis creation story. Sources as widely-separated as the Sumerian scholar Zacharia Sitachin and Christian evangelist scholars who read ancient middle eastern languages, are generally in agreement that this word in its original context actually means "epochs of time," "ages," or

something similar. Also, lost continents and civilizations are distinctly mentioned, as is their destruction. Many biblical references describe an earlier age, and the fate of pre-human civilizations which have vanished from the Earth. Some of these were overthrown by cataclysms which thrust them to the bottom of the ocean, or else were driven or plunged deep beneath the crust of the world. Such places are referred to as a “terror,” and came about due to great planetary upheavals. References are made to the prehumans, the “old people” or “people of old time.”

Ezekiel 26: 19-21 states:

19 For thus saith the Lord GOD: When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the DEEP upon thee, and GREAT WATERS SHALL OVER THEE;

20 When I shall bring thee down with them that descent into the pit, with the PEOPLE OF OLD TIME, and shall set thee in THE LOW PARTS OF THE EARTH, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living;

21 I will MAKE THEE A TERROR, and thou shalt be no more; though be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the lord GOD

It would seem that grays, reptilians, UFOonauts of many descriptions and many cryptid critters which defy rational explanation such as “hairy humanoids” translated as “satyrs” in the King James version of the Torah, and “el chupacabras,” fit the description of being “a terror,” at least according to many who have encounters with them. The statement “thou shalt be no more” refers to a surface-world, pre-cataclysmic kingdom. There’s much additional Biblical information to support this theory, as in the book of Jeremiah.”

One can see that the loose thread of Biblical connection to current UFO research, Cryptozoological research and paranormal research as well as fortean connections are snapped together. A hairy humanoid is a satyr, and the el chupacabra is the terror pronounced in Ezekial. This is not an attack on the Bible, rather look at how the Mott is using the Biblical references to things as justifications to the running theme of a darker side to the world through the study of lost civilizations, cryptozoology, ufology, paranormal research, hollow earth studies and so forth. These areas of study are joined by Mott, perhaps to some peoples liking, and can collectively explain the answers to nearly everything.

Complexity is the problem here. By throwing too much into the pot the stew is tainted, by throwing too many potentially unrelated as well as in some cases unknown items into the pot, a stew of sour taste is left.

Perhaps the confusion is gleamed from multiple pages numbered differently, yet containing the same information (on both copies this reviewer has of the hard copy form), or perhaps the rumors of sabotage on the publisher at the printing time. It would seem though that to put a point across the author would stick step by step in convincing a reader of the topic, not jump around and touch on twenty or more different theories to encompass a central answer in the last page. Life, and research are complex, but need we try to explain it all away in one single breath?

Mysterious America - The Revised Edition

Author: Loren Coleman

ISBN - 1-931044-05-8

Paraview Press, New York, 2001, 334 Pages, \$16.95

☆☆☆☆☆

Available at amazon.com and other online bookstores. Image below is of the original version of the book from 1983 published by *Faber and Faber* and the 2001 updated version from Paraview.



Loren Coleman is well known to many people with even a passing interest in Cryptozoology and fortean studies. Having written a number of books on the subject from Cryptozoology A to Z (2000) to Tom Slick and the Search for the Yeti (1989) and Curious Encounters (1985) to sociological books dealing with less fortean subjects as dealt with in Working with Older Adoptees (1988) and Unattended Children (1987).

Presented in 2001 is an update by Coleman to a classic 1983 work from a “Traveling American Fortean” and in many cases entire sections of Mysterious America have been rewritten to cover nearly 20 years of gap material. Coleman’s latest book is perhaps his best yet, the theories presented are minimal as compared to some of his previous works, but the passion and enthusiasm for the subject at hand are what makes this tome stand out. Even the addition of illustrations, some by William Rebsamen who has done previous work with Dr. Karl Shuker, William Gibbons and Loren Coleman (to name a few) , add a new flavor to the work.

Coleman has presented to the reader a collage of Americana, not just the United States as some may think in an egotistical view of America but in a North American continental viewpoint. One travels to Canada in 1995 with Loren and his sons to experience a forteanian car problem that leads him to an eye-witness to a “kangaroo event” that otherwise would have been missed. We are led down the still active debate over the “*Dover Demon*” of Massachusetts, were new “*Demon Moose*” theories are evaluated. Coleman recounts the continuing search into mystery felines of the east, with statistics from Todd Lester of the *Eastern Cougar Research Center* and the continual (albeit rare) sighting of a manned animal.

One does not have to be a fortean enthusiast or an advocate of Cryptozoology to draw something from this book. Movie watchers would enjoy the chapter that is entitled “*Teleporting Animals and Magnolia*” which deals with frog falls and fortean events, dealt with in subtle and dramatic ways by director Paul Anderson’s recent film *Magnolia*

Not all aspects of the book have changed significantly, but what has been altered does constitute a new chapter in the history of Mysterious America, it is undeniable a new book and not just a simple reprinting. Perhaps in the near future we could see the sister book Curious Encounters updated as well, a mini-encyclopedia then of North American fortean and cryptozoological research indeed would then be presented. Until then relive the thrill of searches, failures and an enduring passion for the mysterious, read Mysterious America - The Revised Edition.

New Notes: 13th Annual Bigfoot Conference

On Saturday, April 7th, 2001 there will be an annual conference on Bigfoot in Newcomerstown, Ohio. The event is free, as it always has been, and is hosted by Don Keating and the Eastern Ohio Bigfoot Investigation Center (EOBIC). The event will take place starting at 4 p.m. at the Newcomerstown Middle School.

This year there are three confirmed speakers at present, and a fourth may still be added. The speakers currently are Don Keating from Ohio, Eric Altman from Pennsylvania and Loren Coleman from Maine. Originally Peter Byrne was going to be a speaker as well, but due to a prior engagement time frame change he is unable to speak at this years conference.

The event draws a large crowd, with over 4000 people attending since the first conference and meetings were held. It is a popular event for people across the country to go to and meet and speak with new people and old friends. If you have the time and enjoy the company, head on down to Ohio. For more information contact Don Keating at (740) 498-9878 or e-mail at eobic@webtv.net. Also visit the website <http://www.angelfire.com/oh/yeti1/index.html> for updates and more information about accommodations and directions.

New Notes: Croatian Jellyfish

A type of jellyfish was recently found in a lake on the island of Mljet in the Adriatic Sea. Initial appearances have it that this jellyfish is a new species, and that there may be other unknown species of crabs and animals in some of the islands other lakes. No formal description of the jellyfish has been done, nor has it positively been described as being of a new species or other taxonomic classification. Mljet Island is relatively small at 102 square kilometers, and lies around 10 miles off the coast of Croatia.

Sources:

New Jellyfish Found in Isolated Croatian Lake, *Reuters*, January 23, 2001

New Notes: Boggy Creek Outhouse Ogre



Farmer Todd needs your help in the game "Chicken Archery". Download the free game at http://www.nstorm.com/games/game.cfm?game_id=12 and help him fight the Boggy Creek Outhouse Ogre, a Bigfoot type creature styled around *The Legend of Boggy Creek*.

Editor's Comment:

This is the last standard issue of *CRYPTO*, and marks it's 12th standard issue and 14th in total since September 1998. As editor and publisher I've been given a chance to work with many gifted people across the globe, people I'm proud of to call friends and colleagues. The conclusion of this publication is not being done however. It will become an irregular newsletter, my expectations being a different style issue two or three times a year, not all of which will be available to everyone. For example, a special issue is being prepared for the *13th Annual Bigfoot Conference* in April 2001. This issue will encompass new or rare material from writers and researchers from around the world in regards to Hominology. Only a few pieces will have been published prior within this newsletter. However, that special edition (one was done for the 12th Annual Conference as well, a compilation issue) will only be available to conference attendees and contributors to the issue (with a few prearranged exceptions).

Some of you have already been contacted regarding this issue. However, if others are interested in offering an article or other comment regarding Hominology, then please contact me for some discussion.

Part of the reason for the slowing down of this newsletter is to allow for some more time to be spent in other endeavors, both Cryptozoological based and other interests. Additionally, with the birth of my daughter on October 14, 2000 I want to spend as much time as possible with her as she grows. Cheyenne Autumn Heinselman is a true charm in my wife, Angel, and my life. She is something we've longed for in the last few years, and is all we ever hoped for. I look forward to educating her and showing her the mysteries around us all, perhaps one day some of you will meet her!

As part of the changes, this newsletter will also in part be combined with Chad Arment and Brad LaGrange's *North American BioFortean Review*, an online .pdf format newsletter available at <http://www.herper.com/NABR.html>. I will be joining with Brad and Chad as co-editor of the journal, and hopes are to broaden the spectrum outside of North America.

However, as I have stated in the past I still firmly believe in free distribution of information. So, anyone who wants a hard copy of *The North American BioFortean Review* when it is published online, please contact me. These will be provided at no charge to the reader, in the same essence as *CRYPTO* was.

For people who have inquired about writing articles, do not stop. These will still see publication in one form or another. Don't forget *CRYPTO* is not vanishing, it is just changing around for yet another time and I hope for an even better location.

I wish to thank everyone for all their help and support over the last few years, it has been amazing.

Regards,

Craig Heinselman
Editor/Publisher *CRYPTO*

Classifieds & Miscellany

Your request for information and materials may be printed for free. Submit any requests to the editor along with address and e-mail. If you do not wish to have your address printed, the editor will withhold it and requests will be handled through the editor. A fee will be charged for commercial listings within the classifieds, however any organization or similar themed publication will be listed free of charge. Contact the editor for specifics regarding commercial and/or organizations and publications listings.

Amendment:

In *CRYPTO Vol. 3, No. 4* the co-author of the article *ESCAPE! - With the Abominable Snowman: Cryptofiction on the Airways During Radio's Golden Age* was omitted. This was purely an editing error. Gary Mangiacopra and Dr. Dwight Smith are the correct authors of this piece. This publication apologizes to Dr. Smith for the omission.

Please Note the address for this publication is as follows.

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CRYPTO is now available as a free downloadable .pdf format newsletter on the Internet. There is a small time lapse between the print issue and the electronic issue. It is available due to the generosity and effort of Chad Arment, who co-edits his own electronic newsletter *The North American BioFortean Review* with Brad LaGrange. To view the electronic version of CRYPTO go to www.herper.com/cznews.html a link there will also bring you to *The North American BioFortean Review* downloads. If anyone wishes to receive the electronic version only of CRYPTO, instead of the print version please let the editor know.