



Creature Chronicles



Autumn · Number 7 · 1984



TRAIL TRACKING

Charles J. Wilhelm

Rarely does an investigator find a perfect print of a Sasquatch. This is to be expected, for a creature walking, or running in mud, or wet ground will slip, change stride, alter direction, or do other things that might distort the prints. Where the creature has walked on hard ground, prints are harder to find. It would be an advantage to discover a perfect Sasquatch print that showed all the features of the foot. However, none have been found that can be called authentic.

To help the investigator to identify real Sasquatch footprints, there are several criteria that have to be achieved. At least some, if not all of these criteria should be present for identification.

For example, if a creature is walking in mud, or soft ground, its foot not only will produce an indentation in the ground, but it will also produce what is called a "mud up-push"; a place where the surrounding wet ground has been pushed up higher than it was before. This usually takes place around the outside of the foot in those areas where most of the weight is borne. The largest "up-pushes" are usually found behind the heel and adjacent to the big toe and the ball of the foot. On occasions, the location is more varied, thus representing a more varied stride.

Another important criteria is that the weight of the creature not only deforms the mud, or soft ground, but it also causes vertical displacement below the foot. As the creature's foot forces the mud, or soft ground down into the subsurface, it becomes compacted with the amount of compaction decreasing with depth.

In tracking a trail of possible Sasquatch prints, the investigator should satisfy himself with trail requirements and the trail should be one of a bipedal creature. Those requirements for a trail of possible prints are as follows:

1. THEY SHOULD BE IN A RIGHT-LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT SEQUENCE.
2. THEY SHOULD ALL BE CONFORMABLE TO ONE ANOTHER IN SHAPE AND SIZE.
3. THE PRINTS SHOULD BE SEPERATED BY A RELATIVELY CONSISTENT LENGTH, REPRESENTING THE STRIDE OF THE CREATURE AND Laterally BY A FEW INCHES REPRESENTING THE NATURAL STRADDLE BETWEEN THE TWO FEET.
4. THE TRAIL SHOULD BE GOING IN ONE DIRECTION.
5. EACH PRINT SHOULD BE REASONABLY ORIENTED IN THE SAME DIRECTION.
6. THE SIZE OF THE PRINTS SHOULD BE REASONABLE WHEN THEY ARE COMPARED TO ITS LENGTH OF THE STRIDE.

The prints should naturally have the general features of a human foot, but larger. The ball of the foot and heel are usually the best preserved portions of the print, since it is on these two areas that most of the creature's weight is concentrated.

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Editorial

Fool Notes; Etc.

REFLECTIONS: AFTER 11 YEARS OF CRYPTOZOOLOGY RESEARCH

I am quite sure that at one time or another, researchers, such as myself, sit back and take a closer look at what evidence they have acquired since entering the field of cryptozoology.

Over the past 11 years, I have attempted to polish my investigative techniques with the latest forensic methodology and objective journalism. This was my goal to achieving an eventual solution to manifestations of cryptozoological and Ufological events.

In CREATURE CHRONICLES number 4, I discussed objectivity versus sensationalism; a "tough - of - war" game that plagues many researchers. The intent of that editorial was to expose the many over-publicized stories of the tabloid newspapers. However, upon establishing a goal of total documentation and total objectivity, I discovered that not only were the tabloids guilty of "over-sensationalism". Many of the books and magazine articles on the market suffer from the same fate.

Sensationalism is employed by believers and skeptics alike. It is unfortunate, but, this method is used to project one's belief in a manner that will allow for bias theories, prejudice and discrimination.

Objectivity is a means by which all facts are brought into play, without being biased. All facts are documented, regardless of their implications. (con't on page 5)

CREATURE CHRONICLES

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to Ron Schaffner



Trail Tracking CON'T

In some instances, the arch is characteristically raised and the sloping toe line should be visible. Individual creature toe depressions are rare, but toe markings made as the foot left the newly formed print are frequently preserved.

In most cases, the ball of the creature's foot will leave the deepest impression, due mainly to the fact that the entire weight of the creature's body is concentrated in this spot while walking just before the opposite foot hits the ground. At this point, the heel is off the ground and mud, or soft ground is squeezed up between the toes as as they are pressed into the ground. Usually, these toe ridges are too fragile to be preserved, although in some cases the one between the big and second toes can be seen.

To simplify the guidelines for a Sasquatch trail:

1. SOFT DIRT OR MUD UP-PUSH
2. PRESSURE STRIATIONS
3. SEQUENCE OF PRINTS
4. A CONSTANT STRIDE
5. TOE MOVEMENT
6. A CONSTANT STRADDLE
7. PRINTS GOING IN ONE DIRECTION
8. SIZE OF PRINTS BEING UNIFORM
9. TREND OF INDIVIDUAL PRINTS
10. SIZE VS. STRIDE SHOULD BE REASONABLE
11. PRINTS MUST BE OF A BIPEDAL AND UPRIGHT CREATURE
12. PRINTS SHOULD RESEMBLE A HUMAN FOOT.

The ability to distinguish tracks is a must. Some mammals will leave tracks that can be easily misinterpreted to be that of a Sasquatch. This can happen if the weather changes, such as rain and/or wind. The most common mistake is that of a bear track. In fact, we have seen weathered duck tracks alleged to have been three-toed Bigfoot prints.

To become more knowledgeable with types of tracks, the investigator should obtain a copy of "A Field Guide to Animal Tracks", by Olaus J. Murie. This publication is number 9 of the Peterson Field Guide Series. *

RECOMENDED READING:

MYSTERIOUS AMERICA by Loren Coleman . Faber & Faber, Inc.
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MONSTERS by Daniel Cohen . Dodd, Mead & Co.
EVIDENCE FOR BIGFOOT AND OTHER MAN-BEASTS by Janet & Colin Bord
Aquarian Press, Ltd.
SASQUATCH AND OTHER UNKNOWN HOMINIDS
Edited by Vladimir Markotic & Grover Krantz
Western Publishers

Something with big feet startles fishermen

By JOHN W. MOODY
Register Staff Writer

The burning question around 801 Star these days is:

"Who took giant steps to interrupt the fishing trip of Kenneth Williams and his nephew, Lynn Wages?"

Today, the two have a memory, and a plaster cast of something which has six toes, no claws and a long stride.

The memory is as vivid as the plaster cast.

Two days ago, the two were fishing between I-35 and the old toll bridge.

Suddenly, Lynn said, "Look at that!" Kenneth looked.

"We saw something move. It was big, hairy, either black or dark brown. About the same time these horses started raising cane," Williams said.

"We waited a few minutes and decided it was time to move out."

That would have probably been the end of the story, had anyone believed the two fishermen. But when they repeated what they saw, some doubt was cast on the whole tale.

"So we went back with some plaster and took casts of footprints," Williams said.

"We found several prints, but only one was really good."

What came out was that something quite heavy had been in the neighborhood. The cast showed the creature had six toes, no claws.

No one as yet is really certain what kind of hairy creature is moving about.

But if you go fishing in the area, watch your step — and his.

Gainesville, Texas

"Daily Register"

August 4, 1984

Credit: Peggy Howard



Camera Triplines;

A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM.

Tim Curry

Years ago, when an investigator wanted to capture his quarry on film, it usually involved setting up a rather crude camera trap using wires or lines to trip the shutter. Today, thanks to modern technology (and affordable prices), the investigator can end the confusion of wires and still retain a degree of effectiveness by using light and sound activated switching devices. This equipment works on the principles of sound waves or changes in existing light to complete an electrical circuit. Many of them are used in surveillance devices and alarm systems.

To adapt them for remote shutter release use requires a bit of ingenuity and the right components. To begin with, one must obtain two small electro-magnets. These can usually be found in the earpieces of old discarded telephones. Without these, the remote release will not work. Basically, an electro-magnet creates a magnetic field when an electric current passes through it; hence its name. The magnetic field draws any type of ferrous metal to it and this is how the shutter will be tripped with this device.

The construction of the component is fairly easy. Use the thinnest wood you can get, but a type which has good inherent strength and will last for a long period of time. The plunger housing is taken from a standard air-release and adapted especially for this project.

The shutter release is ready to test when it is coupled with a 12-volt battery case adapted to seat on the camera hotshoe.* Hook up the battery wires to the component terminals and clip only one of the battery snaps to the case. By intermittently touching the other battery terminal, you can see whether the shutter release is working. You may have noticed how the plunger is visible out of the top of the component. This is to allow the operator to visually check the component and verify its proper operation when it is actually attached to the camera. As the current flows through the electro-magnets, the resultant magnetic pull forces the contact plate down, which in turn, depresses the plunger and activates the shutter release. After the current is disconnected, the return spring insures that the attraction is broken and the plunger returns to its previous position.

Now that the component functions properly, it is time to hook up either one of the switches. These are not as complicated as they seem; they simply complete a circuit in response to either sound waves or changes in existing light.

LIGHT-ACTIVATED SWITCH (MOTION-DETECTOR)

Note: As the name implies, this device works on changes of light. As such, it can only be used during the daylight hours.

In setting it up, hook one wire from the battery pack and one wire from the component terminal to the switch. Depending upon where you place the switch, any change of light will trigger the release mechanism. For purposes of Sasquatch investigations, it is recommended that the switch be placed in a reasonably open area at a height of six to seven feet. This will allow resident wildlife, such as deer, or elk, to pass under the switch's "beam" without releasing the camera shutter. The preferred location would be along a much used game trail, or at a likely place where wildlife would congregate, such as a water hole, stream, etc.

This switch has a reasonably wide latitude of operation, since it will work at from .1 to 100 candlepower (footcandles). This will allow the user to also operate it in lowlight conditions, such as dawn, dusk, or overcast days. In the two former situations, a strobe may be required. Some further adaption or rearrangement of the

(Continued on page 5)

Camera Triplines Con't

setup will be needed to allow placement of the strobe. (This rearrangement will also work with a movie camera and methods are currently being explored in this area.)

SOUND ACTIVATED SWITCH

This switch completes a circuit in response to sounds. This operation has a preferred use at night, since the sound level during the day will be higher. This switch has a much broader general range of uses. One must allow for the use of a strobe accordingly.

These techniques are just the basics for inclusion in this publication. For more information, feel free to write me and ask for the diagrams at 2144 U.S. 6, Waterloo, Indiana 46793.

NOTATIONS

1. After the component is completed, it is recommended that it be sealed by applying polyurethane.
 2. Both the switch and the sound-activated device are available from BNF Enterprises, 119 Foster Street, P.O. Box 3357, Peabody, Massachusetts, 01960.
- * You must be sure that the hotshoe of the camera is completely insulated from the battery case, otherwise, the camera will "think" it is connected to a strobe and will cause unnecessary power drain.

(EDITORIAL CON'T) Indeed, it can be most difficult, even for the experienced investigator. Unfortunately, for the believers, objectivity will begin questioning the many cases that, at one time were thought to be genuine. It can strengthen one's case, or weaken it, depending on the facts.

Often times, the scientific community is labeled conservative when approaching the study of unexplained events. Everyone knows this to be true, but put yourself in their position. A scientist must follow strict disciplines in order to achieve discoveries. There must be the pro's and con's, debates and argumentative situations, or science would run amuck.

Hominid Research, as a group, is now in the process of re-examining many of the former established cases and feel confident many are misinterpretations of known objects and/or hoaxes. But, don't interpret this to mean all cases, as there are still unsolved incidents that have a high mark of validity. REMEMBER: once one removes the questionable and unprobable situations, the valid cases will stand-out for closer scrutiny.

Unfortunately, our methods have infuriated some of our esteemed colleagues. We believe criticism is good for researchers and even for us.

Hoaxes and Reality

by Ron Schaffner

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On May 15, a Pacific Stage Lines bus was headed toward Vancouver, British Columbia on Highway 7. Pat Lindquist, the driver, and a half-dozen passengers witnessed what they believed to be a Sasquatch. Lindquist stopped the bus and began pursuing the creature. He described it as having flat, flared nostrils, like a monkey with large white eyes.

"It didn't make any sound except heavy breathing," he claimed.

About two weeks later, three men admitted they staged the prank. Using a two hundred dollar monkey suit and shoulder pads, they managed to fool the driver and passengers. The hoax took three weeks to concoct. Other preparations were manufacturing a phony foot for a footprint and checking the bus schedules. The brilliant part of the plan was planting a phony witness on the bus to generate the passenger's excitement and to get more witnesses to the event.

Don Ticehurst, the prankster on the bus said, "I had to act pretty excited."

In early August, near Stilwell, Oklahoma, 15 year old Brian Jones claimed he was grabbed by a nine foot tall hairy monster with red glowing eyes. He went outside after his friends saw a pair of red eyes peering through the kitchen window. Jones and his brother were at the home of Rober Ritchie, with his two sons, Mr. Ritchie was not home at the time.

The creature allegedly picked Jones up by the shoulders and lifted him about three and one-half feet off the ground, tearing his shirt and leaving claw marks on his back. In addition, the window screen and plastic was said to be damaged.

Brian went to the west corner of the house and heard heavy breathing when suddenly he was confronted by the giant.

Later on in the month, Brian Jones admitted the story was a tall tale. After failing to pass a polygraph test in Fort Smith, Arkansas, by authorities, he decided to tell the truth about the story. He was afraid to go back on his story after the sheriff, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigations, and a couple of Bigfoot research teams began intensive investigations.

Unlike investigating UFO reports, hairy monsters to the average person may seem a hoax from the very start. The two encounters mentioned so far may be great tools for the skeptic. Various zoologists and anthropologists who lean somewhat towards the Bigfoot enigma, read of such incidents, then no more questions, they dismiss the entire theory.

And what of the hoaxsters themselves? Are they publicity seekers? This type of mischievous trick could end up in violent means. If the Vancouver bus driver had a fire arm and was a shakey individual, our man in the monkey suit could have been a "deap-ape."

On the other hand, a hoax has the tendency to hamper a somewhat more real encounter. The Stilwell case had a number of officials investigating. Think of all the money spent and wasted on something that started out as a sick joke. The Sasquatch Investigation of Mid-America, a civilian research group must have paid a lot of expenses just to get to Stilwell. Contrary to what some of us think — the Bigfoot investigator doesn't make any money, unless he has enough information to publish an article or write a book.

While Mr. Jones was ripping off the citizens of Stilwell, investigators could have been on the scene of a possible authentic creature. A week after the Stilwell joke, a story was developing in Dutch Mills, Arkansas.

Something entered the barn of Ed Bailey and slashed a screen door, left footprints in the mud and marks on a tree. Those who witnessed the print measured eleven inches across and thirteen inches long.

There are various theories:

1. It's a gorilla
2. There's a large bear around
3. It's a hoax

While I'm not certain on this case, theory number two and three are the probable answers. Bears were seen in the area and with a local theatre showing a certain movie about a skunk ape there may be more Jones' on the prowl.

Halloween came early in Orange County Florida. A security guard claimed he was attacked by the legendary Swamp Ape. The guard, Donnie Hall, was found by authorities with his shirt torn and scratches on his back. Footprints were discovered at the scene.

The Orange County sheriff's department, who investigated, disagreed with Hall. The prints were turned over to a Florida Game Department and they tell us the print was made by a man trying to make the prints resemble

that of an animal. There is also talk of the tracks belonging to a huge duck.

I ask you — hoax or real?

It's over one hundred years since the Sioux defeated Custer at the Little Big Horn. The Sioux are again at war. This time the enemy is Bigfoot.

Little Eagle, South Dakota has been the center of much monster activity. Many Sioux are packing up and leaving the area.

While most of the evidence backs up such a creature, the tracks and their plaster casts, make me skeptical. A photo of the cast that appeared in the McIntosh, South Dakota News on Oct. 6, 1977 is uncharacteristic of an anthropoid. The total length is about two feet. The toes are too small in conjunction with the rest of the foot. I could not even imagine a five hundred pound beast walking on this foot without falling on its face. Try cutting a couple of toes off your feet and see if you can perambulate properly. (For those of you that receive A.P.C.I.C. the photo is on page 9.)

The reality of Big Hairy Monsters is still with us, however. For every hoax this year, there are the authentic cases.

In the Nov. issue of this paper I ran a photo of a footprint in Preble County, Ohio. The May 18 incident involved two teenage boys who were pursued by a tall hairy creature with a rotten stench. The print indicated that the creature was running. The toes were in proportion with the foot. An arch was also noted and the heel was sunk in the soft ground.

As for the witnesses, they are sticking with the story. Even with much ridicule they are afraid to sleep with windows open and not locked.

The Preble County authorities even admit something is different — the absence of deer and other wild game and strange noises in the night.

A young couple near Rising Sun Indiana had an encounter with a violent creature who smashed into their car. (See the 2nd issue of the paper). Again, the witnesses showed signs of extreme fright. At any rate, something of enormous size dented their car.

During the same week of the activity in southern Oklahoma, up to twelve witnesses have claimed to see the ape-like creature in the High Vinta Mountains of northern Utah. While the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources are skeptical, they do plan to search the area by horseback.

These incidents are still under investigation, so I don't know the validity of the Utah monster.

One last thought:

Perhaps if states would pass laws to arrest and convict hoaxsters, this madness would cease. After all, isn't fraud against the law?

**Note: Reprinted from UNUSUAL NEWS
January, 1978**

Letters

Gentlemen:

November 9, 1983

I do not know if you are interested in items, such as given below, but offer it anyway: On WRKO, Talk Radio 68, Boston, Massachusetts, Friday morning, November 4, 1983—"It was reported that police were making a concerted effort that day (11/4), around Exit 47, of the Garden State Parkway in New Jersey to find a large black panther, or cougar, which had been sighted and reported independently by several motorists".

One thought — in this area in October or late September there was an earthquake (centered much further north). I seem to remember that unusual earth tremors are often preceded or followed by unusual sightings. Have you found any such correlation?

Sincerely,

L. Meyers

Middletown, Rhode Island

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*

While one cannot positively conclude that such a connection exists, it is interesting to note that a minor quake occurred near Maysville, Kentucky on July 27, 1980 and was followed by three alleged Sasquatch encounters in October. —(Editor)

Retrospective

Screaming mystery beast haunted us 25 years ago

Editor's note: Residents of Bluffton and the surrounding community might remember stories about the "cries like a baby, screams like a woman—mystery animal" from the mid-1950s. Twenty-five years ago this month—in the Nov. 29, 1956, Bluffton "News" front page—was published this account of that event surrounding the "mystery animal."

A MYSTERIOUS night-prowling animal that "cries like a baby and screams like a woman" and powerful enough to break a coon dog's back is again on the prowl in the Lafayette area, according to local coon hunters.

The strange animal which is believed to have killed at least five or six coon dogs since it was first heard in 1950 is back again, according to Mr. and Mrs. Dallas Yoakam of the Lafayette area.

The animal was first heard by the Yoakams while hunting coon in the old Perry Bechtol woods three miles northeast of Lafayette.

"First it sounded like the low cry of a human baby," the Yoakams describe it.

Their coon hound approached the sound. Then it turned and scurried away, tail between legs.

Mr. Yoakam learned that other hunters have heard the same cry. Some said it sounded like an angry woman.

In 1952 one of the Yoakam boys and a friend were hunting. When they encountered the weird sound, one of their dogs attacked the animal. The mangled body of the canine was found, neck broken.

Attempts to identify and capture the animal have failed. This year, after Mr. and Mrs. Richard Watt reported hearing the animal near the Sandusky road northeast of Lafayette, a posse was formed and a square mile area was searched without success.

The last coon hound reported to have been killed by the animal was owned by Wayne Hauenstein who lives about seven miles northeast of Lafayette.

Mr. Yoakam advises hunters to use caution if they run into the animal. It could be dangerous.

Persons having dogs killed under unexplainable circumstances are asked to contact Yoakam.

LATE NEWS

No Evidence Found; Soviets Declare Yeti Doesn't Exist

MOSCOW (AP)—The Soviet news agency Tass declared Saturday that the abominable snowman, also known as Yeti and thought by some to stalk the Himalayan Mountains, does not exist.

Quoting arguments advanced by Vadim Ranov, a man described as a well-known Soviet explorer, Tass said that no remains—skeleton, skull or individual bones—have ever been found. Nor has other evidence of the existence of an abominable snowman, such as shelters, caves or traces of food, ever been unearthed, Tass said.

Alleged yeti tracks spotted in the mountains are more likely to be those of other animals distorted by bright sunrises in the high Himalayan range and eye-witness accounts are "imagination," Tass said.

It quoted Ranov as saying that the hypothesis about an abominable snowman being a primitive man surviving till modern times "is wrong and is easily refuted."

Cincinnati, Ohio
"Enquirer"
April 8, 1984

Exotic Lizard Shot In Pond

FINDLAY (AP)—An African lizard nearly six feet long, found lurking in a Hancock County pond, likely had been someone's pet and could not have survived for long in Ohio's rugged climate.

A teen-ager who spotted the giant reptile pumped six bullets into it, and speculated that the lizard might have killed a duckling that had been in the pond.

The exotic Nile Monitor lizard was five feet 11¼ inches long and weighed about 35 pounds. It is native to Africa and is not normally found in the United States.

"More than likely, someone had it as a pet at one time or

another and they either got tired of it and got rid of it, or maybe it escaped," said Jim Abrams, a county game protector.

In any case, the lizard's travels came to an end Wednesday night when a Van Buren High School senior shot it.

Rodney Cameron, 19, said he was walking around a pond in his family's backyard when he came upon the lizard. Cameron ran home and grabbed a .22-caliber rifle. When he returned to the pond, the lizard "was in a dormant stage," Cameron said.

He said it appeared to be dying and did not move when he shot it.

Cincinnati, Ohio "Enquirer" February 26, 1984

Cat killings perplex police

INDIANAPOLIS (UPI) — An east side neighborhood has experienced a string of 100 cat killings which has police and residents baffled.

Concern about the crimes in which no suspects have been located has prompted the non-profit Spay-Neuter Services to offer a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killers.

"We have traditionally kept our focus on the problem of pet overpopulation," said services President Velda R. Boenitz. "But this situation is so horrendous we felt Spay-Neuter had to do something."

The killings started in late December. In most cases the cats were savagely beaten or clubbed to death. They were found in the 200 to 400 blocks of North Hamilton and Jefferson avenues.

The first reports were made Dec. 28 by a woman who reported four of her cats had

disappeared.

"She found one dead in her yard with its head bashed in. The other three weren't found until the snow started melting," Boenitz said.

Beatings were not the only brutal deaths.

Boenitz said one cat was found with its heart cut out and another had its head almost cut off.

Indianapolis city police Detective Philip L. Harris said he was investigating the killings but had little to go on.

A spokesman for the Humane Society of Indianapolis said the organization had not heard about cat killings like those on the east side.

"We hear about isolated cases of abuse. Cats are frequently a target, more so than dogs. There are quite a few around, and they are easier to catch and smaller. That's one reason why we tell people to keep their cats indoors," said Terri Peterson Smith of HSI.

Cr. T. Curry - Ft. Wayne, Indiana "Sentinel" February 26, 1984

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