

# CRYPTO

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

*“If we cannot even explain the extinctions of the past satisfactorily, how can we be sure that we haven’t missed something crucial for the future?”*

**Ross D.E. MacPhee and Preston A. Marx from *Mammoths and Microbes: Hyperdisease Attacked the New World* (Discovering Archaeology magazine , Volume 1, Number 5, September/October 1999)**



Image of an establishment in Dallas, Texas (USA) named *CHUPACABRA'S*.

Image provided by Craig Woolheater of Dallas, Texas

The establishment is located at 4817 Ross Avenue, Dallas, TX (USA), 75204

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## The Long Walk

### A Review and Commentary of Slavomir Rawicz's The Long Walk

By Bobbie Short

Presented below is a review and commentary on The Long Walk by Bobbie Short. A Registered Nurse by occupation, Bobbie is an active Bigfoot researcher and field investigator with a growing database of hirsute homin sightings, writings and tales dating back to the 10th Century A.D. Her name is included with many others in connection with the well known 1967 Patterson-Gimlin film as the interviewer of John Chambers in October of 1997. For nearly 30 years Chambers was rumored to have created the monkey suit in the Patterson film, but his greatest costume design was seen the following year in the 1968 movie *The Planet of the Apes*. That effort in costume designing was nothing close to the creature exhibited in the Patterson-Gimlin film.

Bobbie has also traveled outside the United States doing research, i. e., in 1999 she traveled the length of the Philippines islands south to the Kalimantan in Borneo to examine evidence for such reported creatures as the *Philippine kapre*, the *waray-waray of Eastern Samar*, *Indonesia's orang pendek*, the *batutut*, and to decipher reports of the *beruang rambai*, a primate reported to be neither bear nor orangutan sighted in Central Kalimantan.

Currently she is communicating with Debbie Martyr and other principles in the Sungai Penuh, Kerinci rain forest of Sumatra regarding the hirsute bipedal half ape, half gibbon-looking orang pendek, sighted by Martyr in 1993 and again by Jeremy Holden in 1994. She is scheduled early summer for a flight to Bella Coola, British Columbia in search of the sasquatch written about in Clayton Mack's stories and a visit to Sumatra in 2001. Bobbie can be contacted at [sierra@n2.net](mailto:sierra@n2.net) and her web site is present at <http://www.n2.net/prey/bigfoot/>.

In Daniel Furguson and Angus Hall's 1989 book Great Mysteries, Mysterious Monsters, there is mention of the story of Lt. Slavomir Rawicz. In the late 1930's, Rawicz was a Polish Cavalry lieutenant who, after the 1939 invasion, was arrested and sent to one of the dreaded Siberian labor camps. He escaped along with six other men in the midst of a worn torn world and walked hundreds of miles out of Siberia, and across Mongolia, the Gobi Desert and over the Himalayas by way of Bhutan and Sikkim with little in the way of supplies. With an inadequate amount of water, hungry, cold and half-starved, they made their incredible escape over the Himalayas to freedom in India.

Listed in my database as 'one of the classics,' the saga is best told in Rawicz's best selling book of its day The Long Walk, a rather thrilling and awe-inspiring journey which expresses man's spirit and quest for freedom. Now in reprinted, the newer edition in paperback is selling on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for approximately \$14; the hardbound \$18.00 and the Audio

version for \$50.00 U.S. It can also be found USED on [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for anywhere from \$6.00 to \$85. If you can afford the audiocassette version, it's great listening on road trips.

The author, now in his 80's and living in England wrote that during his 1942 escape from Siberia, he and his companion escapees saw two eight-foot tall yeti-like creatures somewhere between Bhutan and Sikkim. It is a riveting story of man's will to live free and the determination of a half dozen men to survive against all odds in the raw elements. Their superbly told story is one of courage and human endurance that was interrupted for two hours by an encounter with two hirsute creatures, which sought to block their passageway.

Most assuredly, this story bears repeating for it is a would-be classic for followers of this phenomenon. Here is that portion of Slavomir Rawicz's story that bears recounting for the current generation of new Sasquatch researchers to process - if for no other reason than to compare Rawicz's observations to present day Bigfoot reports. The significance of this recount is distinguished by the fact that it is written 25 years before the advent of the Patterson-Gimlin filming of a Sasquatch in Bluff Creek, California. Yet Rawicz's Bigfoot description bears notice since there was no means for him or his companions to have had prior knowledge of these creatures detailed in The Long Walk in 1942. As important a classic as any, here are a few central out-takes from Rawicz's book.

*"The contours of the mountains temporarily hid them from view as we approached nearer, but when we halted on the edge of a bluff we found they were still there, twelve feet or so below us and about 100 yards away. Two points struck me immediately. They were enormous and they walked on the hind legs. The picture is clear in my mind, fixed there indelibly by a solid two hours of observation. We just could not believe what we saw at first, so we stayed to watch."*

*"I set myself to estimate their height on the basis of my military training for artillery observations. They could not have been much less than eight feet tall. One was a few inches taller than the other in the relationship of the average man to the average woman. They were shuffling quietly around on a flattish shelf, which formed part of the obvious route for us to continue our descent. We thought that if we waited long enough they would go away and leave the way clear for us."*

*"It was obvious they had seen us and it was equally apparent they had no fear of us. The American said that eventually he was sure we would see them drop on all fours like bears. But they never did. Their faces I could not see in detail, but the heads were squarish and the ears must lie close to the skull because there was no projection from the silhouette against the snow. The shoulders sloped sharply down to a powerful chest. The arms were long and the wrists reached the level of the knees. Seen in profile, the back of the head was straight line from the crown into the shoulders, "like a damned Prussian," he wrote.*

*"We decided unanimously that we were examining a type of creature of which we had no previous experience in the wild, in zoos or in literature. It would have been easy to see them waddle off at a distance and dismissed them as either bear or big apes of the Orangutan species."*

*"At close range they defied facile [simplistic] description. There was something both of the bear and the ape about the general shape, but they could not be mistaken for either. The color was a rusty kind of brown. They appeared to be covered by two distinct kinds of hair - the reddish hair which gave them their characteristic color forming a tight close fur against the*

*body, mingling with which were long loose straight hairs hanging downwards, which had a slight grayish tinge as the light caught them. They were doing nothing but moving around slowly together, occasionally stopping to look around them like people admiring a view. Their heads turned towards us now and again but their interest in us seemed to be of the slightest. I looked back and the pair was standing still, arms swinging slightly as though listening intently."*

*"What were they?"*

*"For years they remained a mystery to me, but since I have recently read of scientific expeditions to discover the Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas and studied descriptions of the creature given to me by native hill men. I believe that on that day we may have encountered two of the animals. I do insist, however that recent estimates of their height as about 5 feet must be wrong. The minimum height of a well grown specimen must be around seven feet."*

According to John Napier's review of the Rawicz book, several varying points were added to the above description of the beasts they encountered. The reasons for the additional commentary were unclear. According to Napier, Rawicz was alleged to have remarked on the presence of buttocks, short legs and rather surprisingly a rounded chin and rather conical shaped head. It is difficult to understand how four such important points were omitted from the original text descriptions, unless Napier interviewed Rawicz.

To be clear, Napier wrote his version of the remarkable observations saying:

*"Unfortunately they complicate the issue even further because two of them, (buttocks and a chin) are not apelike but human characteristics, a conical head and short legs are ape-like. Slavomir Rawicz also mentions how the creatures stamped and swayed when moving about, a description that evokes the locomotion patterns of neither man nor ape."*

Sounds like the pongid verses the homin campaign was enforce more than thirty years ago by Napier but not by Rawicz and company.

Today, with highly detailed digital image analysis of the Patterson-Gimlin film, we know Rawicz's astute observations in matching likenesses to the North American Sasquatch in the 1940's, prior to the 1967 Patterson-Gimlin filming, were astonishing field notes for that period of time and under conditions of survival and fear. I cannot intellectualize how Rawicz could make such creature descriptions of the day, never having had prior knowledge and have it be so similar in detail to what we know about hominids today, roughly 60 years later.

Slavomir Rawicz also noted that these creatures were bipedal saying "At no time did they drop to the ground on all fours" or display the "knuckle-walking" habit of chimpanzees and gorillas. Knuckle walking is a term devised by American Anthropologist Russell Tuttle to describe the gait of African apes on the ground. Rawicz seemed confident in his assessments that what they saw was a hirsute biped.

Surely Slavomir Rawicz's early field notes lack the peer recognition they so richly deserve. Rawicz's interpretations of his observations before the era of sensationalized Bigfoot journalism are intelligently thought out for a man under stress, fleeing captivity, in fact running for his life as an escaped prisoner of war. His field notes should be placed among the classics.

In a recent issue of the *Fortean Times*, *The Bigfoot Times* Editor Daniel Perez demonstrated a



different viewpoint with regard to the Rawicz story. In his book review of Loren Coleman and Patrick Huyghe's Field Guide To Bigfoot, Yeti and other Mystery Primates Worldwide, 1999; Daniel Perez makes this critical comment stating:

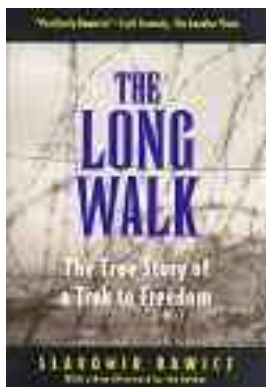
*“Long after this alleged episode, famous mountaineer Eric Shipton, expedition leader of the successful assault on Mt. Everest, studied the text of ‘**The Long Walk**’ and later expressed considerable doubt about the terrain Rawicz claims to have traversed. Therefore, on the heels of questionable and shaky geography described by Rawicz, the damned testimony of the alleged witness [Rawicz] has to come into question.”*

From my point of view, I would suggest Perez does not illustrate Shipton's claims by rote, citation or page numbered sources and I could find no direct conflict with the terrain described as the route taken by the six individuals with Rawicz or any difference of opinion by Shipton, who by the way, ascended Mt. Everest which is located in Nepal's mountain range, not Sikkim or Bhutan; a far cry from Siberia, Mongolia and the Gobi desert route into Bhutan and Sikkim that Rawicz traversed. Even if Shipton disagreed with the landmarks described by Rawicz, does that disaffirm the authenticity of the tall and hairy creatures described in Rawicz's book?

It is interesting to note that archaeologist-author Dr. Myra Shackley also concluded Rawicz's story was questionable and based her opinion solely on Shipton's statement without further research. But there is no evidence that Eric Shipton ever traveled Rawicz's route afoot, under the same conditions or season. In addition, Shackley wrote that what Rawicz and the other escapees saw were but specks in the distance, yet in The Long Walk Rawicz clearly states the men were perched 12 feet above them and only 100 yards away. The recounting of these stories in follow-up textbooks has a way of distorting the original manuscript.

I find Perez, Shipton and Shackley's judgments lacking in research, poorly concluded and critically premature. Perhaps we human's err in judging the quality of witness sources based exclusively on a single person's account because the name seemingly carries some kind of weight. Because opinion is written in a book, doesn't make it fact regardless of who or what the author may be or how high his pedestal stands. Assessments like Shipton's are usually motivated from a personal opinion other than fact.

Reading The Long Walk the second time around was as hypnotic a read as it was 10 years ago. For the unsure, this true drama is a real bargain as a used book. If you're interested in hirsute hominids, you'll be amazed at Rawicz's field notes.



## **News Note: Ogopogo-of-Sorts on Film**

In August of 2000 a movie produced by Original Pictures, Inc. of Winnipeg, Canada was to begin principal photography written by Barry Authors and directed by John Henderson. The film, slated for a budget of \$25 million dollars, was to deal with a Canadian inhabitant. That inhabitant is no other than Ogopogo or a creature akin to Ogopogo, the reported lake creature from Okanagan Lake in British Columbia.

Although the movie may feature reports of Ogopogo, or Ogopogo type creatures, it will not be filmed at Okanagan Lake. Instead the film was to be shot at Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba, Canada.. The reasons for this dealt with the visual appearance of the lake as well as the weather conditions, with Manitoba being more mild in atmospheric conditions and exhibiting the needed roughness to the lake shore as well as a generous tax credit to film producers. Although some area shots may be done around Kelowna, British Columbia and Lake Okanagan to add authenticity to the movie. However, a subsidy battle over the film has begun, and Manitoba may in the end lose out as a film location, instead New Brunswick may become the films prime principal photographic location. This subsidy battle is still in the air as of May 19, 2000.

Tentatively the Ogopogo type creature for the film will run along the lines of \$3 million dollars to make, and is being worked on now at the Jim Henson Creature Shop in England. Both an animatronic and computer-generated creature are slated to appear in the movie. To date human actors have not been cast.

### **Sources:**

King, Randall, Our First Monster Movie is About ... a Monster, *Winnipeg Sun*, April 5, 2000  
Ogopogo Film to be Made in Manitoba, *Canadian Press*, April 5, 2000  
Ogopogo may demand sunglasses and his own trailer, *Canadian Press*, May 2, 2000  
Ogopogo film project hits financial snag, *Canadian Press*, May 18, 2000  
Manitoba may lose film project to New Brunswick, *Canadian Press*, May 19, 2000

## **News Notes: Sahara Desert Crocodile**

According to an article in Science from February 16, 2000, a team of German zoologists has found a relic population of crocodiles in the Sahara desert. While conducting a reptile study in the Sahara, the team headed by Wolfgang Bohme heard of a population of crocodile in Mauritania. At the location the team found four crocodiles approximately 5 meters underground in a smallish pond approximately 20 meters wide. These crocodiles though were Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*) which grow to around 6 meters in length in their normal environment. In the Mauritania population the largest specimen seen was only around 2 meters in size. Still, the find is interesting as the population in Mauritania was isolated for thousands of years from other crocodiles.

### **Source:**

*Science Magazine*, Volume 287, Number 5456, February 18, 2000

## **A Mystery Feline from Ohio**

**by Don Keating**

Don Keating is the Chairman of the Tri-State Bigfoot Study Group (E.O.B.I.C., P.O. Box 205, Newcomerstown, Ohio, 43832-0205). He distributes a newsletter entitled *The Monthly Bigfoot Report* available for \$10.00 a year in the U.S. and \$15.00 outside the U.S. Contact Keating at the above address or e-mail [eobic@webtv.com](mailto:eobic@webtv.com) for more information. Keating is the author of three self-published books The Sasquatch Triangle (1987), The Eastern Ohio Sasquatch (1989), and The Buckeye Bigfoot (1993) as well as host of an annual Bigfoot Conference for the last twelve years in Newcomerstown, Ohio. On May 13, 2000 he is to be a speaker at the 30th Conference on Anomalous Phenomena presented by *The International Fortean Organization* (INFO) held at College Park, Maryland.

On June 4'th, 1988, Don Keating of Newcomerstown, Ohio and Betty Parks, then of Eaton, Ohio, spotted what they first thought to be a large dog walking along the side of a country road as they were heading to an area to do Bigfoot research. The location was about 1.5 miles south of SR 541 in Coshocton County midway between Plainfield and Coshocton, Ohio.

As they approached, Keating noticed this dog was not a dog, but what looked to be a black panther. He described it as "having a long, slender body with a long tail that did not hang to the ground, but instead was curled up. It had a shiny, beautiful black coat of hair. It walked very smoothly and never looked back at us. It appeared to have a triangular shaped head", though the two witnesses were looking at this animal from a rear view.

As it walked off the side of the road and into the brush, Keating grabbed his 35mm Chinon camera and headed right to the area the cat was last seen. He arrived to discover nothing, but at the same time, noticed that there was no movement in the brush. With the thought of a possible close encounter right around the corner, he decided to head back to the vehicle. This encounter took place between 4 and 6 p.m. Keating was not able to get a photo and did not have a camcorder at the time.

### **Editors Note:**

Although typically this newsletter does not publish individual reports dealing with mystery animals. A decision was made to publish this short piece, as it demonstrates an important item. Regardless of what a research looks for in the field, be it a lake creature, Sasquatch or a new species, one just never knows when another mystery or enigma may appear.

In late April 2000 in a series of e-mails, the editor asked Don Keating some further questions regarding the animal seen. Keating reports that they (being Betty Parks and Don Keating) were within 25 feet (approximately) at the closest time to the animal. The animal was 2.5 to 3 feet in length from snout to hind (not counting the tail) and possessed a tail approximately 2/3's the length of the body (mathematically this works out to around 2 feet). No tracks were found at the time either.

What did Don Keating and Betty Parks see that day in June?



## The Patterson, Gimlin Film: Enmity, Evidence, and Evolution

**By Chris Kraska**

In 1973 eminent anthropologist and primatologist John Napier, then Visiting Professor of Primate Biology at the University of London, wrote a book entitled “Bigfoot, the Yeti, and Sasquatch in Myth and Reality”. Many who have read the book, scientists and laymen alike, have found it to be somewhat ambiguous in its conclusions. The physical evidence of the Patterson, Gimlin Film in particular was assailed by Napier and various consulted colleagues who found it to point to “a hoax of some kind”. (Napier, pg 95) Upon close examination by the author, however, there are many simple, scientifically verifiable explanations for most of the observed “problems” with the analysis. In the subsequent few pages the author will evaluate, in a systematic manner, the critiques by Napier and others of the visible anatomy of the subject in the 1967 film while at the same time demonstrating why the subject does stand up to functional analysis, whereas Napier argued that it did not. (Napier, pg 95)

The theories proposed herein are wholly mine but their impetus lies in many different sources. It is the author’s feeling that this effort is necessary because so many have taken Napier’s analysis as the final word on the subject. As one of the most distinguished anthropologists of the last century many looked to Napier for vindication of Patterson’s film. What they received instead was a vague and inconclusive work.

### The Head

One of the biggest arguments that Napier and others have with the subject in the film is the appearance of the head.

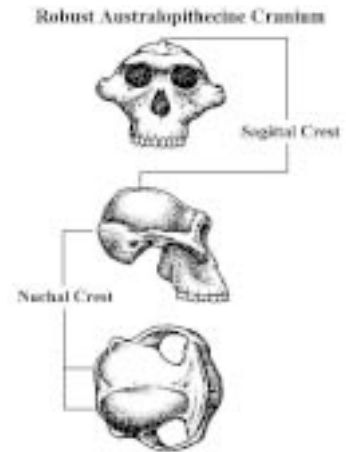
*“Frank Beebe of the British Columbia Provincial Museum, who concluded quite independently that the bodily form of Patterson’s Bigfoot was male in spite of its female appendages, also made an extremely pertinent observation. Why, he asks, does a creature with a tall bony crest on its skull, as Patterson’s creature clearly had, have a non-protuberant abdomen? To understand this apparent irrelevance one must appreciate the biological meaning of the bony crest, which forms such a prominent feature of male gorilla and orang-utan skull anatomy. The crest is an adaptive device to provide supplementary attachment for muscles operating the jaws. Gorillas and orangs have big massive jaws and teeth, which demand very large muscles to operate them during chewing. Heavy jaws are necessitated by a diet of large quantities of roughage, low-energy food which demands powerful mastication and consequently, a pot-bellied appearance.” (Napier, pg 92 & 93)*

Beebe is making an inference using living great apes, in particular the Gorilla and Orang-Utan. He fails either to note or be aware of the fact that the Gorilla’s diet consists almost exclusively of leaves, pith, and stalks, whereas Orangs are “primarily frugivorous (fruit eating), but bark, leaves, insects, and meat (on rare occasions) may also be eaten.” (Jurmain, Nelson, et al. pg 129) Stalks and leaves are indeed “low-energy” foods, but fruit contains considerably more nutritional value and is much easier to digest.

In addition, both sagittal crests and nuchal crests can be observed in the cranial morphology of extinct hominids, most noticeably in the more derived forms of Australopithecine. “Because the major changes (between gracile and robust australopithecines) are in the teeth, jaws, and chewing characteristics, a different diet seems ... likely...”. (Relethford, pg 326) In what way was their diet different? “Their diet is thought to have consisted of small, hard-to-chew objects, such as seeds, nuts, and hard fruits. Such objects require heavy chewing and large teeth.” (Ibid)

To understand the relationship between heavy chewing and the sagittal crest one must understand that its function is as an anchor point for the temporalis muscle which has its origin on the skull and its insertion on the coronoid process of the mandible. The nuchal crest, on the other hand, serves only to anchor the muscles which travel down the back of the neck helping to hold the head upright and has no correlation with an animal’s diet. Prominent nuchal crests are visible in the skulls of most extant great apes and many extinct hominids. Indeed, the confluence of these crests forms the bulk of the visible crest on an individual animal’s head. Both the sagittal and nuchal crests are “purely functional; they have no phylogenetic valence at all.” (Class notes, Spring, 2000) Thus the vastly larger comparative size between human and gorilla (and Sasquatch) temporalis muscles (and concomitantly, the sagittal crest) is a reflection of a diet with an abundance of small, hard food objects.

The size of the crest visible on the head of the Patterson film subject is not at all uncharacteristic of what one would expect to see in a female gorilla of equivalent size (800 pounds). However, since female gorillas do not attain this size Bebee’s reference is made to adhere to known dimensions and conditions. What is being ignored here that is absolutely pertinent is the scientific principle of allometry. Also known as “scaling”, it is the differential proportion among various anatomical structures. “Moreover, scaling effects must also be considered when comparing species.” (Jurmain, et. al., pg 483) Thus the statements of Napier and others regarding the contradiction of a visible crest with the otherwise female appearance of the film subject is not warranted when discussing such an immense creature.



## **The Body**

The second apparent contradiction which Bebee points out (and which Napier gives credence to) is the lack of a visibly “protuberant abdomen”. The abdomen of the film subject is hardly what one would consider svelte. The entire torso, as visible in several frames of the film, is extremely deep. Once again, the inference is made that since Gorillas have a “pot-bellied” appearance and a visible crest, how can the Sasquatch have one without the other? The answer is simple. Gorillas, and all the great apes, are habitual and obligate quadrupeds. The Sasquatch, on the other hand, is obviously completely bipedal.

In apes, the pelvis, made up of the ossa coxae and the sacrum, is devoid of supportive function with the iliac blades lying along the back of the animal parallel to the vertebral column. In essence, the viscera are held in place by the abdominal muscles in a “suspensory” fashion. In other words, the stomach is free to hang down in great apes, whereas in bipeds the viscera are supported in the “bowl” of the pelvis to a great extent. Secondly if small and/or hard food items are the dietary component which accounts for the presence of the sagittal crest (rather than high cellulose content plant matter) the larger intestinal tract (and therefore the “pot-bellied” appearance) would not be necessary.



Napier’s own analysis of the overall image of the film subject can be summed up with his statement: “The upper half of the body bears some resemblance to an ape and the lower half is typically human. It is almost impossible to conceive that such structural hybrids could exist in nature “. Such an obviously erroneous statement is not what one would expect from someone of Napier’s knowledge. The notion of “mosaic evolution” is well established in the hominid fossil record. The robust australopithecines in particular show hyper-robust cranial features along with an essentially human lower-body. Even the more delicately built forms of australopithecine demonstrate “ape-like” cranial features (small brain, maxillary prognathism) along with an essential “modern” pelvic girdle and associated anatomy. This makes Napier’s notion that such a “structural hybrid” could not exist in nature scientifically unsound.

The final point of contention regarding the body is what Dr. William Montagna, then the director of the Regional Primate Research Center in Beaverton, Oregon, points out regarding the breasts of the film subject. Napier quotes him as saying: “human female breasts do not bear hairs however hirsute the rest of the body. “ (Napier, pg 92) Additionally, Dimitri Bayanov notes in his book “America’s Bigfoot: Fact, Not Fiction” that:

*“If Sasquatches were to read all of the learned criticisms of their filmed sister, they would find it to be a staple of Sasquatch humor. And first prize would undoubtedly go by a unanimous vote to Dr. William Montagna for his defense of propriety in the question of Sasquatch breasts. The question: Is it right for a female Sasquatch to grow hair on her mammary glands? Dr. Montagna’s definitive answer: No, it is not! And he has short shrift for anyone inclined to the contrary. To wit: The crowning irony was Patterson’s touch of glamour making his monster into a female with large pendulous breasts. If Patterson had done his homework, he would have known that regardless of how hirsute an animal is, its mammary glands are always covered with such short hairs as to appear naked.” (Bayanov, pg 149)*

Dr. Montagna’s comment holds true for many animals, in particular the great apes. However, the extant great apes are residents of the tropical equatorial world. A quick look at primates living in colder climates, in particular several species of macaques and langurs, would show that lactating females have very noticeably hirsute breasts with only the nipple devoid of hair. The North American Sasquatch is also a denizen of much more temperate areas, and could therefore be expected to follow the evolutionary example of the latter.

## The Feet

Finally, the feet of the Patterson Film subject, and their relative proportions, are called into question. Napier refers to the analysis of his associate, anatomist Dr. Don Grieve, when approaching the question of the gait of the creature on the film.

*“A stature of 6 ft. 5 in. is fine; there is no reason to exclude the Sasquatch on these grounds. But the footprints associated with this creature are totally at variance with its calculated height. The footprints are said to have been between 14 in. and 15 in. in length. On the basis of the coefficient given on p. 119 this should equate with a stature of 7 ft. 8 in.-8 ft. 3 in. The space (the step) between one footprint and the next is given as 41 in. A creature of 6 ft. 5 in. in height should have a step of 45 in., particularly, as is seen in the film, when striding out. In fact in view of the exaggerated nature of the walk, the step might be expected to be somewhat longer than the normal, say 50 in.”*

In the above paragraph Dr. Napier is arguing that the feet of the film subject are too large for its body. This is determined by generating figures using a length/width index for the feet as well as a big-toe index. Scalar comparisons of known examples of human feet often deviate out of expected range, however, and little can possibly be gleaned from such a comparison except the fact that the range of foot size in the Sasquatch reflects typical variation expected within a species. Indeed, the greater overall surface area created by the large dimensions of the foot would closely support the appearance of great bulk in the film subject, and the subsequent need to provide adequate support for the same.

Napier further muddies the issue by suggesting that the film subject is “striding-out” and, in effect, exaggerating the length of stride. From repetitive viewing of the film it is evident that the subject, to the contrary, is rather reserved in its stride due to the visible lack of full lower leg extension between heel-strike and toe-off. Thus, the notion that a greater stride length would be expected is unfounded.

## Conclusions

In closing, it would appear that the “frame of reference” for Napier’s analysis was much too limited in its scope. In essence he was “drawing inside the box”, instead of looking outside of it for the needed answers. This is what one would expect of a cautious, academic approach to the subject in the early 1970s, especially from such a well-respected anthropologist not wanting to draw undue ridicule. Unfortunately for Dr. Napier, this occurred nonetheless. Despite the obliqueness of his conclusions on the Patterson Film subject and other “hairy hominoids”, he was harassed as a result, as have been subsequent scientifically minded authors on the subject. Even so, he ends his book with the inclusion of the statement: *“I am convinced that the Sasquatch exists, but whether it is all that it is cracked up to be is another matter altogether.”*

As a final note I quote from a current Anthropological text:

*“Not all scientists were ready for such a theory from such an unlikely place. Hence, his report was received with indifference, disbelief, and even caustic scorn. He realized that more complete remains were needed. The skeptical world would not accept the evidence of one partial immature individual, no matter how suggestive the clues.” (Jurmain, et. al., pg 277)*

The person and discovery in question were Raymond Dart and his “Taung Child”, the type specimen for *Australopithecus africanus* discovered in South Africa in 1924. It is included here only to demonstrate the apparent level to which the bar had been raised in another case. With a dearth of substantive Sasquatch evidence we too must find something more tangible than film and footprints in order to make a solid case for the existence of our subject. Hopefully this century will provide us with the evidence, which the last did not.

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## **The 12th Annual Bigfoot Conference (a.k.a. The Bigfoot Expo)**

Once again *The Tri-State Bigfoot Study Group* presented a fascinating annual gathering in Newcomerstown, Ohio. The conference held there has become a staple in North America for those with an interest in Hominology, in particular the Bigfoot or Sasquatch of North America. This years conference, the 12th annual one, was held on April 8, 2000 and boasted 225 attendees.

On the schedule of speakers were Dr. John Bindernagel from Courteny, British Columbia, Scott Herriott of San Francisco, California, Ron Schaffner from Milford, Ohio and Larry Lund from Vancouver, Washington. Additionally Ray Crowe of *The Western Bigfoot Society* from Hillsboro, Oregon spoke briefly as well. Originally slated to speak was Loren Coleman of Portland, Maine, however due to some personal reasons he was unable to attend the conference and Larry Lund took his place as speaker.

One of the treats of these annual conferences is the privilege of hearing these fine speakers talk to the audience and share their understanding of the mystery at hand. From encounters they have experienced or researched, to their analysis and findings regarding films and photographs to viewpoints on evidence collection. Each speaker adds a bit to the attendee's knowledge base in regards to these creatures in question. But, they do it in a manner that is not condescending to the audience, but as researchers and interested parties, equals in the search for understanding.

In this round of talks the audience was shown a wide range of topics. Dr. John Bindernagel, author of North America's Great Ape: the Sasquatch (Beachcomber Books, Courtenay. B.C., 1998) presented information on eyewitness testimony and how sketches by the witnesses can add to an understanding of what was seen. He also demonstrated how slowly the idea of Sasquatch biological evaluations are being acclimated to by various Primate and Wildlife Societies. While Larry Lund (a.k.a. the "*Sasquatch Sleuth*") presented information on a range of video footages from the infamous Redwoods Tape to the Snow-walker tape. An interesting addition was also in regards to the Paterson - Gimlin Film, and the methodology he went through to find two dead spots in the tape wherein Roger Patterson in all likelihood released the camera trigger for a brief second causing a white are on the film. Not a piece of detrimental evidence, or celebratory evidence, but to show how even now things can be found if you look long enough.

Ron Schaffner treated the audience to some basic interview and evidence gathering techniques using personal examples and common sense approaches. From ways to gather information from a newspaper source to how to collect samples without harming the sample or yourself. Some people after the conference felt Ron was a bit condescending to the audience and perhaps a bit rude, however these people fail to understand that one must be steadfast in methodology to screen evidence and testimony. These same methodologies were what Ron was showing the audience in a matter of fact way.

Scott Herriott spoke to the group regarding his encounters in California and how the media twisted some of it around. HE also showed a full airing of his classic and hysterical pseudo-documentary entitled *Journey Towards Squatchdom* (Soka Soka Productions, 22:18 minutes). In this documentary Scott shows the lighter side of Bigfooting, and how it is important for us all to have a sense of humor about the area. After all, we all need a laugh now and then, why not at our selves. Ray Crowe spoke as well, detailing some of the recent events in the Pacific Northwest, including a recent meeting between Joe Beelart and Bob Gimlin (of the Patterson-Gimlin Film duo).

Aside from the vendors selling various wares, the audience had the opportunity to talk one on one with each other and the speakers. This is perhaps the most important thing about the conference, the interactions between interested people. Some of which only get to see each other once a year. Luke Gross, Craig Woolheater, Richard LaMonica, Mike Lanzillo, Dawn and Marc DeWorth, Jeff DeWorth, Don Keating (chairman of *The Tri-State Bigfoot Study Group* and coordinator of the conference), Eric Altman, Chris Kraska, Lauri Facsina, Bob Daigle, Michael Gates, Richard Myers, Peter Massaro, Smokey Crabtree (yes, of *The Legend of Bogey Creek*, and a speaker from the 11th Conference returned to sell his wares and see people again), Karen Barbee, John Livermore, Bill Miller, Randy Fisher and more were present from states from Colorado, Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Indian, Illinois, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, New Hampshire, Delaware, California, Oregon, New Jersey and beyond.

If you have never had the honor of attending one of these conferences, make plans now to go in 2001. At the rate they are going the 13th Annual Conference will be as good if not better than the 12th .



## **Hoan Kiem Turtle - A Tale of the Sword**

**By Craig Heinselman**

Le Loi, in 1418 organized a resistance in the village of Lam Son of the Thanh Hoa Province of the future Vietnam. This first resistance organization by Loi marked the beginning of over ten years of warfare against the Chinese. His tactics were the essence of guerrilla warfare, attacking the weaker areas of a front and then retreating before stronger reinforcements could arrive. Hence, showing strength through selective battles to chisel weakness into a warring sanction. Yet, despite his war discipline for battle, Loi controlled his fighters in a disciplined manner, which through avoidance of raiding villages won the support of the people in the area. This in turn turning the entire environment against the Chinese military approach. It was through these honorable methods of fighting and compassion that the Chinese army was defeated in 1428. During the negotiations a new king was selected as a reestablishment of the Tran Dynasty, King Tran Cao held rule.

King Tran Cao however was but a token king, and fearing he would be dishonored by not being able to rule as king, he fled. Subsequently he was captured and forced to commit suicide by drinking poison. With the death of King Tran Cao a new king was to be taken. The warrior who fought against the Chinese and was key in their defeat was chosen. Le Loi was to be king under the name of Le Thai To, hence starting the Le Dynasty in 1428. With this new dynasty the country became Dai Vet (formerly An Nam). Under his rule until his death in 1433 at the age of 49, King Le Thai To reorganized the country that would become Vietnam. The military was cut by over 50% to allow men to return to the fields, the returning men alleviated the food shortages through this allowance. Judiciary practices were reinstated and educational outlets were established. All in all the first king of the Le Dynasty brought rejuvenation to his country long harassed and impoverished.

This important man was crucial in the history of Vietnam. But, his historical legacy also places a part in the story of a small band of turtles now located in Hanoi City, Vietnam. It was after Le Loi defeated the Chinese and became King Le Thai To that he happened to be on the water of Luc Thuy (Green Water or Green Lake). While crossing this lake a large turtle appeared and King Le Thai To pointed his sword (which was invaluable in his fighting of the Chinese) at the turtle. The turtle in turn grabbed hold of the sword and pulled it from the Kings hand and submerged back into the water. King Le Thai To in desperation declared that the lake was to be searched for his sword, but neither the sword nor the turtle was found. King Le Thai To finally accepted the swords loss and felt it was justifiable returned to his protectors during the war. He renamed Luc Thuy as Ho Hoan Kiem, known today as Hoan Kiem Lake or the Lake of the Returned Sword (or Restored Sword). This legend of the lake varies depending on the interpreter, from the turtle imploring the King to return the sword to the Dragon King and having the sword shake and fly from the Kings hands, to the King draining the lake in search of his sword. Regardless of the interpretation, the end result was that the turtle took the sword, and by doing so the name of the lake altered and became a legendary lake, with a legendary giant turtle. The turtle though is no longer a piece of legend though, it is real and they are still within Hoan Kiem Lake situated in Hanoi City, the capital of Vietnam.

Since 1991 Professor Ha Dinh Duc, of the Faculty of Biology, University of Science, Vietnam National University of Hanoi, has been researching the reported sightings of large turtles within Hoan Kiem Lake. He has collected 111 sightings of the animals in that time frame, as well as sighted them several times himself over the years. At this point you may simply be asking, *"So what. They are just turtles?"* You would be right, they are indeed just turtles sighted in a lake, but turtles of a particular kind if Professor Ha Dinh Duc is correct in his research findings, turtles new to science. A new species of turtle tied to a legend from nearly 600 years ago, the Hoan Kiem Turtle.

It is an accepted fact that turtles do exist in the lake, this is not a dispute. Only the species of turtles present is a dispute. Even biological texts such as the Vietnam Red Data Book places the Hoan Kiem Turtle within its text, in this case within the classification of *Pelochelys bibroni*. While the organization Conservation International places the Hoan Kiem Turtle within the classification of *Rafetus swinhoei* in a 1999 press release entitled *Profiles of Turtles in Trouble*. Despite the mingled classification, the Hoan Kiem Turtle does indeed have a peculiar connection to these various turtles mentioned already, it is a soft-shelled turtle, hence at least a partial classification can be made, that of the family *Trionychidae*.

The family *Trionychidae* is made up of strictly soft-shelled species. This term of soft-shelled turtle means that the turtles lack the characteristic hard outer protective shell (the dorsal carapace and ventral plastron) commonly associated with turtles and tortoises (testudines). Rather these turtles have a low profile shell with an elongated shape in the adult. This low profile shell is made up of a leathery skin that may cover a reduced amount of peripheral bones causing a flap like appearance, additionally the plastron may be incompletely ossified or cartilaginous. The physicality of the soft-shelled turtle is also slightly different than standard shelled turtles, with three-clawed feet that are completely webbed to a narrow head situated on a long neck with a heavy double holed proboscis nose. It can therefore be stated relatively safely that there are five recognized species of turtles of the family *Trionychidae* within Vietnam, these being: *Pelochelys bibroni*, *Pelodiscus sinensis* (Chinese soft-shelled turtle), *Palea steindachneri* and *Amyda cartilaginea* (Black rayed soft-shelled turtle), additionally a specimen of *Rafetus swinhoei* was collected from Hanoi, Vietnam in 1914. And further it can be stated that the Hoan Kiem Turtle must belong to either one of these species or another undescribed species altogether.

What therefore makes these turtles of Hoan Kiem Lake special? That answer is the mystery, are they indeed a species known to exist and yet unclassified as to specific genus and species? Even more so is the tantalizing history of the lake and its cultural history in regards to turtles, a truer case could not be found for a historical enigma, a mystery of the past.

Various people have theorized as to what these turtles are, but Professor Ha Dinh Duc is by far the leading authority on these animals. From his research various characteristics emerge that show a morphological difference to these turtles in question. The turtles head size for instance is larger than *Pelochelys bibroni* and *Rafetus swinhoei*, whilst their shell form is a murky gray color with a pinkish hue to the underside, coupled with a less protruded snout. The skull itself of the Hoan Kiem turtles also varies in detail from the genus *Pelochelys* and *Amyda*. (specifics of this variation cannot be given at this time as Professor Duc's description of the turtles is awaiting publication in the *Chelonian Conservation and Biology Journal*).

The facts though remain that even if by eliminating some of the possibilities through general morphological comparisons, the possibilities of regional and genetic variation within a small population of animals exists. Even under severe conditions a change in coloration and pattern can occur. Such a case happened in the United States in the 1940's. Wherein a specimen of *Amyda spinifera hartwegi* captured in the wild and placed in a tank within the University of Kansas. In the course of a year with no attention and virtually no food or natural sunlight, the turtle changed in color.. The end results from histological studies suggested a form of metabolic disorder associated with the environment the turtle was in or a form of delayed melanism (back pigmentation, most commonly associated with a black panther in zoo's). So under severe conditions and a harsh ecological environment, certain variations in color can and do appear in turtles, particularly in the case of soft-shelled turtles wherein the blood vessels are closer to the exterior of the body due to the minimization of the carapace. This is not to say that the Hoan Kiem turtle are just a color variation or regional variation, this cannot be substantiated strictly by way of color changes and coloration of an animal.

What is needed is a physical comparison between a known species and a physical specimen of Hoan Kiem turtle. Such a case is possible, and has been done. To date three specimens of turtles thought to be Hoan Kiem Turtles exist. These include a stuffed specimen in Ngoc Son Temple in the island in the middle of Hoan Kiem Lake, the skeletal form of another and another stuffed specimen. Coupled with various pictures of living Hoan Kiem turtles, the end result is indeed amazing.



These two pictures for example to the left taken by Professor Ha Dinh Duc on March 14, 2000 show a turtle that has an estimated carapace length of 1.8 meters and weight of 200 kilograms (nearly 6 feet in size and over 400 pounds). The man in the picture (from the Ngoc Son Temple) further demonstrates the size of these turtles. We are not talking about a box or painted turtles here, but a large omnivore the size of a human being.



Furthermore by looking at these images one can readily see the pigmentation ascribed by Professor Duc with a gray mottled upper shell and a pinkish coloration to the underside. The snout in the upper image further demonstrates the shallow and blunt appearance of the protruding head and nasal areas of the turtle. In essence the pictures offer you a chance to visually see that these turtles are not just there to be ignored and thought of as “*Oh it is just a turtle*”.

On a sadder note though, these turtles may not be around for much longer. Although some initial reports stated fewer than six of these turtles are alive, the actual number is unknown as no hard population census has been done. What is known is that not many of these turtles are present, and that they are known from Hoan Kiem Lake alone, with possible associated species or the same species in other Vietnamese locals. With tourism and industry, the ecology of Hoan Kiem Lake does suffer, with it the well being of these turtles. But on a brighter note, a possible egg of one such turtle was found on April 7, 2000 and is now being incubated. This egg measures 26 x 50 millimeters in size and was found alone, unlike a previous find of a batch of eggs probably from *Pelodiscus sinensis* which is smaller at 18 millimeters in diameter. This egg, if from a Hoan Kiem Turtle shows that at least hope is not lost that an egg of a new generation has been produced.

These turtles called *Rafetus hoankiemensis* in an article from *The Vietnam Investment Review* from January 2000, demonstrate how large animals can still live within our grasps. It is important to understand the placement of these animals within zoological classification, however it is perhaps more important to understand how these same animals fit into a cultural basis. In Vietnam the turtle is held sacred, as such blood and tissue samples of a living specimen will in all likelihood not be taken, and have not to date. Comparison then must lie to the preserved

specimens mentioned before. These in turn exhibit marked cranial and shell difference from other *Trionychidae* of Vietnam, as well as marked morphological differences and pigmentation differences. So although genetic material is not available for comparison, the basic data for comparison and extraction is. That extraction of information leads to the conclusion of a distinct new species of turtle in Hoan Kiem Lake, genus *Rafetus*. Although it could still be debated that due to a small reproductive population certain isolated variations in appearance have occurred constituting not necessarily a new species but a variation of an existing one such as *Rafetus swinhoei*.

*Rafetus hoankiemensis* may not be the turtle's scientific designation, the actual nomenclature lies within Professor Duc's description paper. Designation significance or not, these animals need not be neglected or forgotten as just an ordinary turtle. For they are they are the tale of the sword, a hold over from half a millennium ago.

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*Vietnam Investment Review*, January 10, 2000

## **News Note: Two New Linyphiidae Species from North America**

Researchers working on a \$48,000 dollar bio-diversity survey for the Lake County Forest Preserve in Illinois (United States) have uncovered two new arachnids. These little spiders belong to the *Linyphiidae* family and are known as sheet-web weavers. The spiders of this weaver type range in size up to just under a quarter of an inch (.125 inches or 3.2 millimeters) and are terrestrial living at the floor of forests in North America. Currently around 900 known species of *Linyphiidae* are known.

Thomas Prentice identified the spiders by examining them under a microscope, the genitalia of the spiders aids in these identifications. Prentice then sent the specimens from the University of California (Riverside) to Charles Dondale of Ottawa, Canada for verification. The two spiders belong to different genera. A single specimen of female was collected at Spring Bluff Forest Preserve and is a member of the *Ceraticelus* genus. A male and female specimen was collected from the Elm Road Forest Preserve and belong to the genus *Meioneta*. A third specimen was also initial thought to be a new discovery, however Dondale was able to identify it as *Halorates plumosus*. To date these two new spiders have not been formerly described, and this may wait indefinitely. Thomas Prentice is involved with studies of tarantulas in the United States and the revision of the *Aphonopelma* genus and does not plan to pursue publication of these two new spiders at this point.

Eventually these spider specimens will be sent to the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois. There perhaps someone will take it upon themselves to do a full evaluation on the specimens and update the genera classifications for *Ceraticelus* and *Meioneta* to include these native specimens. Prentice has still to present a published version of the analysis, so the hard species classification is not present yet.

### **Sources:**

Newbart, Dave, New Spider Species Found, *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 4, 2000

Prentice, Thomas, Personal Correspondence April 14, 2000

Sulkin, Ryan, Local Discovery of Spider Species Highlights How Little We Know, *Chicago Daily Herald*, April 12, 2000

## **News Notes: Genetically Different Elephants**

Researchers at the Natural History Museum in Paris have performed genetic tests on Coca, an elephant at the Vincennes Zoo in Paris. These tests show a genetic difference between Coco and traditional savannah elephants, indicating that the forest dwelling elephants of Africa are a separate species than the savannah elephants. Although this idea of two species has been suggested before, these genetic tests are the clearest differential. With mitochondria DNA (mtDNA) first being analyzed and then latter nuclear DNA. The results show that the forest elephants differ from the savannah elephants perhaps as much as the savannah elephants differ from the Asian elephants. More tests from a wider gene pool that just Coco are needed for determination, but the basic results are encouraging.

### **Sources:**

Scientists name new species of elephant, *Australian Broadcasting Company*, March 29, 2000

Africa is home to not one but two species of elephants, *New Scientist Magazine*, April 1, 2000

*Academie des Sciences Volume 322*

**Reviews:**

**Note: All reviews by Craig Heinselman unless stated otherwise.**

If your looking to purchase one of these books, known sources that carry them are listed by each title. Additionally use the ISBN number and order it through a local bookstore in your area (always best to support local merchants if possible). Additionally a five star rating system has been utilized, the highest rating is henceforth five stars ★★★★★ and the lowest rating one star ★ These ratings appear next to the publisher, year and length of item (as applicable to media being reviewed).

**A Fish Caught in Time**

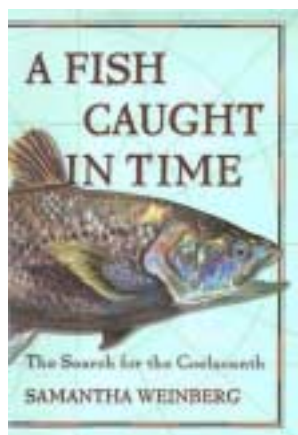
Authors: Samantha Weinberg

ISBN 0-06-019495-2

Harper Collins, New York, 2000, 220 pages, \$24.00

★★★★★

Available through Amazon.com



Weinberg has presented in her book a detailed history of perhaps the favorite fish of cryptozoology, the *coelacanth*. A story of rediscovery, personality conflicts, human triumph, and amazement in a constant rotation.

Although Weinberg is not the first to write of this important zoological discovery, she does it in a manner that is presentable to the layperson. Wherein works such as Dr. Keith Thomson's Living Fossil (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1991) dealt more with the scientific understanding of the animal through biological examination and J.L.B. Smith's classic Old Fourlegs (Longmans, Green and Co., Toronto, 1956) dealt with his work regarding the *coelacanth*, neither dealt with the entire epic of the discovery.

Using records and documents obtained from such people as Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (whose named is forever tied to the *coelacanth*s scientific designation of *Latimeria chalumnae*), members of the J.L.B. Smith Institute, Jerry Hamlin (the creator of a website called dinofish.com that deals with *coelacanth* protection and safe returning operations), to William Smith (son of J.L.B. Smith), Weinberg has given us the people behind the fish. More to the point, Weinberg has allowed us to essentially live with the discovery from 1938 to the Indonesian population find that began in 1997. The people, places and idiosyncrasies each had are displayed.

For example, J.L.B. Smith committed suicide on January 8, 1968, a transcript of a note to his wife Margaret Smith (who did many of the early artistic depiction's of ocean life for her husbands work) is presented on page 112 of the book:

*"Goodbye my love, and thank you for a wonderful thirty years. I am going upstairs to the servant's room. Careful. Cyanide."*

These inclusions add the touch of humanity that many past books lack. To understand a discovery is to understand not only the find, but the people and practices that went into the discovery. To anticipate and worry over doing the right thing, or making the right decision. Too often we are only presented with the cold facts, and not the life behind the facts. For showing us these lives behind the *coelacanth*, Samantha Weinberg is to be commended and her book cherished.



### **My Quest for the Yeti**

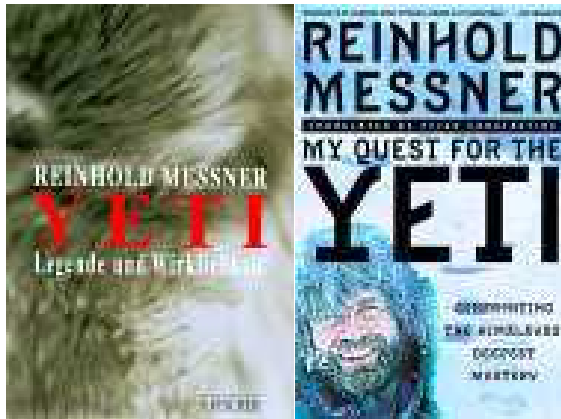
Authors: Reinhold Messner (translated by Peter Constantine)

ISBN 0-312-20394-2

St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, 169 pages, \$23.95

☆☆☆

Available through Amazon.com for the English language version. Available through amazon.de for the German language version published as Yeti: Legende und Wirklichkeit (S. Fischer, 1998), ISBN 3-10-049411-3 for DM 39,80.



Reinhold Messner has written this book as an explanation to the riddle of what the Yeti is. Messner, a mountaineer and explorer, does deserve credit for explaining the hardships of exploring the harsh environments of the Tibet mountains. But, there the credit slows. For the book Messner has presented to us is the explanation of the Yeti as a giant bear that walks almost always on two feet without leaving claw impressions in the snow or soil. This is not to say that such a bear does not exist, nor that Messner is erroneous in the assumption of this bear, however the supporting evidence is not presented.

One such faulty statement from the English translation occurs on page 94:

*“In the meantime, a new kind of yeti hysteria was spouting in the West. Some scientists began to speculate that it might be possible that a few specimens of Gigantopithecus - presumed to have become extinct some three hundred thousand years ago - may have survived in Central Asia. A few zoologists supported this theory. Soon these gigantic apes were populating the imagination of millions. As to the question of why nobody had ever found any, a simple answer was formulated: because these animals were shy and lived in remote areas. This somehow managed to ignore the fact that the four corners of the earth had been fully explored and observed by satellites.”*

Yes, Gigantopithecus is a theorized possibility for the Yeti by some, but not all. But to avoid explaining why it could not be the culprit of reports, instead to wave it off by saying the scientists are wrong in that all of the earth has been explored. If the entire earth has been explored, then why are ancient ruins still be found in the jungles and medium sized animals still being found, including larger mammals such as Rhinoceros in Vietnam.

Other statements throughout the book show a strong detest towards other researchers and historical examples. Such a case involved the enigmatic Minnesota Iceman. The case is well known by most people with an interest in Hominology, as well as being fairly well documented. Yet, Messner states :

*“Zoologists drew pictures of this iceman and described his features as being those of a hominid. No one thought to crack the ice and remove tissue samples.”*

These scientists mentioned were Bernard Heuvelmans and Ivan Sanderson. Both well known at the time for their work in regards to Cryptozoology and Hominology, and still well known to this very day. And although pictures were drawn, photographic evidence was taken. Moreso, the investigating Heuvelmans and Sanderson where only allowed to view the creature through the ice, but did report the smell of rotting flesh from small cracks in the ice. Whether the creature was a relic hominid or some undescribed ape, it remains that the description of the event in Messner's book does not even begin to touch on the factual basis behind the Minnesota Iceman.

On the other hand though Messner does not exclude the possibility that a relic hominid of sorts could exist elsewhere in the world:

*"To be fair, it is quite possible that mummified mammals corresponding to descriptions of the yeti might still be found buried in the arctic permafrost.. And too little is known about the existence of cave bears in Central Asia (in Europe they became extinct during the last ice age) to pass final judgment on the origins of the yeti. Time will tell whether Neanderthal-like creatures, offshoots of the human genealogical tree, might have survived in the rugged mountains of Central Asia and Mangolia.."*

Although the book comes across as an egotistical chronicle of one mans correctness and everyone else's wrongness in regards to the creature commonly called in the West, Yeti. It does deserve to be read, as some of the basic theories are interesting. For example color variations and behavior variations of the Yeti, or Chemo as it is called within the book, can be ascribed to various age and sexual characteristics. To avoid humans the creatures are nocturnal (a theory many people hold), and that although the reports come from all over the Himalayan regions, they are for the most part stories passed on by others, similar to the Western worlds bogeyman.

*"Yeti is a collective term for all the monsters of the Himalayas, real or imagined. It is the abominable snowman, that Western fantasy, as well as the chemo and dremo. My perspective was no longer Western. I did not believe yetis were relics of a prehistoric anthropoid species that had managed to survive undetected. The yeti was a living creature, not a figment of the imagination, that corresponded to the brown bear (Ursus arctus). After all, in an ancient Tibetan dialect, yeti translates as "snow bear". I hasten to add that this is an extraordinary animal - fearsome and preternaturally intelligent, as far as possible from the cuddly image people of the West sometimes have of bears"*

Renhold Messner's theories regarding the Yeti and the cultural basis for it should not be neglected or tossed aside. He is allowed to have his own ideas, as have others as to single species or multiple species responsible for the Yeti legends. Just because Messner's ideas do not jive with these other ideas does not make them incorrect. We all do not have the answers at hand, and until the answers are fully acquired the truth behind the Yeti history is but a theory.

Messner's book is worth reading for this alternative perspective. The pictures presented are nice, however the color versions in the German language text are more breathtaking (as well as having more of them). Messner may come across as egotistical and a bit Western world hating, and this may turn away some readers. But, he has been to the areas in question and spoken to these people, for that his story should be read and looked at as a whole.

*Cryptofiction:*

***The Relic of the Pliocene***

**By Jack London**

Jack London (1876-1916), a prominent early twentieth-century writer, is one of the most cherished of American writers. During his brief writing career of 21 years (1895 - 1916), he penned some 22 novels and 188 short stories, not counting in works of non-fiction and essay. London is best known for his works dealing with the South Seas and wilds of the Northern areas of North America. Wherein such classic works as The Call of the Wild (1903) and The Sea-Wolf (1904) act as tributes to the wilds of the Earth and also the savagery of man and nature, a core element in much of London's writings.

Among London's vast array of short stories are a number that deal with what modern society would call fanciful fiction, fantasy, horror or science-fiction. A gem of a story stands out from these tales, one fitting of a cryptozoological viewpoint. *The Relic of the Pliocene* was written in 1900, and first appeared in a collected work of stories entitled The Faith of Men (1901). The Relic of the Pliocene is presented here in its entirety, while reading it look beyond the tale and see how various elements of the story are wound around a raw savagery and power of the natural force presented in the form of the source of the muclucs.

I wash my hands of him at the start. I cannot father his tales, nor will I be responsible for them. I make these preliminary reservations, observe, as a guard upon my own integrity. I possess a certain definite position in a small way, also a wife; and for the good name of the community that honours my existence with its approval, and for the sake of her posterity and mine, I cannot take the chances I once did, nor foster probabilities with the careless improvidence of youth. So, I repeat, I wash my hands of him, this Nimrod, this mighty hunter, this homely, blue-eyed, freckle-faced Thomas Stevens.

Having been honest to myself, and to whatever prospective olive branches my wife may be pleased to tender me, I can now afford to be generous. I shall not criticize the tales told me by Thomas Stevens, and, further, I shall withhold my judgment. If it be asked why, I can only add that judgment I have none. Long have I pondered, weighed, and balanced, but never have my conclusions been twice the same—forsooth! because Thomas Stevens is a greater man than I. If he have told truths, well and good; if untruths, still well and good. For who can prove? or who disprove? I eliminate myself from the proposition, while those of little faith may do as I have done—go find the same Thomas Stevens, and discuss to his face the various matters which, if fortune serve, I shall relate. As to where he may be found? The directions are simple: anywhere between 53 north latitude and the Pole, on the one hand; and, on the other, the likeliest hunting grounds that lie between the east coast of Siberia and farthestmost Labrador. That he is there, somewhere, within that clearly defined territory, I pledge the word of an honourable man whose expectations entail straight speaking and right living.

Thomas Stevens may have toyed prodigiously with truth, but when we first met (it were well to mark this point), he wandered into my camp when I thought myself a thousand miles beyond the outermost post of civilization. At the sight of his human face, the first in weary months, I could have sprung forward and folded him in my arms (and I am not by any means a demonstrative man); but to him his visit seemed the most casual thing under the sun. He just strolled into the light of my camp, passed the time of day after the custom of men on beaten trails, threw my snowshoes the one way and a couple of dogs the other, and so made room for himself by the fire. Said he'd just dropped in to borrow a pinch of soda and to see if I had any decent tobacco. He plucked forth an ancient pipe, loaded it with painstaking care, and, without as much as by your leave, whacked half the tobacco of my pouch into his. Yes, the stuff was fairly good. He sighed with the contentment of the just, and literally absorbed the smoke from the crisping yellow flakes, and it did my smoker's heart good to behold him.

Hunter? Trapper? Prospector? He shrugged his shoulders No; just sort of knocking round a bit. Had come up from the Great Slave some time since, and was thinking of tramping over into the Yukon country. The factor of Koshim had spoken about the discoveries on the Klondike, and he was of a mind to run over for a peep. I noticed that he spoke of the Klondike in the archaic vernacular, calling it the Reindeer River—a conceited custom that the Old Timers employ against the CHECHAQUAS and all tenderfeet in general. But he did it so naively and as such a matter of course, that there was no sting, and I forgave him. He also had it in view, he said, before he crossed the divide into the Yukon, to make a little run up Fort o' Good Hope way.

Now Fort o' Good Hope is a far journey to the north, over and beyond the Circle, in a place where the feet of few men have trod; and when a nondescript ragamuffin comes in out of the night, from nowhere in particular, to sit by one's fire and discourse on such in terms of "tramping" and "a little run," it is fair time to rouse up and shake off the dream. Wherefore I looked about me; saw the fly and, underneath, the pine boughs spread for the sleeping furs; saw the grub sacks, the camera, the frosty breaths of the dogs circling on the edge of the light; and, above, a great streamer of the aurora, bridging the zenith from south-east to north-west. I shivered. There is a magic in the Northland night, that steals in on one like fevers from malarial marshes. You are clutched and downed before you are aware. Then I looked to the snowshoes, lying prone and crossed where he had flung them. Also I had an eye to my tobacco pouch. Half, at least, of its goodly store had vanished. That settled it. Fancy had not tricked me after all.

Crazed with suffering, I thought, looking steadfastly at the man—one of those wild stampededers, strayed far from his bearings and wandering like a lost soul through great vastnesses and unknown deeps. Oh, well, let his moods slip on, until, mayhap, he gathers his tangled wits together. Who knows?—the mere sound of a fellow-creature's voice may bring all straight again.

So I led him on in talk, and soon I marveled, for he talked of game and the ways thereof. He had killed the Siberian wolf of westernmost Alaska, and the chamois in the secret Rockies. He averred he knew the haunts where the last buffalo still roamed; that he had hung on the flanks of the caribou when they ran by the hundred thousand, and slept in the Great Barrens on the musk-ox's winter trail.

And I shifted my judgment accordingly (the first revision, but by no account the last), and deemed him a monumental effigy of truth. Why it was I know not, but the spirit moved me to repeat a tale told to me by a man who had dwelt in the land too long to know better. It was of the great bear that hugs the steep slopes of St Elias, never descending to the levels of the gentler inclines. Now God so constituted this creature for its hillside habitat that the legs of one side are all of a foot longer than those of the other. This is mighty convenient, as will be reality admitted. So I hunted this rare beast in my own name, told it in the first person, present tense, painted the requisite locale, gave it the necessary garnishings and touches of verisimilitude, and looked to see the man stunned by the recital.

Not he. Had he doubted, I could have forgiven him. Had he objected, denying the dangers of such a hunt by virtue of the animal's inability to turn about and go the other way—had he done this, I say, I could have taken him by the hand for the true sportsman that he was. Not he. He sniffed, looked on me, and sniffed again; then gave my tobacco due praise, thrust one foot into my lap, and bade me examine the gear. It was a MUCLUC of the Innu pattern, sewed together with sinew threads, and devoid of beads or furbelows. But it was the skin itself that was remarkable. In that it was all of half an inch thick, it reminded me of walrus-hide; but there the resemblance ceased, for no walrus ever bore so marvellous a growth of hair. On the side and ankles this hair was well-nigh worn away, what of friction with underbrush and snow; but around the top and down the more sheltered back it was coarse, dirty black, and very thick. I parted it with difficulty and looked beneath for the fine fur that is common with northern animals, but found it in this case to be absent. This, however, was compensated for by the length. Indeed, the tufts that had survived wear and tear measured all of seven or eight inches.

I looked up into the man's face, and he pulled his foot down and asked, "*Find hide like that on your St Elias bear?*"

I shook my head. "*Nor on any other creature of land or sea,*" I answered candidly. The thickness of it, and the length of the hair, puzzled me.

"*That,*" he said, and said without the slightest hint of impressiveness, "*that came from a mammoth.*"

"*Nonsense!*" I exclaimed, for I could not forbear the protest of my unbelief. "*The mammoth, my dear sir, long ago vanished from the earth. We know it once existed by the fossil remains that we have unearthed, and by a frozen carcass that the Siberian sun saw fit to melt from out the bosom of a glacier; but we also know that no living specimen exists. Our explorers—*"

At this word he broke in impatiently. "*Your explorers? Pish! A weakly breed. Let us hear no more of them. But tell me, O man, what you may know of the mammoth and his ways.*"

Beyond contradiction, this was leading to a yarn; so I baited my hook by ransacking my memory for whatever data I possessed on the subject in hand. To begin with, I emphasized that the animal was prehistoric, and marshalled all my facts in support of this. I mentioned the Siberian sand-bars that abounded with ancient mammoth bones; spoke of the large quantities of fossil ivory purchased from the Innuits by the Alaska Commercial Company; and acknowledged

having myself mined six- and eight-foot tusks from the pay gravel of the Klondike creeks. *“All fossils,”* I concluded, *“found in the midst of debris deposited through countless ages.”*

*“I remember when I was a kid,”* Thomas Stevens sniffed (he had a most confounded way of sniffing), *“that I saw a petrified water-melon. Hence, though mistaken persons sometimes delude themselves into thinking that they are really raising or eating them, there are no such things as extant water-melons?”*

*“But the question of food,”* I objected, ignoring his point, which was puerile and without bearing. *“The soil must bring forth vegetable life in lavish abundance to support so monstrous creations. Nowhere in the North is the soil so prolific. Ergo, the mammoth cannot exist.”*

*“I pardon your ignorance concerning many matters of this Northland, for you are a young man and have travelled little; but, at the same time, I am inclined to agree with you on one thing. The mammoth no longer exists. How do I know? I killed the last one with my own right arm.”*

Thus spake Nimrod, the mighty Hunter. I threw a stick of firewood at the dogs and bade them quit their unholy howling, and waited. Undoubtedly this liar of singular felicity would open his mouth and requite me for my St. Elias bear.

*“It was this way,”* he at last began, after the appropriate silence had intervened. *“I was in camp one day—”*

*“Where?”* I interrupted.

He waved his hand vaguely in the direction of the north-east, where stretched a TERRA INCOGNITA into which vastness few men have strayed and fewer emerged. *“I was in camp one day with Klooch. Klooch was as handsome a little KAMOOKS as ever whined betwixt the traces or shoved nose into a camp kettle. Her father was a full- blood Malemute from Russian Pastilik on Bering Sea, and I bred her, and with understanding, out of a clean-legged bitch of the Hudson Bay stock. I tell you, O man, she was a corker combination. And now, on this day I have in mind, she was brought to pup through a pure wild wolf of the woods—grey, and long of limb, with big lungs and no end of staying powers. Say! Was there ever the like? It was a new breed of dog I had started, and I could look forward to big things.*

*“As I have said, she was brought neatly to pup, and safely delivered. I was squatting on my hams over the litter—seven sturdy, blind little beggars—when from behind came a bray of trumpets and crash of brass. There was a rush, like the wind- squall that kicks the heels of the rain, and I was midway to my feet when knocked flat on my face. At the same instant I heard Klooch sigh, very much as a man does when you’ve planted your fist in his belly. You can stake your sack I lay quiet, but I twisted my head around and saw a huge bulk swaying above me. Then the blue sky flashed into view and I got to my feet. A hairy mountain of flesh was just disappearing in the underbrush on the edge of the open. I caught a rear-end glimpse, with a stiff tail, as big in girth as my body, standing out straight behind. The next second only a tremendous hole remained in the thicket, though I could still hear the sounds as of a tornado dying quickly away, underbrush ripping and tearing, and trees snapping and crashing.*



*"I cast about for my rifle. It had been lying on the ground with the muzzle against a log; but now the stock was smashed, the barrel out of line, and the working-gear in a thousand bits. Then I looked for the slut, and—and what do you suppose?"*

I shook my head.

*"May my soul burn in a thousand hells if there was anything left of her! Klooch, the seven sturdy, blind little beggars—gone, all gone. Where she had stretched was a slimy, bloody depression in the soft earth, all of a yard in diameter, and around the edges a few scattered hairs."*

I measured three feet on the snow, threw about it a circle, and glanced at Nimrod.

*"The beast was thirty long and twenty high," he answered, "and its tusks scaled over six times three feet. I couldn't believe, myself, at the time, for all that it had just happened. But if my senses had played me, there was the broken gun and the hole in the brush. And there was—or, rather, there was not—Klooch and the pups. O man, it makes me hot all over now when I think of it Klooch! Another Eve! The mother of a new race! And a rampaging, ranting, old bull mammoth, like a second flood, wiping them, root and branch, off the face of the earth! Do you wonder that the blood-soaked earth cried out to high God? Or that I grabbed the hand-axe and took the trail?"*

*"The hand-axe?" I exclaimed, startled out of myself by the picture. "The hand-axe, and a big bull mammoth, thirty feet long, twenty feet—"*

Nimrod joined me in my merriment, chuckling gleefully. *"Wouldn't it kill you?" he cried. "Wasn't it a beaver's dream? Many's the time I've laughed about it since, but at the time it was no laughing matter, I was that danged mad, what of the gun and Klooch. Think of it, O man! A brand-new, unclassified, uncopyrighted breed, and wiped out before ever it opened its eyes or took out its intention papers! Well, so be it. Life's full of disappointments, and rightly so. Meat is best after a famine, and a bed soft after a hard trail.*

*"As I was saying, I took out after the beast with the hand-axe, and hung to its heels down the valley; but when he circled back toward the head, I was left winded at the lower end. Speaking of grub, I might as well stop long enough to explain a couple of points. Up thereabouts, in the midst of the mountains, is an almighty curious formation. There is no end of little valleys, each like the other much as peas in a pod, and all neatly tucked away with straight, rocky walls rising on all sides. And at the lower ends are always small openings where the drainage or glaciers must have broken out. The only way in is through these mouths, and they are all small, and some smaller than others. As to grub—you've slushed around on the rain-soaked islands of the Alaskan coast down Sitka way, most likely, seeing as you're a traveller. And you know how stuff grows there—big, and juicy, and jungly. Well, that's the way it was with those valleys. Thick, rich soil, with ferns and grasses and such things in patches higher than your head. Rain three days out of four during the summer months; and food in them for a thousand mammoths, to say nothing of small game for man.*

*"But to get back. Down at the lower end of the valley I got winded and gave over. I began to speculate, for when my wind left me my dander got hotter and hotter, and I knew I'd never know peace of mind till I dined on roasted mammoth-foot. And I knew, also, that that stood for SKOOKUM*

*MAMOOK PUKAPUK—excuse Chinook, I mean there was a big fight coming. Now the mouth of my valley was very narrow, and the walls steep. High up on one side was one of those big pivot rocks, or balancing rocks, as some call them, weighing all of a couple of hundred tons. Just the thing. I hit back for camp, keeping an eye open so the bull couldn't slip past, and got my ammunition. It wasn't worth anything with the rifle smashed; so I opened the shells, planted the powder under the rock, and touched it off with slow fuse. Wasn't much of a charge, but the old boulder tilted up lazily and dropped down into place, with just space enough to let the creek drain nicely. Now I had him."*

"But how did you have him?" I queried. "Who ever heard of a man killing a mammoth with a hand-axe? And, for that matter, with anything else?"

"O man, have I not told you I was mad?" Nimrod replied, with a slight manifestation of sensitiveness. "Mad clean through, what of Klooch and the gun. Also, was I not a hunter? And was this not new and most unusual game? A hand-axe? Pish! I did not need it. Listen, and you shall hear of a hunt, such as might have happened in the youth of the world when cavemen rounded up the kill with hand-axe of stone. Such would have served me as well. Now is it not a fact that man can outwalk the dog or horse? That he can wear them out with the intelligence of his endurance?"

I nodded.

"Well?"

The light broke in on me, and I bade him continue.

"My valley was perhaps five miles around. The mouth was closed. There was no way to get out. A timid beast was that bull mammoth, and I had him at my mercy. I got on his heels again hollered like a fiend, pelted him with cobbles, and raced him around the valley three times before I knocked off for supper. Don't you see? A race-course! A man and a mammoth! A hippodrome, with sun, moon, and stars to referee!"

"It took me two months to do it, but I did it. And that's no beaver dream. Round and round I ran him, me travelling on the inner circle, eating jerked meat and salmon berries on the run, and snatching winks of sleep between. Of course, he'd get desperate at times and turn. Then I'd head for soft ground where the creek spread out, and lay anathema upon him and his ancestry, and dare him to come on. But he was too wise to bog in a mud puddle. Once he pinned me in against the walls, and I crawled back into a deep crevice and waited. Whenever he felt for me with his trunk, I'd belt him with the hand-axe till he pulled out, shrieking fit to split my ear drums, he was that mad. He knew he had me and didn't have me, and it near drove him wild. But he was no man's fool. He knew he was safe as long as I stayed in the crevice, and he made up his mind to keep me there. And he was dead right, only he hadn't figured on the commissary. There was neither grub nor water around that spot, so on the face of it he couldn't keep up the siege. He'd stand before the opening for hours, keeping an eye on me and flapping mosquitoes away with his big blanket ears. Then the thirst would come on him and he'd ramp round and roar till the earth shook, calling me every name he could lay tongue to. This was to frighten me, of course; and when he thought I was sufficiently impressed, he'd back away softly and

*try to make a sneak for the creek. Sometimes I'd let him get almost there—only a couple of hundred yards away it was—when out I'd pop and back he'd come, lumbering along like the old landslide he was. After I'd done this a few times, and he'd figured it out, he changed his tactics. Grasped the time element, you see. Without a word of warning, away he'd go, tearing for the water like mad, scheming to get there and back before I ran away. Finally, after cursing me most horribly, he raised the siege and deliberately stalked off to the water-hole.*

*“That was the only time he penned me,—three days of it,—but after that the hippodrome never stopped. Round, and round, and round, like a six days' go-as-I-please, for he never pleased. My clothes went to rags and tatters, but I never stopped to mend, till at last I ran naked as a son of earth, with nothing but the old hand-axe in one hand and a cobble in the other. In fact, I never stopped, save for peeps of sleep in the crannies and ledges of the cliffs. As for the bull, he got perceptibly thinner and thinner—must have lost several tons at least—and as nervous as a schoolmarm on the wrong side of matrimony. When I'd come up with him and yell, or lain him with a rock at long range, he'd jump like a skittish colt and tremble all over. Then he'd pull out on the run, tail and trunk waving stiff, head over one shoulder and wicked eyes blazing, and the way he'd swear at me was something dreadful. A most immoral beast he was, a murderer, and a blasphemer.*

*“But towards the end he quit all this, and fell to whimpering and crying like a baby. His spirit broke and he became a quivering jelly-mountain of misery. He'd get attacks of palpitation of the heart, and stagger around like a drunken man, and fall down and bark his shins. And then he'd cry, but always on the run. O man, the gods themselves would have wept with him, and you yourself or any other man. It was pitiful, and there was so much of it, but I only hardened my heart and hit up the pace. At last I wore him clean out, and he lay down, broken-winded, broken-hearted, hungry, and thirsty. When I found he wouldn't budge, I hamstrung him, and spent the better part of the day wading into him with the hand-axe, he a-sniffing and sobbing till I worked in far enough to shut him off. Thirty feet long he was, and twenty high, and a man could sling a hammock between his tusks and sleep comfortably. Barring the fact that I had run most of the juices out of him, he was fair eating, and his four feet, alone, roasted whole, would have lasted a man a twelvemonth. I spent the winter there myself.”*

*“And where is this valley?” I asked*

*He waved his hand in the direction of the north-east, and said: “Your tobacco is very good. I carry a fair share of it in my pouch, but I shall carry the recollection of it until I die. In token of my appreciation, and in return for the moccasins on your own feet, I will present to you these muclucs. They commemorate Klooch and the seven blind little beggars. They are also souvenirs of an unparalleled event in history, namely, the destruction of the oldest breed of animal on earth, and the youngest. And their chief virtue lies in that they will never wear out.”*

Having effected the exchange, he knocked the ashes from his pipe, gripped my hand good-night, and wandered off through the snow. Concerning this tale, for which I have already disclaimed responsibility, I would recommend those of little faith to make a visit to the Smithsonian Institute. If they bring the requisite credentials and do not come in vacation time, they will undoubtedly gain an audience with Professor Dolvidson. The muclucs are in his possession, and he will verify, not the manner in which they were obtained, but the material of which they are composed. When he states that they are made from the skin of the mammoth, the scientific world accepts his verdict. What more would you have?

## 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.

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Any English fictional novel or  
short story having a  
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### *Additional Notes:*

Arment Biological Press's Digital Library mentioned in an insert last issue is now available for free. The website is <http://www.herper.com/ebooks/members.html>. Chad Arment has also added two additional Cryptofiction collections to this site, Strange Creatures II: Chambers' Works and Strange Creatures III: Pulp Cryptids. Each is a wonderful collection of older Cryptofiction tales.

Also, the CD-ROM reviewed in the last issue The Search for Selma presented by the Global Underwater Search Team is now available for \$19.95 instead of the original \$49.95. This price was altered to make the item more available to the public. Go to <http://www.cryptozoology.st> to acquire this unique item. It is also possible in the near future the CD-ROM may be turned into a book format, this will allow an even wider audience to read of the searches involving Selma. This is a reiteration of the information contained in a correctional insert to the last issue of CRYPTO that went out independently of the issue. This correction adjusted some details of the review of this item, specifically the audio/video clips evaluation, wherein the reviewer erroneously counted the multi-media portions of the CD-ROM.

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](http://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.