

Five-foot-tall grayish hair color bipedal creature runs from teens

Sighting Details:

Date: December 1986

Time of Day: 8pm or a little after

Season: Late Fall/Early Winter

State: FL

County: Polk

Nearest town: Winter Haven/Lakeland

Nearest road/Highway: 540

Weather Conditions: Clear cool evening

Terrain of location: Central Florida wooded area

Anything else odd: Strange bird or whistling sounds before sighting

Other Witnesses: Yes 1

Local Stories: Seems to be at least a few around this area

Original report:

It's been over 22 years, but I still remember the incidents pretty well. Back then I was terrified, but now I realize that I encountered something special and would pay money for the opportunity to see it again.

The thing I remember most is the feeling of my senses disconnected from my brain while the encounter took place. I don't know if I can explain it, but your eyes always work in unison with your brain and your brain continually processes what you see. On this particular night, my brain could not process what my eyes were telling it they were seeing. I ended up freezing still while my brain was in overload trying to figure out what I was seeing. It's a very strange feeling that I never felt before or since.

I'll try to make this as concise as possible without neglecting pertinent info.

A little background...

In 1981, I moved "with my parents" to Winter Haven from Miami. The area we moved to was much less developed and more heavily wooded than it is at present day.

Within weeks of living in my new neighborhood, I befriended several other children my age and we would explore and play in the surrounding woods. At this time there was an elderly couple whose property bordered the woods; their property as well, provided the easiest access to the areas of the woods we liked to go.

One day on our way out of the woods, the elderly gentlemen stopped us in his back yard and asked us if we had seen the hermit in the woods yet. Hermit, we asked? He told us a story about a hermit that lived out in the woods and would come up in the early morning and dig through his trash and make a mess of things. He said that he was short and had very long hair and beard. The old man said that he would chase the hermit away and the hermit would run back into the woods. At the time I just took this as an old man telling a bunch of kids a story, maybe trying to scare us.

Soon after settling in to our new home, I began to hear what I can only call screams. Very, very strange screams/yelling coming from the wooded area near our home. Now, I was from Miami and had no idea what a wild animal might sound like and I just assumed it to be such. The screams were heard probably 1-2 nights a week and always between probably 11pm to 4am. They would start and go on for about 10min, then stop for about 30min and start again. I would ask my friends if they would hear it and they would tell me yes and that their parents told them it was a cow or pig out in the woods. I knew no better and just brushed it off. This went on for a few years. Sometimes it would sound closer "and louder" than others. I became used to it and eventually wouldn't even hear it.

I ran across this – http://www.oregonbigfoot.com/sounds/ORBF_OH_howl_94.mp3. It is extremely close to what we heard and I get chill bumps when I hear it. It sounds like someone in pain and is very eerie to say the least.

Christmas break of 1986. By this time, my friends and I were a little more mature and would actually camp out in the wooded area around our neighborhood. We probably spent dozens of nights out there over the years. Odd, now that I look back; we never heard the screams while we were camping out in the area “perhaps whatever was making the noise knew we were there and laid low.”

On this particular night, there were 4 of us all together. It was around 8pm and we realized that we might not have enough fire wood for the night, so a friend and I grabbed the flashlights and headed out into the woods. We were probably 200-250 yards from camp when we heard what sounded like a bird coming from the right of us at about 50 yards away. It was a loud weird bird call that I have never heard before. We found this interesting and it seemed to be coming from near ground level; so we decided to see if we could find what was making the noise. Upon approaching, it stopped. We looked around for a few minutes, found nothing and lost interest; only to have it start again when we were back to where we were when we first heard it. This peaked our interest once again and we started on our way back to where it seemed to be emanating. Of course, again it stopped. Losing interest again we turned around and continued back to where we were. This time however, at the moment we turned around, I noticed an object about 25 yards in front of us “the exact area we just came from” that seemed out of place; I didn’t remember it being there before.

At first look “and in the dark of the night” it looked like a tree stump, but there was no tree stump there before. Then I remember saying out loud “what is that.” At that time, both my friend and I shined our flashlights on it and whatever it was, stood up. It was about 5’ tall and somewhat thin with grayish “ash color” hair maybe 2” long covering its entire body. At the precise moment it stood up, it turned to our right and began to run. I must add that the direction it ran took it through a large patch of sugar sand. When it hit the sugar sand, it didn’t even seem to slow down. It ran through the sugar sand faster than the fastest human could run on a hard surface. At the edge of the sugar sand patch were palmetto bushes. Once it reached the palmetto bushes; it dove head first into the bushes and we could hear it scurry off. After the effects of shock wore off, we ran like little girls back to camp and then home. We never camped out there again and even going out there in the day light was not as fun as it once was. I always felt like I was being watched.

I cannot say for sure we witnessed a Bigfoot, Sasquatch or Skunk Ape. I cannot even say for sure that this is the creature that was called a hermit “by the old man” or the one responsible for the screams over the years. All I can say is, we witnessed a bipedal creature about 5’ tall maybe weighing 90-100lbs that was more athletic and agile than any human I have ever seen, it moved very fast. Its arms and legs were long in proportion to the rest of its body and it was covered in about 2” of grayish fur/hair. The whole incident from the time it stood up until the time we couldn’t hear it any more through the palmetto bushes lasted about 7 seconds.

Follow up investigation by: David S

I’ve talk to Lee a few times about his encounter, he’s actually has come out with us in the field after we’ve spoke intensively about what he saw that night. I’ve found that Lee is very down to earth and his wife is also. Two of the nicest people I’ve met. After Lee explained to me the encounter and the location this happen in, things started to make since. The location back then had less housing in the area first off and then the wooded area this took place in actually is now owned by the South Florida Water Management District now. The location backs up to 570 (Polk parkway) and adjacent from the that is the Polk Co Landfill. There has been a few other sighting in that past or around the same time within a 15-mile radius. Is it coincidental that the SFWMD bought up the land around this landfill for a reason? Makes you wonder why. There is also 15 feet fencing around the landfill property, which would not keep a Sasquatch out.

I believe that Lee saw a juvenile Sasquatch that night and that there were possibly adults nearby. The juvenile was probably curious of what the teens were doing, probably curious of the firelight, voices and just wanted to get closer to the teens. When the teens got closer it, it probably froze hopping that the teens would not notice it, Lee said that

it ran on two legs the whole time, so that rules out a bear. The speed was amazingly fast to run across sugar sand at night. Also he said that when it reached the palmetto bushes it dived in head first, so that rules out a human playing a hoax. What hoaxer would dive head first into palmetto bushes not knowing if there are snakes or anything else that might live in there. I believe that Lee saw a juvenile Sasquatch, whether male or female, it was too hard to tell. But after he did some research and spoke to our team, I think that may have confirmed he that the possibility is a strong one.