

Big Foot / Sasquatch/ Yeti



Bigfoot: Man-Monster or Myth?

By [Benjamin Radford](#) - Live Science Contributor November 06, 2012

Bigfoot, also known as Sasquatch, is a giant ape-like creature that is said to roam the Pacific Northwest. There is scant physical evidence that such creatures exist, but Bigfoot buffs are convinced that they do, and that science will soon prove it.

While most sightings of Bigfoot occur in the Northwest, the creatures have been reported all over the country. There are many native myths and legends of wild men in the woods, but Bigfoot per se has been around for only about 50 years. Interest in Bigfoot grew rapidly during the second half of the 20th century, spurred by magazine articles of the time, most seminally a December 1959 "True" article describing the discovery of large, mysterious footprints the year before in Bluff Creek, California.

If you don't believe in Bigfoot (singular or plural), you're not alone. According to a 2007 Baylor Religion Survey, only 16 percent of Americans said that Bigfoot "absolutely" or "probably" exist, with 44 percent responding "probably not" and about 40 percent saying that they "absolutely [do] not" exist. (In contrast, over twice as many people believe in ghosts or astrology.)

By far the most common evidence for Bigfoot is [eyewitness reports](#). Unfortunately, this is also by far the weakest type of evidence. Psychologists and police know that eyewitness testimony is notoriously unreliable, and that people are simply not very good at accurately describing something they saw — especially at a distance in low light and when the subject is partially hidden by trees and foliage (as most Bigfoot reports are).

Anyone can be mistaken, and pilots, policemen, priests, and public officials are no exception. Most Bigfoot researchers admit that the vast majority of sightings are mistakes or hoaxes (up to 95 percent, by some estimates). Still, they insist that a Bigfoot must be hiding in that tiny portion of sightings and reports that can't be easily explained.

Photographic evidence

The most famous image of a Bigfoot is the short film taken in 1967 by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin. Shot in Bluff Creek, Calif., it shows a dark, man-sized and man-shaped figure striding through a clearing. Widely considered a hoax, it remains to this day the best evidence for Bigfoot. However this poses a serious blow to the film's credibility: if it's real, and these Bigfoot creatures are really out there wandering in front of people with cameras, it's very suspicious that better films and videos haven't emerged since Lyndon Johnson's administration.

These days almost everyone has a 5 megapixel, HD camera in their pocket with their iPhones or other devices. At no time in history have so many people had high-quality cameras on them virtually all the time. If Bigfoot exist, logically the photographic evidence for them should improve over the years. Yet it hasn't. Photographs of people, cars, mountains, flowers, sunsets, deer, and everything else have gotten sharper and clearer over the years; Bigfoot is a notable exception.

One possibility is that there is some supernatural explanation, such as that Bigfoot somehow emits special, unknown light waves that inexplicably cause the beasts to always appear out of focus in photographs, no matter how good the camera is. The more logical explanation suggests that these things don't exist, and that photographs of them are merely hoaxes and misidentifications.

Elusive hard evidence

In his book "Big Footprints," veteran researcher Grover Krantz (Johnson Books, 1992) discussed alleged Bigfoot hair, feces, skin scrapings and blood: "The usual fate of these items is that they either receive no scientific study, or else the documentation of that study is either lost or unobtainable. In most cases where competent analyses have been made, the material turned out to be bogus or else no determination could be made."

When a definite conclusion has been reached through scientific analysis, the samples have invariably turned out to have ordinary sources — "Bigfoot hair" turns out to be elk, bear, or cow hair, for example, or "Bigfoot blood" is revealed to be transmission fluid. Sometimes alleged Bigfoot samples are subjected to DNA analysis and are deemed "unknown" or "unidentified." However "unknown" or "unidentified" results do not mean "Bigfoot." There are many reasons why a DNA sample might come back unknown, including that it was contaminated or too degraded by environmental conditions. Or it could simply mean that the animal it came from was not among the reference samples that the laboratory used for comparison. We have no reference sample of [Bigfoot DNA](#) to compare it to, so by definition there cannot be a conclusive match.

In fact, genetics provides another reason to doubt the existence of Bigfoot: there cannot just be one elusive creature, there would need to be tens of thousands of them in order to assure enough genetic diversity to maintain the species. With so many of them out there, surely at least one of the creatures would be killed by a hunter or hit by motorist on a highway, or even found dead (by accident, disease, or old age) by a hiker or farmer at some point. Yet no bodies, bones, or anything else have been found.

Hoaxers have further contaminated the problem of sorting fact from fiction. Dozens of people have admitted faking Bigfoot prints, photographs, and nearly every other type of Bigfoot evidence. One man, Rant Mullens, revealed in 1982 that he and friends had carved giant Bigfoot

tracks and used them to fake footprints for decades. Which are real? Which are fake? Often the Bigfoot experts themselves can't agree.

The lack of good evidence hasn't dampened the enthusiasm of Bigfoot buffs; they have all they need in sighting reports, fuzzy photos, inconclusive hair samples, and footprints to keep the search going. Until better evidence comes along, old evidence will be rehashed and re-examined — and unless Bigfoot is proven to be alive, the search will continue.

NEW ARTICLE



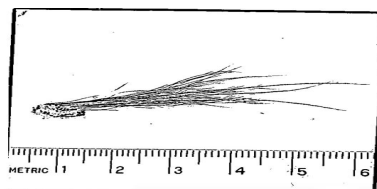
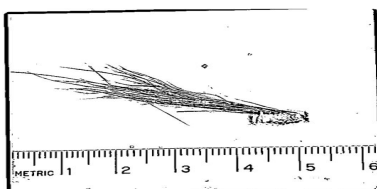
FBI Investigate Bigfoot

By Becky Little JUN 6, 2019

In 2019, the FBI released its four-decade-old file on a Bigfoot inquiry.

Legends of large, ape-like beasts can be found all over the world. Since the 1950s, the United States' version of this has been "Bigfoot." And since 1976, the FBI has had a file on him.

That year, Director Peter Byrne of the Bigfoot Information Center and Exhibition in The Dalles, Oregon, sent the FBI "about 15 hairs attached to a tiny piece of skin." Byrne wrote that his organization couldn't identify what kind of animal it came from, and was hoping the FBI might analyze it. He also wanted to know if the FBI had analyzed suspected Bigfoot hair before; and if so, what the bureau's conclusion was.



Hair samples sent into the FBI for testing, believed to be from Bigfoot.
Federal Bureau of Investigation

At the time, "Byrne was one of the more prominent Bigfoot researchers," says Benjamin Radford, deputy editor of Skeptical Inquirer magazine. "In 2019, a lot of people think of Bigfoot as being sort of silly and a joke, or whatever else. But in the 1970s, Bigfoot was really, really popular. That was when *The Six Million Dollar Man* had a cameo by Bigfoot."

This was also after Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin released their famous video footage in 1967 supposedly showing Bigfoot in Northern California. It's worth noting that the original "evidence" that launched the Bigfoot craze—a trail of oversized footprints discovered in the same region in 1958—was revealed to be a prank by logger Ray L. Wallace in 2002. Many people believe the "Bigfoot" creature in the

Patterson-Gimlin film was a costumed prankster as well. Byrne has always believed the footage is real. Jay Cochran, Jr., assistant director of the FBI's scientific and technical services division, wrote back to Byrne that he couldn't find any evidence of the FBI analyzing suspected Bigfoot hair, and that the FBI usually only examined physical evidence related to criminal investigations. Still, it sometimes made exceptions "in the interest of research and scientific inquiry," and Cochran said he'd make such an exception for Byrne.

The FBI's official Bigfoot testing results.
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Unsurprisingly, Cochran found that the hair didn't belong to Bigfoot. In early 1977, he sent the hair back to Byrne

along with his scientific conclusion: "the hairs are of deer family origin." Four decades later, the bureau declassified its "Bigfoot file" about this analysis. To be clear, this is not evidence that the FBI endorsed the

1 - Mr. Cochran
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February 24, 1977

REGISTERED

JMG

X
Mr. Howard S. Curtis
~~Executive Vice President~~
~~Academy of Applied Science~~
~~65 India Wharf, Suite 28A~~
~~Boston, Massachusetts 02110~~

Dear Mr. Curtis: *OUTSIDE SOURCE*

*LABORATORY EXAMINATIONS AND
INQUIRIES CONCERNING THE BIGFOOT
INFORMATION CENTER AND EXHIBITION*

The hairs which you recently delivered to the FBI Laboratory on behalf of The Bigfoot Information Center and Exhibition have been examined by transmitted and incident light microscopy. The examination included a study of morphological characteristics such as root structure, medullary structure and cuticle thickness in addition to scale casts. Also, the hairs were compared directly with hairs of known origin under a comparison microscope.

It was concluded as a result of these examinations that the hairs are of deer family origin.

The hair sample you submitted is being returned as an enclosure to this letter.

Sincerely yours, *EX-113* *K12*
Jay Cochran, Jr. *REC-57* *95-213013 5*
Jay Cochran, Jr.
Assistant Director FBI
Scientific and Technical
Services Division
MAR 1 1977

MAILED 6
FEB 24 1977
FBI

existence of Bigfoot, any more than the U.S. military's decades-long investigation of unexplained aerial phenomena, popularly known as UFOs, is an endorsement of the existence of aliens.

“All it means is the FBI did a favor to a Bigfoot researcher,” Radford says. “There’s nothing wrong with that, but it shouldn’t be mistaken for de facto government endorsement of the reality of Bigfoot.”

Even so, Bigfoot believers may be tempted to spin it that way. “They love the idea that there’s a smoking gun in the FBI files—‘See, look, Bigfoot must be real, otherwise the FBI wouldn’t have taken it seriously,’” he continues. “Well, the FBI didn’t send out a team of investigators to look for Bigfoot, they agreed to run an analysis of 15 hairs.”

To add more layers to what is already an unusual case, 93-year-old Byrne doesn’t seem to remember receiving the FBI’s response that the “Bigfoot hair” was actually deer hair.

Because Byrne had been out of the country for several months, Cochran sent the letter to the executive vice president of the Academy of Applied Science, which was associated with Byrne’s Bigfoot organization. The executive wrote that he would give Byrne copies of the correspondence when he returned. Yet when the FBI released its Bigfoot file—which was exclusively about Byrne’s inquiry—on June 5, 2019, Byrne reacted as though he were hearing that it was deer hair for the first time. “Obviously I can’t speak for Peter Byrne,” Radford says. But “if you’re going to make a big enough deal about this unknown specimen to give it to the FBI, then you’re not going to want to publicize the fact that it turned out to be deer.

NEW ARTICLE

THE SEARCH FOR THE YETI. By: Graf, Christine, Faces, 07491387, Sep2019, Vol. 36, Issue 1

Section:

FEATURES

Big Foot. Sasquatch. Yeti. Abominable Snowman. Are these elusive creatures fact or fiction?

Footprints in the Snow

British explorer Eric Shipton discovered something unusual on his fifth trip to Mount Everest in 1951. He was on an expedition to find a route to the summit of Mount Everest on the mountain's south face in Nepal.

On this expedition, Shipton found mysterious human-like footprints in the snow. They were about 13 inches (33 cm) long and twice as wide as the footprint of an average man. The outline of a giant big toe and four or five smaller toes were visible in each print.



Shipton, his expedition partner, Michael Ward, and their Sherpa guide followed the footprints for more than an hour without discovering who or what had made them. According to Ward, their guide told them he "had no doubt that these prints belonged to the **yeti**, of which there were two types: a Yak-eating and a man-eating, the latter of which had smaller tracks. He described the **Yeti** as walking on two legs and standing about 5 feet high and covered with brown hair; they had a high forehead and a face like that of a man. When pressed, he said that he himself had never seen a **Yeti**."

Yetis in Mythology

According to Nepali mythology, **yetis** are incredibly strong and dangerous beasts that live in caves at high elevations. For generations, children have been warned not to wander into the mountains where **yetis** roam free.

Shiva Dhakal, the author of *Folktales of Sherpa and Yeti*, said stories of the **yeti** may have been used as "a warning...so that kids wouldn't wander far away and that they would be always close and safe within their community."

Myths about the **yeti** can be traced to 326 B.C., when Alexander the Great's armies conquered Asia's Indus valley. The great Macedonian leader heard about the **yeti** from the local people and demanded to see one. He was told a **yeti** could not be brought to him because they could not survive at low altitudes.

Hundreds of Sightings

Since the late 1800s, hundreds of people have reported sightings of **yetis** or their footprints. These sightings have taken place throughout the Himalayan Mountains. The mountains span about 1,500 miles (2,400 km) and pass through Nepal, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, and Bhutan.

After Shipton returned to England following his 1951 expedition to Nepal, a British newspaper published the pictures he had taken of the mysterious footprints. Because Shipton was a highly respected explorer, the photos were taken seriously. People from around the world began traveling to Nepal to search for the **yeti**.

A Yeti Scalp?

While on a 1960 expedition in Nepal, Edmund Hillary—the man who made history by summiting Mount Everest—got involved in the hunt for the **yeti**. Although he saw strange footprints while on the mountain, he did not believe the creature existed. He said, "We found quite a few so-called **yeti** tracks. They were obviously made by the effect of the sun's rays and wind on the tracks of smaller animals." He also said, "The **yeti** is not a strange, superhuman creature as has been imagined. We have found rational explanations for most **yeti** phenomena."

During his 1960 expedition, Hillary traveled to the village of Khumjung in northeastern Nepal. An elderly woman claimed to have a 240-year-old **yeti** scalp. Hillary was told the scalp belonged to a pregnant **yeti** that had been killed by a Buddhist monk.

Hillary described the scalp as "a convincing sort of specimen." He convinced the woman to allow him to borrow the scalp for one month. It was considered good luck, and the woman worried the village would be cursed if it was not returned.

Hillary took the scalp to the Chicago Museum of Natural History where scientists examined it. They determined it had been made from the hide of the Himalayan serow, a goat-like antelope. As promised, Hillary returned it to Khumjung, where it is now housed in the village's monastery. The local people remain convinced it is a **yeti** scalp.

Scientific Data

In the decades that followed, scientists have analyzed fur, bones, teeth, skin, and even a finger that were said to have belonged to the **yeti**. They determined that the majority of the samples belonged to Himalayan brown or black bears.

The scientific data agrees with the conclusion of animal experts. They have said that bear footprints can resemble human footprints. These prints look similar to those found by Shipton and others. They are made when bears place their hind foot partly over the imprint of their forefoot.

Despite the lack of scientific evidence, many people believe in **yetis**. In May 2019, the Indian Army announced on social media that one of their expedition teams had spotted **yeti** footprints in the Himalayas. The announcement was widely ridiculed.

For those who believe the **yeti** is real, this announcement provided more proof that the creature is out there. The search for the **yeti** is far from over.

FAST FACTS:

- People outside of Asia sometimes refer to the **yeti** as "the **Abominable Snowman**." The word "**abominable**" means worthy of or causing disgust or hatred.
- The **Abominable Snowman** has appeared as a character in movies, television shows, and comic books.
- In Nepal, the **yeti** is also called *metoh-kangmi*, which means, "man-bear-snow-man."
- The purpose of Hillary's 1960 Nepal expedition was to research the effect of high-altitude exposure on humans.
- During the 1950s, more people journeyed to Mount Everest to search for the **yeti** than to climb the mountain.
- Italian explorer Reinhold Messner conducted more than 20 expeditions to search for the **yeti**. He concluded that the Himalayan brown bear has been mistaken for the **yeti**.

NEW ARTICLE

Yeti

By Daniel Taylor

Yeti, << *YEH tee*, >> also called the Abominable << *uh BOM uh nuh buhl* >> *Snowman*, is a creature said to live on Mount Everest and other mountains of the Himalaya range of Asia. Reports of such a creature have also come from remote parts of China, Siberia, and other parts of Asia. According to legend, the Yeti is a hairy beast with a large, apelike body and a face that resembles that of a human being. It has long arms that reach to its knees, and it walks erect on its thick legs. Legend says that the Yeti sometimes comes down from the mountains to attack villagers.



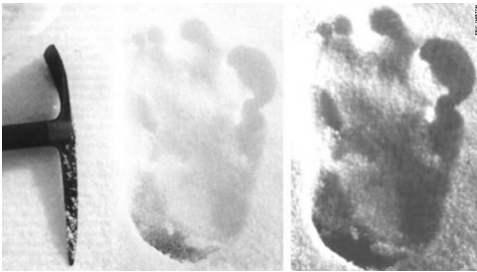
The name *Abominable Snowman* may have come from a journalist's translation of *metoh kangmi*, a Tibetan name for the creature. The name *Yeti* was given to it by the Sherpa people of Nepal. The word

probably once meant *all-devouring creature*. It may refer to a mountain demon rather than a real creature.

There is no direct evidence that the Yeti exists. Local tribes have reported seeing it, but their stories cannot be verified. Since the late 1890's, sightings have been reported by Western travelers, and explorers have sighted



footprints of a large, unknown creature in the snow. In 1951, the British explorer Eric Shipton took pictures of "snowman" tracks near Everest. Since then, several expeditions, including one sponsored by World Book in 1960, have searched for the creature. The explorers neither captured nor saw anything that might be the snowman.



Scientists of the World Book expedition said the tracks may have been made by bears or other animals. They found that the sun often caused such tracks to melt into large footprints.

Some investigators consider the Yeti to be a *cryptid*. A cryptid is a living thing whose existence has been suggested but not demonstrated. Scientists have collected small amounts of hair, teeth, and bones that were purported to have come from a Yeti. In 2017, scientists conducted tests on genetic material obtained from many of these samples. The tests showed that the samples all came from various known species, including dogs and bears.