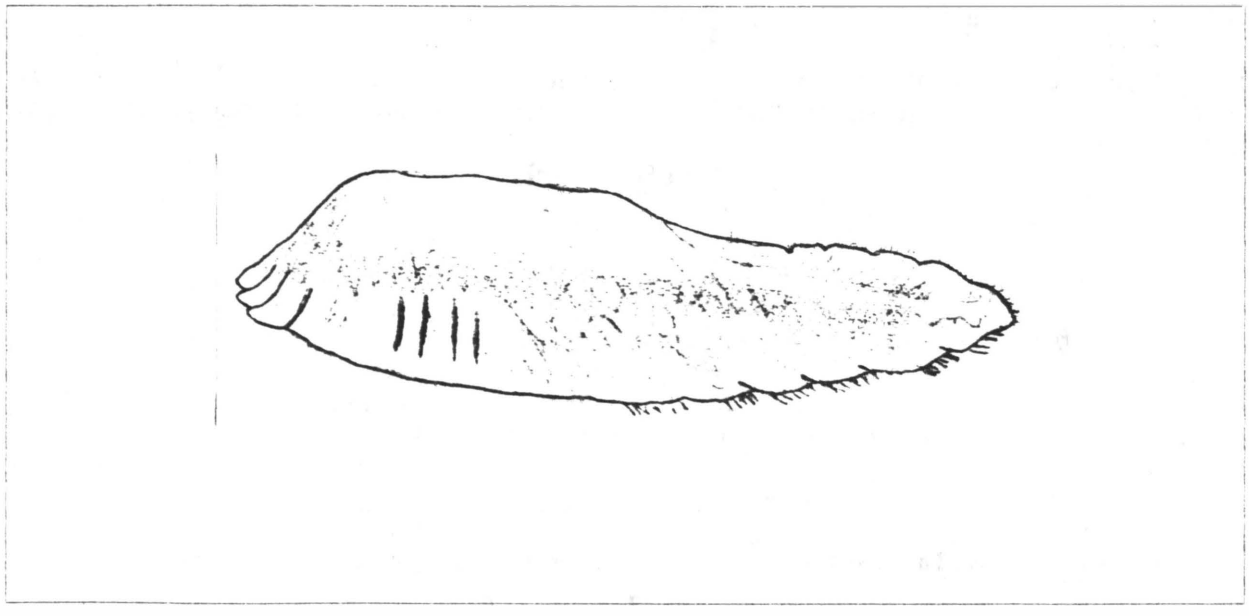
The Cryptozoology Review

Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1996

Editor/Publisher: Ben S. Roesch
Associate Editor: John Moore

Contents of this Issue:



The Editor's Page

Welcome to the first issue of The Cryptozoology Review (from here on TCR). This publication is something that I have always thought of doing, ever since I became truly "involved" in the subject of cryptozoology, the study of "hidden life" (see Loren Coleman's article), which was actually only last year. Writing cryptozoological articles for other magazines *is* fun and I don't intend to stop doing so, but it is extra exciting and interesting to have a publication to call your own.

Thus I present to you this periodical you are holding at the moment. It shall be a quarterly (we here at TCR *do* have lives, and unfortunately obligations to school as well!) journal of sorts, with a basic content as you see on the first page (we will have new departments as well as times passes). The content will be of the highest possible cryptozoological and scientific standards, with room to spare for some humour and entertainment of course, and will be put together, edited and published primarily by myself, Ben S. Roesch, the editor-in-chief. Of course I can't do this all by myself, and I have several staff members listed below who will write articles, help with editing and help with other such tasks. If you would like to become a part of TCR's staff (see below), please contact us. We would also like to publish articles of cryptozoological nature by any authors, so if you have an article you want published please send it our way (please, if possible, email it or send it on a computer disk; this is easiest for us), and we will review it for possible (there is a very good chances it will get in) inclusion in an upcoming issue of TCR. Payment is in copies.

Subscription will be $7.50 US (or $10.00 Canadian; £5.00 UK), and this is simply to cover production and postage costs. Lifetime subscription is $100 US. We are a non-profit publication. If you maintain a cryptozoological or related publication and you wish to receive TCR in exchange for you sending us your publication, please let us know.

As for the format of TCR, as you can see it is comprised of separate back to back pages, with writing on both sides of each page. It is stapled down the side on the front. We hope you like the layout and fonts used in the production, but if you have any suggestions or criticisms to this accord, please let us know.

Finally I hope you enjoy this first issue, and please contact us (see End Page) with your concerns, suggestions, comments or questions. Thanks for your time and support, and I hope you will enjoy TCR.

-- Ben S. Roesch

Editor/Publisher: Ben S. Roesch
Associate Editor: John Moore
Contributing Editors: Bufo Calvin, Loren Coleman, Darren Naish, Gordon Rutter
Correspondents: Terry Colvin, Peter Darben, Peter Massaro
Artists: Jarrett Lee, Darren Naish, Russ Fletcher
Editorial Consultants: Robert Tuck Jr.

On The Cover : The First Tasmanian Globster (Illustration Copyright Ben S. Roesch 1996)

A Compendium of Cryptids™

("All the latest cryptozoology news fit to print")

Compiled by Ben S. Roesch

A Rediscovery in Tibet

After a forty year-long disappearing act, the Tibetan red deer, or shou, has been rediscovered in its natural habitat, the alpine meadows situated about 120 km from Tibet's capital, Lhasa.

Over 100 of these deer were found there last October by an expedition from the Wildlife Conservation Society, led by the eminent zoologist George Schaller, and two Chinese colleagues, Wang Xiaoming and Liu Wulin. The expedition was prompted when Schaller saw two captive stags in Lhasa in 1988, and led Schaller "to believe there were still some in the wild."

Heavy hunting for the deer's prized meat and body parts (used for medicinal purposes) had decimated the wild population to the point where it had essentially "disappeared." However, the Tibetan government is being more careful this time; guards are being sent to patrol the area and a special reserve may be set up.

Source: Eliot, John L. 1996. "Lost and Found: Tibet Red Deer" *National Geographic* 189:5 (May), pp. 141.

A New Sighting of Caddy - And Photos Too!

Two Welsh teenage rugby players visiting British Columbia, Martin Jones and Martin Brophy, say they spotted and photographed the famous Cadborosaurus sea serpent (see Reviews) off Ten Mile Point, British Columbia on April 16 1996. They described the creature as being 15 meters long, coloured "dark-grayish black", "at least a half metre thick ... [and] had these big spines on its back." They added that "each hump" (presumably the spines) were "about a metre and a half apart."

The Victoria Times-Colonist wrote: "The ... monster was less than 20 metres away in Smugglers' Cove when the two ... teenagers first saw it at 7 p.m. [on] Tuesday. It was about 30 metres away when they pulled out a camera and snapped several photos." Jones thought that it was a conger eel, but the obviously the size is a major constraint to this theory. Brophy also dismissed the theory that it was a seal, as seals do not spines on their back, and certainly do not reach lengths of 15 meters! In any case, we should wait until more details and perhaps even the photos are disclosed before making any assumptions.

Source: Anonymous, 1996. Title unknown. *Times-Colonist* (Victoria, B.C.) Apr. 18.

New Rodent Discovered in the Philippines

A new species of rodent was discovered in the Philippines in late February by a team headed by Dr. Robert Kennedy and Pedro Gonzales, of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and the National Museum of the Philippines, respectively. The new mammal, a nocturnal squirrel-like creature, has received the name "The Panay Cloudrunner" (*Crateromys heaneyi*). It was discovered on the Philippine island of Panay by local residents, who brought three cloudrunners to the attention of Dr. Kennedy and Mr. Gonzales. These three cloudrunners are now on display at the Cincinnati zoo, and a fourth is housed in the Manila museum.

The Panay cloudrunner is an agile but slow-moving rodent suited for life in the trees; one of its more distinctive qualities is its tail, which is longer than its body, and used for balancing itself. The cloudrunner weighs about 1 kg, and emerges at night to feed on a variety of fruits such as bananas, guavas and papayas. It is the fourth recorded species of a family of tree-living rodents (called "Cloud rats"), endemic to the Philippines, and of which little is known. The details of the Panay cloudrunner's lifestyle, ecology and environment are unknown as of yet, mostly because of its rarity and the difficulties in reaching and working in its remote and thickly vegetated habitat.

The Panay Cloudrunner (*Crateromys heaneyi*). Picture courtesy of the Cincinnati Museum Centre.

However, its habitat is disappearing very quickly, thanks to much legal and illegal logging and slash and burn farming. As its habitat decreases, its survival in zoos will be more and more important and it may soon be the only place to find this newly discovered species.

Source: Line, Les. 1996. "A Newfound Mammal of Philippine Treetops Gets High-Flown Name"*New York Times*, February 20.

Chupacabras - Is it Cryptozoology or Paranormal?

The *Chupacabras*, or goat-sucker, is the name given to a mysterious creature that has been allegedly terrorizing communities in Puerto Rico over the last two years. Its terror lies in the fact that it allegedly dismembers dogs, cats, goats and other domesticated and farm animals, sometimes leaving trails of slime and rancid meat. It has been described as looking like an alien, and a recent picture (see below) published does look like an alien indeed, but with a very strange body structure, with quills and an almost rooster-like appearance. At first I had thought it might be a sasquatch type creature, but soon it all got out of hand and people began discussing very paranormal explanations, such as ultra-dimensional shifting and much other bizarre stuff. This is obviously not cryptozoology!

Does this look like cryptozoology to you? The *Chupacabras*.

While some will dispute this, I believe the *Chupacabras* is nothing but the work of feral dogs (or perhaps even weasels, which are know to "drain the blood" of their victims) that has been sensationalized by the press and imaginative persons. In fact, a recent autopsy done by Dr. Alan Herron, a professor of pathology at the University of Miami, on the dismembered corpse of a goat allegedly killed by a *Chupacabras* , was determined to actually have likely been done by a pack of feral dogs. Adding to my theory of "the sensationalized story explanation" is the fact that reports of similar attacks by a supposedly similar creature have been also reported in Miami, New York, Boston and even Moscow! This seems the tell-tale sound of *contagion*, a psychological term used for occurrences when one person reports something strange or unusual, and then lots of people say they also have seen it. This has been confirmed in the past, and for now it seems the best explanation for the *Chupacabras* phenomena.

Sources: Anonymous, 1996. Title Unknown. *Florida Today* (Melbourne, Florida), April 10. // Valdes, Alisa. 1996. "Tale of Creature Discomforts" *Boston Globe*, April 13.

The "Mokele-Mbembe Film" - What a Disappointment!

The latest issue of Fortean Times (#86) sports a feature on a new film out of the heart of the Congo, allegedly showing a "living dinosaur." I had initially heard of this over the Internet prior to publication, and looked very much forward to seeing the stills of the film that were to be published in FT. Indeed they were published - but what a disappointment!

The film, taken from a plane by the same Japanese group that produced questionable footage of the lake monster *Migo* in New Britain (in the South Pacific), shows an animate object travelling rapidly across Lake Tele, one of the reputed haunts of Mokele-Mbembe (*the* "living dinosaur" to

most), and then submerging beneath the waters. The stills in FT show a very hazy (the quality of the film was very poor) dark object with two projections sticking out of the top of its body, a taller one at the fore of the object and another shorter one at the rear.

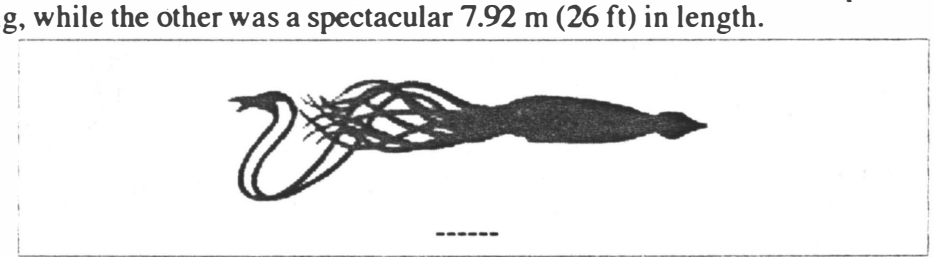
Undoubtedly the thought that this film could actually be a dinosaur is rather ridiculous! It really could have been anything. At first glance, the film looks suspiciously like the silhouette of two persons in a canoe of some sort. However, since the object moves so rapidly and smoothly in the film, its proponents said that only a motorized canoe could have created such a image, and they were told that none were present on or around Lake Tele. Of course this doesn't rule out a hoax by the filmers; after all they did have a motorized canoe. But of course the object submerges in the film, strange activity for a boat of any kind.

All in all, it is hard to say that this could be any animal, much less a dinosaur, because there aren't many, if any, animals that have two "pointy" projections coming out of their back. For the time being, this cryptozoologist is unsatisfied!

Source: Dash, Mike. 1996. "Dinosaur Caught on Film?" *Fortean Times* 86 (May): pp. 32-35.

Giant Squids Everywhere

Since December of 1995, the Southwestern Pacific has been revealing several examples of a magnificent and little known deep sea denizen. No less than three specimens of giant squid (*Architeuthis* sp.) were trawled up in the nets of deep-sea commercial fisheries during this time; a large female was snagged off the coast of Tasmania, while another two females, and one male, were captured at Chatham Rise, a half-mile deep rocky plateau the size of Texas which rises out of the abyss off the east coast of New Zealand. One of the female New Zealand specimens was 3.96 m (13 ft) long, while the other was a spectacular 7.92 m (26 ft) in length.



Architeuthis sp. If this specimen above is 60 ft long, a very large squid indeed, then the dashes above would approximately represent an adult human diver swimming alongside the giant invertebrate.

The New Zealand male specimen was 6.09 m (20 ft) long, was covered with tiny copepod-like parasites, and was captured at a depth of only about 304 m (1 000 ft), a depth rather shallow for giant squids, which are normally expected to live at depths of around 1 000 m (3 280 ft). It is thought that the increased pressure on deep-sea fish stocks from deep-sea commercial fisheries has reduced the amount of food for giant squids, which must therefore frequent shallower waters to feed.

All this increased giant squid activity in the waters surrounding New Zealand has attracted the attention of Dr. Clyde Roper, a professional *teuthologist* (a scientist who studies squids) who works at the Smithsonian Institute, and is arguably the most knowledgeable man in the world on

the subject. Dr. Roper plans to raise enough money to finance an expedition to New Zealand with the goal of trying to film and perhaps study the giant squid in its natural habitat, something that would be one of the most important zoological events of the century, as noted sea life expert Richard Ellis has stated.

The expedition plans to do preliminary studies on fish populations to determine where giant squid would be frequenting in search of food. Then they will track sperm whales, famous for their appetite for giant squids, to give clues as to where exactly the enormous invertebrates congregate. The next step would be of course to dive down into the deep and try to track down, or attract, one of these giants from the deep, and get it on tape. However, they had better hope *Architeuthis* doesn't mind being on tape - or else they had better have a strong submerisble! In any case, it will be National Geographic who will be filming the whole event for a television special, and if they do succeed in taping the giant squid, it will certainly be one interesting special, no doubt about it.

Sources: Broad, William J. 1996. "Scientists Close in on Elusive Giant Squid" *New York Times*, February 13. // O'Shea, Steve. 1996. Personal comm. February 6.

Range Rover Unpopular with Local Beast

The mystery surrounding mysterious big cats in England continues, but no one thought it would escalate to the point where a car was allegedly ripped apart by one! The crime in hand occurred in the Hertfordshire village of Brookmans Park, and involved a range rover and a very strong, very crazed animal of some sort.

Madelaine Dinsmore had parked the car in her front drive, which is right at the front door of her house, and despite not hearing anything all night, she woke up the next morning to find it very "chewed up." She stated that "there were bits of rubber all over the drive. The rubber part of the front bumper, which is very tough, had been chewed and shredded. There were large muddy paw marks high up on the car and deep scratches in the paint work, so that you could see the metal underneath. The bull bars had teeth marks in. Worst of all, the brake pipes had been chewed through. There was brake fluid all over the drive."

The damage done cost her £700, and she blamed it on one of the elusive big cats allegedly roaming around England, and which have caused much controversy. Specifically, she thought it was a puma which had done the job, but I don't see why any big cat of any kind would or could have done something like this. In fact, a posting by "Shez" to the alt.misc.forteana Internet newsgroup stated that zoo officials who examined the teeth marks and footprints associated with the damaged car were in fact from a large dog. Obviously, this is the best explanation for the time being, barring the possibility that a wolverine had done it, as these voracious animals are beginning to be reported in England too (see Karl Shuker's recent article in Fortean Times 85).

Sources: Anonymous. 1996. "Bumper night out for the Beast of Brookmans Park" *Daily Telegraph*, January 24. // Shez, 1996. "Re: Bumper night out for Beast of Brookmans Park" posted to *alt.misc.forteana* Usenet Internet newsgroup, January 28.

Quick News

-- Some results on the alleged Bigfoot hairs from Walla Walla, Washington State, USA have come in. The newest issue of *The Track Record* states: "The hairs from the Walla Walla, WA, area are said by Wes Sumerlin to be of an unknown primate. They had been supposedly DNA tested at Ohio Sate University."

Source: Anonymous, "Miscellaneous" *The Track Record* (February), pp. 8-12.

-- A tiny monkey, weighing only 198 g and thought to be extinct, has been rediscovered in southeast China. According to the People's Daily of April 22, the little primate, named the ink or pen monkey and a traditional pet of Chinese scholars, was found in the mountains of Fujian province. Strangely, the newspaper gave no information about the species of the creatures and did not say how many had been discovered. The Times of London stated: "the animals are known as ink or pen monkeys because they were kept to prepare ink, known in China since at least 2000BC, pass brushes and turn pages. They slept in desk drawers or brush pots. Zhu Xi, the 12th-century philosopher, is said to have kept one."

Source: Mirsky, Jonathan. 1996. "Ink monkey of China is rediscovered" *The Times*, April 23.

-- Deaths: On January 27, 1996 the Associated Press reported that Yu Gong, a Chinese scientist, had died in a remote area of northern China while taking part in the Chinese expedition searching for evidence of the wildman (China's equivalent of the sasquatch). On the other side of the world, the Salt Lake Tribune of February 10, 1996 reported that "Affleck Gray, a Scottish mountaineer and expert on the legendary Big Gray Man of Ben MacDhui (a Scottish variation of the Abominable Snowman), has died; he was 89."

Sources: Anonymous, 1996. "Miscellaneous" *The Track Record* (February), pp. 8-12. // Anonymous, 1996. "Deaths" *Salt Lake Tribune* (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 10.

-- While examining the skeletons of *Perodicticus potto*, a species of potto (primates related to lemurs), at the University of Zurich, Jeffrey H. Schwartz of the University of Pittsburgh came across two strange specimens, collected in the Cameroons. These bones, thought to be from a potto, were actually from a completely new species of primate, now christened *Pseudopotto martini*, which means "Martin's false potto." Its species name is in honour of R.D. Martin, the director of the Anthropological Institute and Museum at the University of Zurich. While we might have its bones, *Pseudopotto* still evades us in the wild, and Schwartz stated that "[i]t is very exciting to think that somewhere in the tropical forests of Cameroon, *Pseudopotto* lives."

Source: Anonymous, 1996. "Not a Potto" *Scientific American* (April), p. 22.

Thanks to:

Peter Massaro, John Moore, Steve O'Shea,
Kevin Stewart, and Robert Tuck Jr.

for clippings, articles, reports and opinions

What Cryptozoology Means

by Loren Coleman

"Cryptozoology," of course, was coined by Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans in his personal correspondence among colleagues in the 1950s, after the 1955 French publication of his book On the Track of Unknown Animals. The first published use of the word "cryptozoology" was in 1959 when a book by Lucien Blancou was dedicated to "Bernard Heuvelmans, master of cryptozoology." (See the International Society of Cryptozoology's journal, Cryptozoology #3, page 21.) Since 1982, Bernard Heuvelmans has written extensively in the journal Cryptozoology on his current thoughts defining and redefining "cryptozoology."

Meanwhile, ISC's Vice President Dr. Roy Mackal has written: "...the term 'cryptozoology' seems to me particularly appropriate, coming as it does from the Greek work *kryptos*, meaning 'hidden.' 'unknown,' 'secret,' 'enigmatic,' 'mysterious'; hence literally the study of hidden animals" (Searching for Hidden Animals, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980, p. xi).

Dr. Karl Shuker has noted that "cryptozoology" is "literally translated as 'the study of hidden life'" (The Lost Ark, London: HarperCollins, 1993, p. 11), perhaps thus too broadly encompassing plants and other nonanimal forms.

From my discussions with Richard Greenwell (ISC Secretary) and Bernard Heuvelmans (ISC President), as well as with various directors on the ISC Board, the general feeling is that an important element in the study of hidden animals as envisioned in current cryptozoology is the input of local, native, explorer, and traveler traditions, sightings, tales, legends and folklore of the as-yet unverified animals. It is for this very reason that most, but not all, of the animals under pursuit are large ones.

Therefore, not too simply, cryptozoology is the study of hidden animals (whether large or small), to date not formally recognized by what is often termed Western science or formal zoology but supported in some way by testimony (in its broadest definition) from a human being.

ISC Update

There has not been a publication from the International Society of Cryptozoology since at least two years ago, and it makes me sad to think that this great society, which flourished during the 80's, may be dying out. The secretariat, Richard Greenwell, said last Fall that there would be several publications coming out, something along the lines of one journal and two newsletters, by the end of 1995, and then another journal at the beginning of 1996. As of the beginning of May, they still not have arrived! I only hope that the ISC will be able to solve their problems soon, and resume their excellent proceedings and publications.

The Cryptozoology Review is published four times a year by Ben S. Roesch and John Moore. Subscriptions are $7.50 US, $10.00 Can., and £5.00 UK, regardless of where you live. Equivalents in other currencies accepted. All may join. Thanks!

A Special Report:

THE SNOW-WALKER FILM

by John Moore

It has been barely six months since the Redwoods Sasquatch footage (which is widely believed to be genuine) came to light, but yet another alleged film of a hairy hominid has been broadcast on television in the United States. This film, which is now being called the Snow-Walker footage, could be genuine. Unfortunately, too many questions surround its origin for us to say anything for certain at the present time.

Of these questions, one of the most important is the fact that we do not know exactly who filmed it. We do know that it was filmed by a young couple who are probably French (although it has been suggested that they are Flemish), but it is still unknown whether or not they were alone at the time. In any case, they gave the film to a friend in Indonesia, who, in turn, gave the film to the producers of an American TV show, Paranormal Borderline, who broadcast it on March 12, 1996.

It is possible that the couple are still in the vicinity of the film site, but it is in fact still unknown exactly where it was filmed, although it is possible that it was somewhere in the Himalayas. The film site was a hillside covered with snow approximately 3 to 3.5 ft (0.9 to 1.1 meters) deep. According to Jeff Meldrum, an Idaho State University anthropologist with an interest in Sasquatch,

> "On the opposite slope there is coniferous forest and the floor of the valley is thicketed with deciduous shrubs and trees." (Post to the Internet Virtual Bigfoot Conference, March 13, 1996)

A contributor to the Sasquatch newsletter Track Record said that they thought that it was probably filmed in the Rocky Mountains of North America. Interestingly, they also said that it has been reported that a young French couple was trying to fund a Sasquatch expedition to British Columbia about a year ago.

The Film

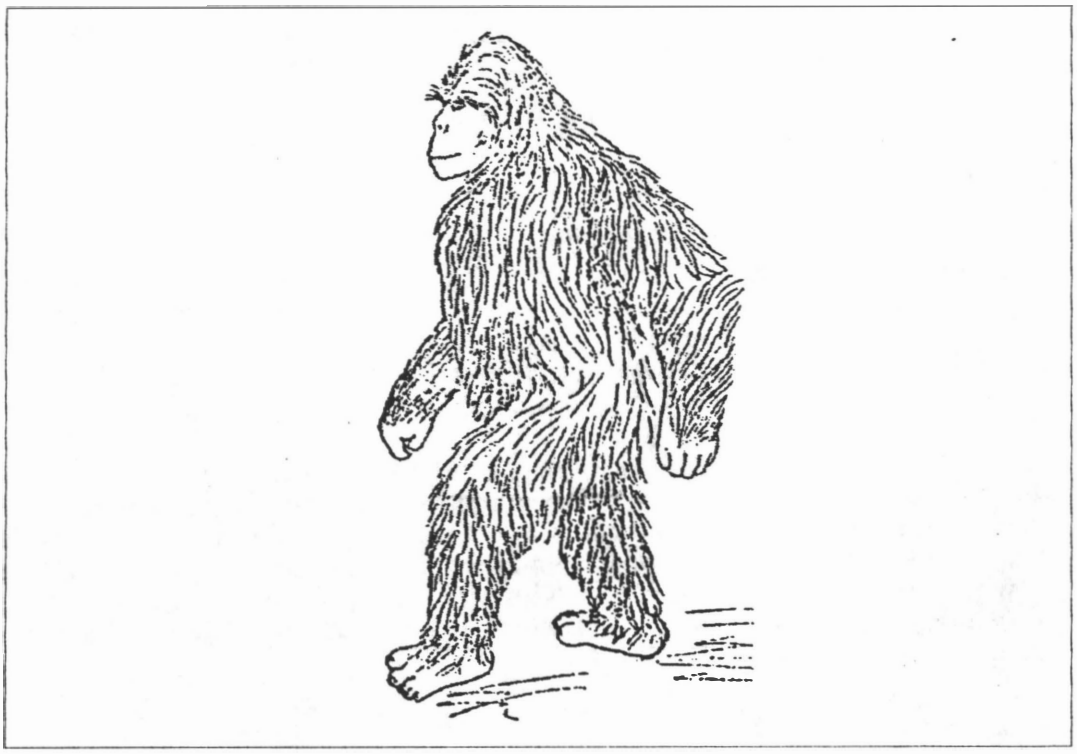
There is at least 30 minutes of film preceding the sighting of the creature. This depicts the two known witnesses walking and doing other activities. The couple had snowshoed by the creature just a few minutes before the film begins, but apparently did not spot the animal.

The footage begins with the "Snow-Walker" sitting in the snow. It then gets up and walks up the hill mentioned above. It has been claimed that the creature acts as though it was interested in the witnesses' trail.

The film is not clearly focused and there are several breaks in the raw footage. The filmer (apparently the woman) is walking during parts of the film, and at one point she even slides down a slope while filming the animal.

As for the creature itself, Jeff Meldrum has calculated its height as being at least 8.5 to 9 ft (2.6 to 2.7 m). This calculation is based upon the witnesses' snowshoe tracks, which are assumed to be

approximately 16 inches (40 cm) wide. Its facial profile, posture, and limb proportions are more ape-like than the subject of the Patterson-Gimlin film. Its face reminded one viewer of an orangutan. However, close examinations of the footage have determined that the creature's hallux (big toe) is unopposable, and therefore it could not be an ape. In addition, its hair is longer and darker than the Patterson-Gimlin subject.



Does the Snow-Walker footage show a real live Yeti? Until more facts turn up, not much can be said.

The technicians at Paranormal Borderline believe the camera to be a Hi-8 of NTSC format but have not yet given the raw video to researchers, only letting them see it in their studio.

In any case, whether a sasquatch, Yeti or human hoax, the truth behind the Snow-Walker footage will not be resolved until questions surrounding its origin can be determinately answered.

Sources: ANONYMOUS, 1996. "Miscellaneous". *Track Record* (March), pp. 8-12. // Posts on the Internet Virtual Bigfoot Conference by Sean Cole (March 13, 1996 and March 14, 1996), Lon Holcomb (March 12, 1996), Bill Linzbach (March 13, 1996), Jeff Meldrum (March 13, 1996 and April 22, 1996), Matt Moneymaker (February 27, 1996 and March 8, 1996), Chris Murphy (March 9, 1996), Steve Musie (March 13, 1996), and Eric Ray (March 12, 1996; 2 posts).

Feature Article

(In which we present a comprehensive research article of cryptozoological nature)

"THE THING"
A CRYPTIC POLYCHAETE OF ST. LUCIA

by Ben S. Roesch

It is always a thrill for cryptozoologists to come across reports of previously unreported and unpublicised cryptids (those creatures which cryptozoologists hunt in vain), as it does not happen all that often. However, when it does, it usually invigorates the cryptozoological community with new discussions and ideas. This is the result of the grandest discoveries, but sometimes we find new cryptids a little less spectacular, but still very interesting. One such cryptid is the subject of this article, and it is not only interesting, but unusual, for a cryptid.

The Caribbean island of St. Lucia (Fig. 1) lies in between Martinique and St. Vincent in the Lesser Antilles, and has begun to attract a large numbers of tourists each year because of its beautiful landscape, both under the sea and on land, and its friendly people. The island, which has an area of 616 sq km and a population of 150 000, has bountiful wildlife in the interior and diverse reefs and undersea worlds in the surrounding ocean, with many colourful fish and coral. With such surroundings we might expect something cryptozoological to turn up, and it turns out that what we had been expecting is actually nothing but the truth.

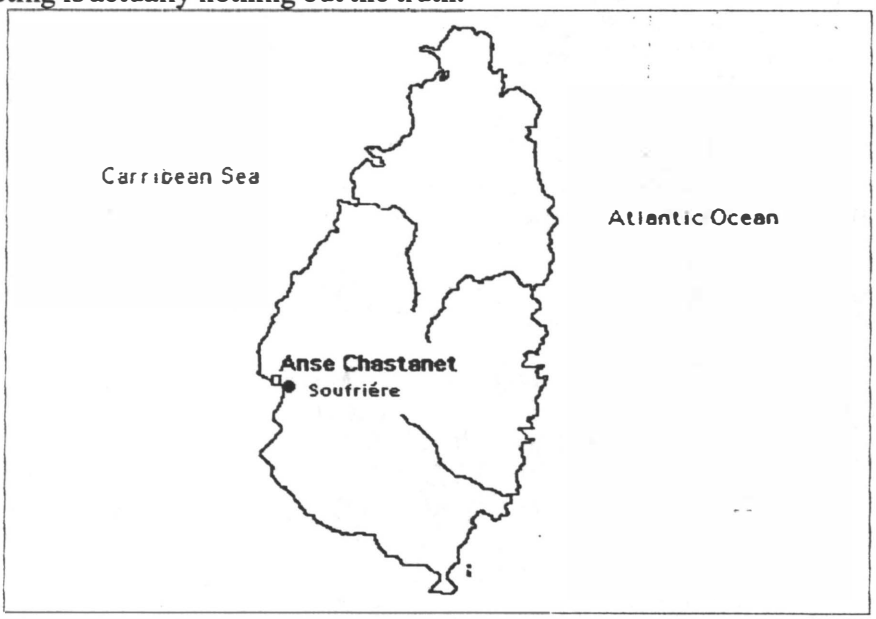


FIG 1. The Caribbean island of St. Lucia, situated in the Lesser Antilles. This map shows the location of the dive resort Anse Chastanet (the square) and the nearby town of Soufriére (the black dot). Map prepared by author.

The story behind my discovery of the reports of "The Thing," which is the crude name the cryptid in question has received, is nothing short of luck and chance. My family was planning to go away in March, 1995 to St. Lucia, to get away from the winter blues of Canada. Shortly before we left, a friend gave me an article she had ripped out of an in-flight magazine, on diving in St. Lucia. The article was named "An Encounter with The Thing", and despite the title, had only a short mention of our cryptid in question, and was certainly not an encounter:

> "Sightings of this enigmatic sea creature put it anywhere from seven to 14 feet long [2.1 m to 4.3 m]. A little small for a Loch Ness-type monster perhaps, but whether it's a mutant worm or a sea cucumber on steroids, the nature of the beast stumps local marine biologists." (1)

Not very informative, but certainly enough to set my cryptozoological interests off. The creature is apparently a "worm-like" marine animal which is often seen on night dives on the beach-access reef by the divers and guests at the Anse Chastanet dive resort, in Soufriére, St. Lucia.

As might be expected from such a vague reference, there is an error. "The Thing" is far from being a complete stump to the local marine biologists, and in fact they actually have a good idea of even what family it belongs to, but this I will discuss later. Firstly, I think it is necessary, in true cryptozoological manner, to give attention to two eyewitness accounts of "The Thing."

The first report comes to us from Flint Smith, a young molecular biologist by profession and a recreational scuba diver, via E-Mail. Smith says he saw

> "... a large worm-like thing on a night dive [at Anse Chastanet]. I saw about 8 inches of something [about] 1.5-2 inches in diameter. It looked like an overgrown legless centipede. It was FAST. When I say 'I saw it' I mean I caught a glimpse of it. Looking down into a gap in the coral, I saw it perfectly still for half a second before it blinked (that's faster than a flash) back into the coral. I have to qualify this with the fact that this was my first dive vacation (with my parents). When I described the thing to the dive master he said 'yeah, yeah, that was it' with a strange tone in his voice. I have never been sure whether he was unhappy that only the kid had seen it or whether he felt bad about perpetuating a myth to an impressionable kid. If I were going to try to model what I remember seeing in that instant, I would take a single section from an undersized lobster tail, make a dozen identical copies and string them together into a worm. Maybe flair the edges out to the side." (2)

Smith elaborates in a second E-Mail to me:

> "[I]t was definitely an end of something longer. As I recall, it was the reef right off the beach. As it was a night dive, [the water] was probably pretty shallow. I wrote the details in my log book, but I didn't keep it up. It might be in a box of dive gear, but I haven't seen it for a while." (3)

Smiths' comments and report are definitely much more informative for our purposes! I have complete trust in Smith, as his report is in no way sensational or spectacular, as we might expect from a hoaxer.

Our next report comes from a Swiss man by the name of Felix Voirol, and again I received his report by E-Mail:

> "We were in Anse Chastanet in summer 1993. During a night dive I got a glimpse of what the dive master identified as "The Thing" by waving her chemical light at the group. I would describe it as the size of a medium moray eel, distinctly copper-coloured and corrugated, like one of those flexible plastic tubings. In a matter of milliseconds the thing disappeared into a crevice. Unfortunately my Nikonos malfunctioned at the time so I left St. Lucia without a documentary proof of the otherwise well advertised phenomenon. For all I know, it may be a mechanical hoax set up by the operators. [In any case], it certainly proved good publicity for the resort." (4)

Again, I have trust in this report, mostly because of the striking similarity between Smith's account and Voirol's. Both of the creatures they saw darted quickly into a crevice, both were worm-like and they both give descriptions of the animal has having a corrugated, ribbed, body.

Before I continue, Voirol's mention of a possible "mechanical hoax" as the explanation for "The Thing" should be briefly discussed. Could "The Thing" actually be a hoax? I seriously doubt it. The Anse Chastanet resort is much too popular anyway among tourists that the owners would hardly give thought to setting up a monster hoax to attract visitors. Anse Chastanet is very well-known for its excellent accommodations and diving, and it has only 48 rooms, so they never have any trouble filling up the hotel at any given time. Besides, a mechanical hoax would just be too much trouble to set up and maintain. Also, as we will see later, other more concrete evidence speaks against the idea of "The Thing" being a hoax.

Back to the reports, we must ask and discuss, in traditional cryptozoological fashion, "What living or extinct animal could 'The Thing' represent?" Luckily for us, we do not have to get too sensational to explain "The Thing". As I have said before, marine biologists already know what kind of animal it is - and this animal could be none other than the marine or bristle worms, scientifically termed *polychaetes*.

The polychaetes are one of three classes (the others being the *Oligochaeta* and *Hirudinea*, or earthworms and leeches, respectively) that comprise the phylum *Annelida*, and encompass the better part of known annelid species. This makes them a common beach side animal; you can often see the burrows of some species in the sand, and in the case of free-living species, see them squirming about, searching for food. Polychaetes vary in size and shape (the majority are small, slender creatures under 30 cm), but all are segmented externally and characterized by frilly hair-like structures called *setae* (Fig. 2). A pair of these setae are mounted on fleshy paddle-shaped locomotor appendages called *parapodia*, many of which run the length of the body. These setae are used for a number of different actions (e.g. swimming, digging etc.), depending on the species in question, and in some species these setae look like bristles of a shaving brush (hence the popular name of "bristle worm"). The heads of polychaetes may appear very bizarre, with tiny eyes, palps, *peristomial tentacles* and in some species, even formidable looking-jaws (Fig. 2a). These characteristics are very important in the classification of polychaetes, as they are often unique from species to species. (5)

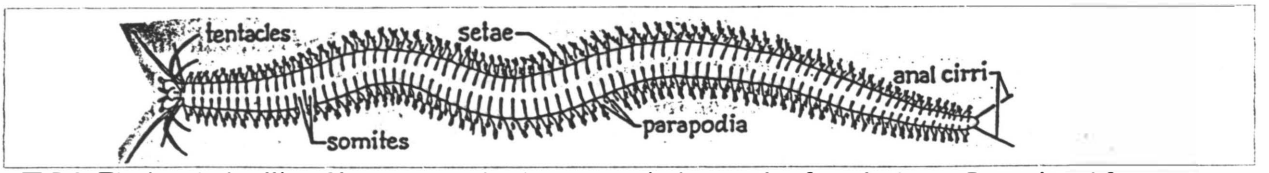


FIG 2. The beach-dwelling Clam Worm, *Nereis* sp., a typical example of a polychaete. Reproduced from Storer, *General Zoology* (9).

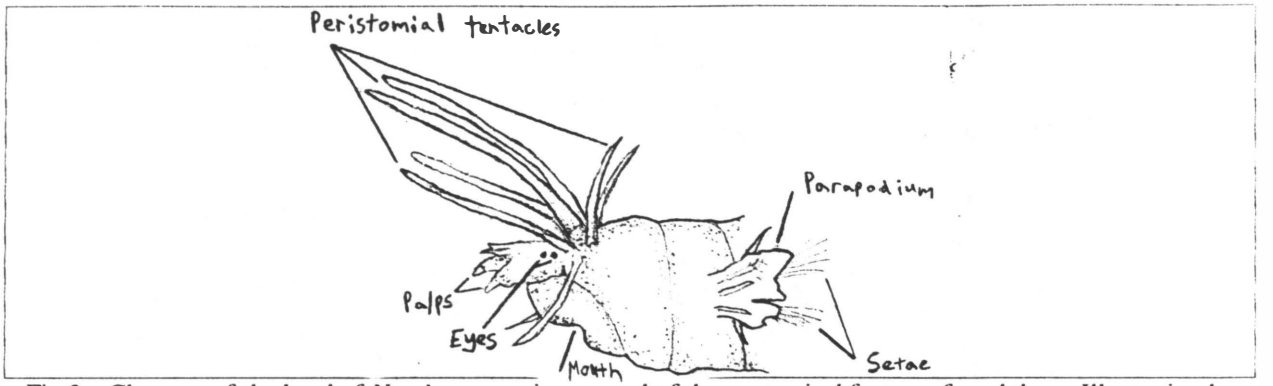


Fig 2a. Close-up of the head of *Nereis* sp., noting several of the anatomical features found there. Illustration by author, based on Storer (9)

Of course, this explanation makes perfect sense. Smith's remark of "flairs out to the sides" for his description of "The Thing" could likely be the frilly setae of polychaetes, and the corrugated body mentioned in both accounts is most probably the result of the look of a segmented worm (which is what polychaetes are). It is safe to say "The Thing" is likely a prime example of a free-living (or active and probably carnivorous polychaete (sometimes referred to as *errant* polychaetes, but this term is now thought to be obsolete and unnatural). Most remarkably though, in rare cryptozoological manner, science is on our side.

I learned of this polychaete explanation for "The Thing" after I wrote to Anse Chastanet, and a dive master there, Michael Allard, sent me back much information on their giant polychaete (6,7).

In a letter dated 21 September 1995, Allard wrote to me:

> "'The Thing' is not as yet identified. It has been photographed by professionals and scientific divers who have been diving with us over the years. They all say 'I know so and so from this university or that institute, we'll identify this thing in no time.' Well, years have gone by and no one has a clue as to the exact species. We have a marine biologist on the island who has seen it several times, but he has no idea either."

This is quite the paragraph when one is talking of a mystery animal! However, we aren't done yet! Allard continues, describing "The Thing":

> "We know that it is a segmented worm. Basically a maroon colour with speckles of neon-like red, yellows, oranges, blues and greens. It has hundreds of leg-like protuberances along its sides and has feathered gills. It has a mouth and head that

make it resemble a walrus for lack of a better description. It feels like an eel ...

"The Thing has been seen upwards of 15 feet [4.6 m]. The average range seems to be six to ten feet or so [2 m to 3 m]."

Allard description is quite alike to both Smith's and Voirol's, and no doubt represents a polychaete. Our multicolored cryptid's "leg-like protuberances" are very likely the setae of a polychaete, and its gills are not all that strange, as several polychaete species have such structures. The walrus-shaped head is in fact a good description of the head of a polychaete, as it does slightly resemble the compact, bulbous head of a walrus. The size of the creature is definitely quite spectacular, as there are only a few species of polychaete that even come close, or match, the dimensions alluded to here (8). A few species of clam worm, genus *Nereis* , can attain rare lengths of 1.5 m, but it is the family *Eunicidae* that take home the honours, with an exceptionally large species, *Eunice giganteus* , growing to as much as 3 m (9,10), the approximate size of "The Thing." Of course giantism is a rare sight within polychaetes, as the majority of species are under 30 cm in length, and therefore even if "The Thing" is rivalled in size by at least one *Eunicid* , it is still a giant among normal polychaetes. Besides, "The Thing" can still attain lengths of as much as 1.5 m longer than *Eunice giganteus.*

Allard's mention of "The Thing" feeling "like an eel" seems strange, as we might expect that if they had been able to feel it, they should have a body by now, and would've been able to identify it. Allard wrote to me on this subject in a second letter, dated 1 December 1995:

"We do get dead partial specimens now and then. We captured one that was wounded. It felt like an eel. We returned it to sea the next day."

As for these specimens, I must quickly note that this destroys any ideas one may have for "The Thing" being a hoax. One hard-nosed skeptic might think that Allard was lying to me in his letter; but of course not only is this very unlikely, but as we will see in a moment, this hoax theory will be further rebutted, when we get back to the topic of these dead "Things."

In any case, continuing on in his letter of 21 September 1995, Allard writes:

"We know [moray] eels feed on them as we have seen this happening on night dives. Both inhabit the same dark tunnel areas of the reef. The Thing is extremely sensitive to light under normal conditions making it very difficult to get good photographs although some do exist. We use a couple in our weekly slide show.

"We know of no other confirmed sightings on any other reefs anywhere. So, for the time being that makes our front yard unique. (11)

"We don't know what The Thing feeds on, life span etc. There are several on the reef and they are seen frequently on night dives here ..."

After reading this it is obvious why "The Thing" is so elusive - it is nocturnal, sensitive to light, and lives in caverns on the coral reef, therefore making it hard to get at a specimen or even take a

photo. However, Allard has informed me that several good pictures have been taken by

> "Walt Stearns, who writes for Discover Diving magazine[.] I have some copies of his shots, but these are not for distribution."

This may be all well and good, but you might be wondering how they still don't know what the exact species of polychaete "The Thing" represents, despite the fact they have photos, eyewitness accounts and even actual specimens, which I mentioned earlier. There are two main reasons behind this, but first we should mention briefly what is known so far about the classification of "The Thing."

According to what samples and photos of "The Thing" she has received, Dr. Susan Marsden, a polychaete expert at McGill University in Montreal (Canada), believes the creature is likely a member of the *Eunicidae* family of polychaetes (we can now say for certain that "The Thing" is not a hoax!) (12). As well, in accordance with the description of "The Thing," several Eunicids have gills along their bodies, with one of the more notable examples being the Red-Gilled Marphysa (*Marphysa sanguinea*). In fact, this species of Marphysa sounds much like "The Thing"; it is iridescent (remember "The Thing" was mentioned by Allard to have speckles of neon colours on its body), it lives in mucous-lined tunnels ("The Thing" is reputed to live in tunnels) in shallow water around the world, including the West Indies, where our mystery polychaete takes residence, it grows to lengths of 60 cm (not as big as "The Thing" but still quite large for a polychaete), and even has a walrus-like head (13,14).

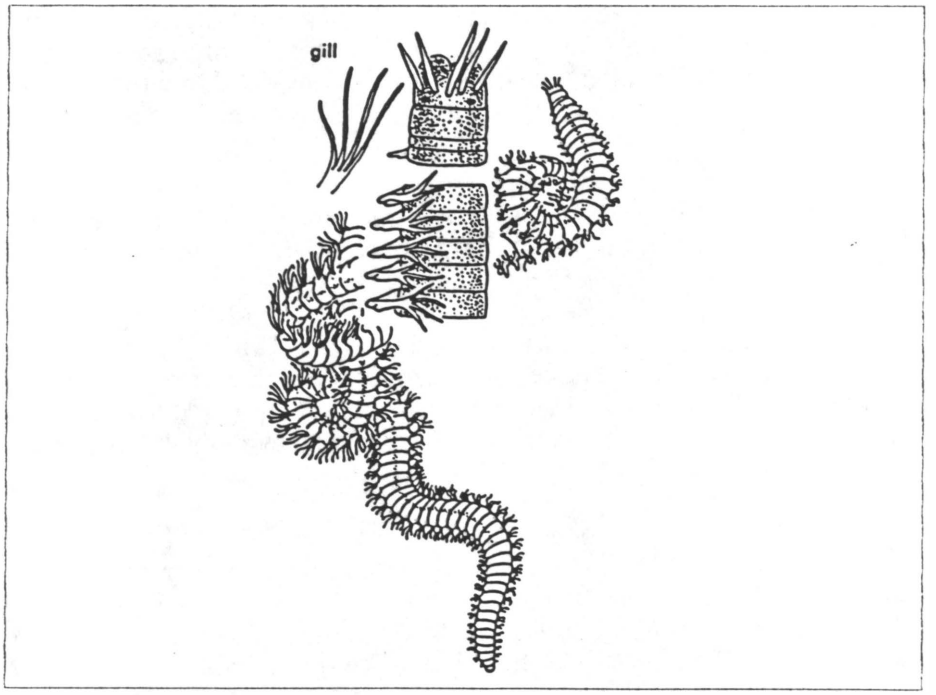


FIG 3. The body and a close-up of the anterior section of the Red-Gilled Marphysa (*Marphysa sanguinea*), a relatively large Eunicid with red frill-like gills. Reproduced from Gosner (5).

Undoubtedly this sounds like our "Thing", but its length is much out of range and I seriously

doubt that Dr. Marsden could make such an error in identification. It is certainly possible that "The Thing" is a larger species of the *Marphysa* genus, but nothing can be said for certain until someone can accurately identify the polychaete species, or even just the genus, that "The Thing" represents, new or known. Of course, this is the problem, which we will now discuss.

There are two reasons why "The Thing" has not yet been accurately identified.

The first is quite simple: Susan Marsden does not have the head of "The Thing"! This may sound like the lead-in to some sort of medieval tale, but it is nothing but the truth. No specimen she has ever seen and/or examined has had a head on it, as "The Thing" has the tendency to break apart when handled (15), and when it comes to polychaetes, their heads are very important for identifying the species. Until she gets one such head (or even examines a photo of one), she will not be able to precisely identify "The Thing." (16)

Dr. Kristian Fauchald, a polychaete specialist at the Smithsonian Institute, informed me of the second possible reason behind the difficulty of identifying "The Thing":

> "The problem lies mainly in the lack of information about variability with size: It is the old concept of allometry [changes in shape or proportions with increase in size (18)]. The relative body-proportions change with size (as in humans) and this change has not been described for any polychaete with any accuracy.
>
> "Most polychaetes don't do much in terms of allometry since they remain small, but a few species become very large and within each group, the large specimens end up resembling each other more than the smaller specimens do. How that is done, and so forth is unknown: We have very few complete large specimens in collections to work with." (17)

In lay person terms, this basically means that when polychaetes within a certain "group" grow larger, they end up looking more and more similar to each other, and less and less similar to their smaller form, making different species harder to distinguish.

It is quite frustrating, really, to have so much evidence for "The Thing", including a partial specimen, for heaven's sake, but yet not have a affirmative idea what the exact genus or species is! And even the family has not been confirmed for certain; though the *Eunicidae* seem the most likely party, as characteristics of this family (gills; iridescent speckles; even the bulbous walrus like head) are found in reports of "The Thing."

In any case, it is hard to dismiss the evidence for the existence of "The Thing", a very large, very elusive, and as of yet very unidentifiable marine worm reportedly living on the beach-access reef of the St. Lucian resort Anse Chastanet. In fact, in my opinion, the evidence is practically irrefutable. It must be said that large polychaetes are known to exist, and a species in the 7-15 foot range would not be such a great jump after all for the order. The question is if it is a new species, or a known small species affected by allometry, after growing giant for some reason. I prefer the former theory, as it seems there is a small community of "The Things" living at Anse Chastanet's reef, and I doubt allometry could account for a whole, albeit small, population, though we cannot disregard this conclusively without more evidence.

I think Michael Allard best sums up the whole situation when he wrote to me:

> "[W]e know very little about this Thing except [that] it exists and we see it."

And there rests the case for "The Thing."

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Michael Allard, Joan Marsden and Kristian Fauchald, of Anse Chastanet, McGill University and the Smithsonian Institute, respectively, for providing much-needed help and information. Also thanks to Felix Voirol and Flint Smith for their reports, Virginia Vogel for passing along the first mention I'd heard of "The Thing", and TCR' s editorial staff for their help.

Notes and References

(1) MACNAIR, M. 1995. "An Encounter with The Thing." *EnRoute* (February). pp. 40-46.
(2) SMITH, F. 1995. Personal communication, March 26.
(3) SMITH, F. 1995. Personal comm., March 27.
(4) VOIROL, F. 1995. Personal comm., April 18.
(5) GOSNER, K. 1978. *A Field Guide to the Atlantic Seashore.* Houghton Mifflin Co. (Boston), pp. 164-65.
(6) ALLARD, M. 1995.Personal comm., September 21. All correspondence from Michael Allard qouted or mentioned in the text derives from notes (6) and (7).
(7) ALLARD, M. 1995. Personal comm., December 1.
(8) We must always remember, however, that while a polychaete may be very impressive in its length, its girth will not be much larger than that of a much shorter species. The reason for this is that marine worms only increase very slightly in girth as they become longer. This thus results in very long, but very skinny, creatures.
(9) STORER, T. I. 1943. *General Zoology.* McGraw-Hill Book Co. Inc. (New York), p. 413.
(10) FAUVEL, P. 1959. "Classe des Annelides Polychetes: Annelida Polycheatea." In Grassé, P-P (Ed.), *Traité de Zoologie*, tome 5, fascicule 1, Masson (Paris).
(11) Actually, Dr. Susan Marsden of McGill University in Montreal has informed me that another giant polychaete, possibly related to "The Thing", may exist in the Barbados.
(12) MARSDEN, S. 1995. Personal comm., December 19.
(13) GOSNER, K. *op. cit.*, p. 180.
(14) NICHOLS, D et al. 1971. *The Oxford Book of Invertebrates*. Oxford University Press (Oxford), p. 99.
(15) Interestingly, the Red-Gilled Marphysa also easily breaks apart when handled.
(16) MARSDEN, S. *op. cit.*
(17) FAUCHALD, K. 1995. Personal Comm., December 18.
(18) STEEN, E. B. 1971. *Dictionary of Biology.* Barnes and Noble Books (New York). p. 14.

WHAT ARE THE GLOBSTERS?

by John Moore

Periodically, carcasses that appear to be from some type of giant invertebrate wash ashore on beaches around the world. These are the "globsters," a term coined by the late Ivan Sanderson to describe a strange carcass that washed ashore in Tasmania in 1960 (1). Theories about the identification of globsters are common, and are the centrepiece of this article. What are the globsters? Before we try to answer this question, however, we need to review the different cases of this phenomena.

The first globster was found in August 1960 by Ben Fenton, Jack Boote, and Ray Anthony. Rounding up cattle near the Interview River in western Tasmania, they came across a large carcass that they said was 20 feet (6.1 metres) long and 18 ft (5.5 m) wide (2).

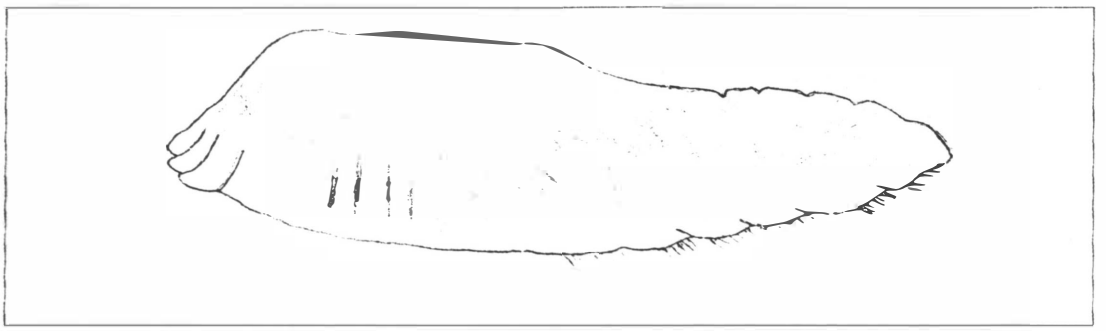
Although Fenton tried to get people interested in the carcass, it wasn't examined by scientists until March 1962. The scientists who examined it were part of an expedition funded by Hobart businessman G.C. Cramp and led by Bruce Mollison.

Between the time of its discovery and the expedition, the carcass had drifted northward with the tide. It is unclear whether or not the carcass decomposed during this time; Fenton said that it had not decomposed and there was no smell, but Boote stated that it had decomposed, and the Hobart Mercury mentioned that it smelled like battery acid (3, 4).

The expedition left on March 2, 1962. They found a very strange carcass. The Hobart (Tasmania) Mercury said that the carcass they found was

> "ABOUT 20 ft. [6.1 m] long, 18 ft. [5.5 m] wide and about 4 1/2 ft. [1.4 m] thick, with an estimated weight of between five and 10 tons [4536 and 9072 kilograms, respectively] ... The part exposed was hard and rubbery and in an extremely good state of preservation ... The party described it in general outline as like a huge turtle, without appendages. It was initially covered with fine hair, described by stockmen as being like sheep's wool, with a greasy feel ... The animal had a hump of about four feet in front and tapered gradually to about six inches [15.2 cm] to what they presumed to the back. There were five or six gill-like hairless slits on each side of the fore part. There were four large hanging lobes in the front, and between the centre pair was a smooth, gullet-like orifice. The margin of the hind part had cushion like protuberances about 2 ft. [0.6 m] wide by 18 in. [0.46 m] deep, and each of these carried a single row of spines, sharp, and hard, about as thick as a pencil and quill-like. There was no appearance of eyes or other organs ... They made a deep incision in the high part and encountered a resilient flesh which appeared to be composed of numerous tendon-like threads welded together in a fatty substance. At no stage in the investigation did they encounter any bone

material ... It was obviously extremely durable and had withstood the weather particularly well."(5)



Sketch of the first Tasmanian Globster, investigated by the Mollinson expedition of 1962. This illustration is based on an illustration published in the *Hobart Mercury* (5). This reproduction copyright 1996, Ben S. Roesch.

They contacted Cramp by telephone on March 7, 1962 and told him that none of them had any idea what the carcass might be.

Soon questions about the creature were being asked in the Australian Parliament. The government decided to mount another expedition, which would be led by John H. Calaby. None of the scientists on the original expedition were included on the new expedition, which lasted only 2 days, from March 17-18, 1962. On their return, they submitted a report to Senator John Gorton, who would later become Australian prime minister.

Several of the new team's observations contradicted those of the earlier expedition's. This new expedition said that the carcass was 8 ft (2.4 m) long, 3 ft (0.9 m) wide, and 10 inches (25 centimetres) thick (compared to 20, 18, and 4 1/2 ft [or 6.1, 5.5 and 1.4 m], respectively, for the earlier expedition). They also did not find any spines. As well, the team stated that fibrous material from the inside had desiccated, and this was what produced the "hair" on the outside. The government's team stated

> "it is not possible to specifically identify it from our investigations so far. But our investigations lead us to believe that the so-called monster is a decomposing portion of a large marine animal. It is not inconsistent with blubber." (6)

Accordingly, later that day Senator Gorton declared,

> "In layman's language, and allowing for scientific caution, this means that your monster is a large lump of decomposing blubber, probably torn off a whale." (7)

Mollison collected some tissue samples from the globster, and had them analyzed to try and find a clue as to the origin of the globster. According to the analysis of these samples, the carcass was largely composed of collagen. Collagen is a stiff substance that is found in cartilage, bone, connective tissue, and any other places in an animal that need to be especially rigid.

Our next globster was found in March 1965 at Muriwai Beach, on the eastern side of New

Zealand's North Island. It was 30 ft (9.1 m) long and 8 ft (2.4 m) high, and after examining the carcass, the head of the zoology department of Auckland University, J.E. Morton, stated

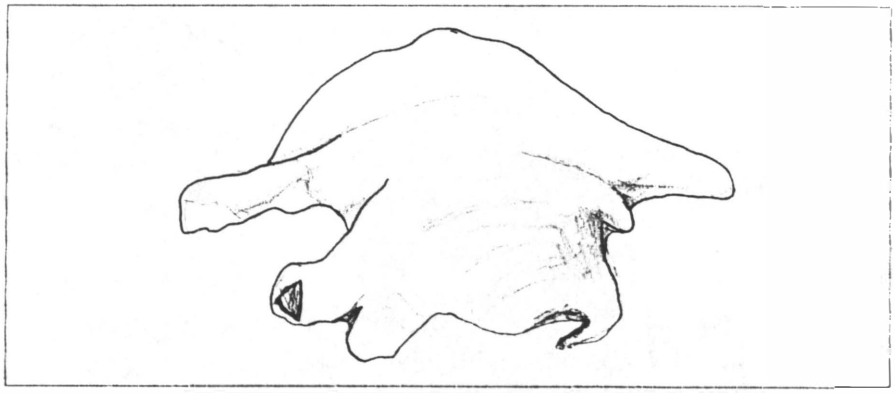
> "The object has a tough quarter-inch [0.6 centimetre] thick hide. Under this is what appears to be a layer of fat, then solid meat. Hair four to six inches [10 to 15 centimetres] long covers its length. Cut from the hide and washed clean, the hair has a soft woolly texture." (8)

According to a letter from J. Robb, a Senior Lecturer in Zoology at Auckland University, to Tim Dinsdale, the creature was not covered with hair, but rather fibres of connective tissue. This was, in Robb's opinion, the remains of blubber, and she thought the carcass was actually from a whale, possibly a humpback (9).

We now move back to Tasmania, when in 1970 another globster washed ashore. It was discovered by the same Ben Fenton who was connected with the 1960 find, and was found a few miles south of Sandy Cape. Some of it was buried beneath the sand, but Fenton said that the part visible was 8 ft (2.4 m) long, humped, had a tough skin, and was relatively fresh. It is unknown what happened to this second Tasmanian globster, and no scientists ever came to examine it (10).

By no means are all globster cases from the Australian/New Zealand area. Several other unidentifiable carcasses reported elsewhere have been said to resemble to these Pacific globsters.

The most famous of these is, without a doubt, the carcass that was discovered on Anastasia Island in Florida in November 1896 (11). This carcass was 21 ft (6.4 m) long and at least 7 ft (2.1 m) wide (12). It was coloured a light pink (13). According to some witnesses, there were several arms associated with the carcass (14). Unfortunately it is not possible to give a full description of it here, but it is by far the best known of the globsters.



A rough sketch, based on an illustration by Dr. Webb, of the St. Augustine glob. This view of it betrays a very octopus-like look. Illustration copyright 1996 Ben S. Roesch.

Dr. DeWitt Webb, of St. Augustine, decided that it was a giant octopus. In 1897, cephalopod authority A.E. Verrill gave the carcass a Latin name, Octopus giganteus, after being notified of the find (15). However, he soon changed his mind and decided that it was a carcass of a sperm whale

(16, 17).

Today, only tissue samples survive. Tests done on these tissues, in general, tend to support the giant octopus theory (18, 19). The recent tests of S.K. Pierce, et al. (20) suggested that the tissues were probably from a whale, but Michel Raynal, has, in my opinion, successfully disproved their arguments in a paper in INFO Journal (21).

Another carcass that has been claimed to have been related to the Australian/Tasmanian globsters is the so-called "Bermuda Blob." It was found in May 1988 by Teddy Tucker in Mangrove Bay, Bermuda. It was about 8 ft (2.4 m) long, rubbery, and tough (22). It was described by Tucker as being

> "2 1/2 to 3 feet [0.8 to 0.9 m] thick ... very white and fibrous ... with five 'arms or legs,' rather like a disfigured star." (23)

It had no bones, cartilage, visible openings or odour. Fortunately, Tucker removed samples of the carcass shortly before the carcass floated back out to sea (24). These samples were also analyzed by the Pierce et al. team, who concluded that it was probably the skin of a fish (25). In his book *Monsters of the Sea*, Richard Ellis said that this explanation is impossible, as no fish would have a skin of the same thickness of the Bermuda Blob (26). However, he has recently suggested that it may have really been from a mola, or ocean sunfish (27). This is possible, as it is the only known fish which could conceivably "transform", in the process of decomposition, into a globster, due to its unusual shape. However, this is still undetermined.

There are other carcasses that could be from globsters that have not been widely mentioned in the literature. One of these, which washed ashore on Dunk Island, Queensland, Australia, was mentioned in a 1948 letter to the *Sydney Sun* (28). It weighed several tons (or several tonnes) and had a skin that was tough and covered with fur. The creature had no eyes, but it had several gill-like slits. It was described as looking like a jellyfish. As the creature stank, the locals dynamited the carcass and dumped the pieces into the sea.

Gerald L. Wood (29) suggested that a carcass found in 1944 at Machrihanish, Mull of Kintyre, Scotland, was related to the globsters. The photo of this carcass look similar to a "stereotypical globster", in Wood's opinion, but as this Scottish carcass was said to posses large eyes and scaly ft, the possibility that it was a globster is unlikely. (Interestingly, however, Michael Bright said that the carcass did not have a head (30). Bernard Heuvelmans, on the other hand, wrote that there were eyes present (31).)

Finally, a carcass that sounds suspiciously like a globster was found in Delake, Oregon in March 1950, acquiring the name "Jughead" from the locals (32). It was between 20 and 22 ft (6.1 to 6.7 m) long and covered with something sometimes described as hair, and at other times shredded flesh or feathers. It did not have a head (33), and a professor from Oregon State University called it a "big glob" (34). This does sound like a globster, but other features of the Delake "globster" are not globster-like at all. For example, people were cutting off pieces of the monster to keep for

	Globster #1	Globster #2	Globster #3	Globster #4	Globster #5	Globster #6	Globster #7
Location/Date:	Florida/1896	QLD/1948	Oregon/1950	TAZ/1960	NZ/1965	TAZ/1970	Bermuda/1988
Length (in feet):	21	?	20-22	20	30	8	8
Width (in feet):	7	?	4	18	?	?	4
Colour:	Pink	?	?	Ivory	?	?	White
Tough?:	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
"Hairy" or Fibrous?:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	?	Yes
Gills?:	No	Yes	No	Yes	?	?	No
Fat in Tissues?:	No	?	?	Yes	Yes	?	No
Appendages?:	Yes	?	Yes	No	No	?	Yes
Probable Identification:	Octopus	NSI	UD	NSI	UD	NSI	UD

Key to Abbreviations:

? - Unknown
NSI - New Species of Invertebrate
NZ - New Zealand
QLD - Queensland, Australia
TAZ - Tasmania
UD - Undetermined

TABLE: COMPARING THE GLOBSTERS

souvenirs. Globsters, on the other hand, are usually very hard to cut. It was also only four feet (1.2 m) wide (35), and was stated to posses three to nine tails, which reportedly lacked hair (36, 37). One expert "identified" it as a whale shark (38), but whale sharks are found in tropical oceans, and would not be expected to be found anywhere near Oregon, where the water is quite cold.

As far as I am aware, no other unidentified carcasses from the sea have been linked in the literature with globsters.

All of the carcasses have things in common. All of them were "hairy" or fibrous, and were coloured either white or a similar colour (except for Octopus giganteus, which was pink (39)). They were usually very hard to cut, and when any tissue samples were analyzed, they were found to be made of collagen.

However, there are also dissimilarities. Supposing that the Florida globster was really the carcass of a giant octopus, a fact that seems very likely, then we must come up with separate identities for at least some of the other globsters. Why? The fact is that the morphology of, for example, the first Tasmanian globster simply cannot be reconciled with that of an octopus. One could, however, hypothesize that perhaps the globster was a very decayed octopus. However, the first Tasmanian globster is usually described as being in good condition (40, 41). The condition of this globster will be discussed further below. Also, the presence of fatty substances in this globster is intriguing. The Mercury said that the flesh of the first Tasmanian globster

> "appeared to be composed of numerous tendon-like threads welded together with a fatty substance." (42)

The government's team stated that

> "It consists throughout of tough, fibrous material loaded with fatty or oily substances." (43)

Fat has also been reported in the New Zealand globster (44). This will be discussed below.

In any case, the important thing is that the Octopus giganteus samples do not show any fat tissue (45, 46). Therefore it seems safe to conclude that at least the first Tasmanian globster is not an octopus.

What about the other carcasses? The two Tasmanian globsters and the Queensland carcass are probably related. There is not enough evidence to judge on the Bermuda Blob. As for the so-called "Jughead," it is probably not related to the other globsters, as there are several features of it that are contradictory to the typical globster image. It is probably some sort of ordinary animal that has decayed beyond recognition, but there is still not enough information to guess what kind.

But what of the New Zealand globster? This was explained away as a whale by J. Robb:

> "The reports of its hairiness were made by an enthusiastic newspaper reporter. . . .

> Certainly, the photographs he had taken seemed to show densely matted fibres, several inches long. When I examined some of these fibres myself, however, it was obvious that they were long strands of fibrous connective tissue - all that remained of the outermost few inches of blubber, the softer parts of the tissue having been either chewed or shredded by small fish, etc., or eroded away by the action of sand and water. While identification of the exact species (of whale) was not possible, it was most likely to have been a humpback." (47)

J.E. Morton reported that

> "The object has a tough quarter-inch [0.6 centimetre] thick hide. Under this is what appears to be a layer of fat, then solid meat." (48)

This sounds superficially like a whale, but as Richard Ellis points out, a piece of a whale the size of a globster would certainly have at least some internal organs or bones in it, which were not present in the New Zealand globster (49). The other interesting thing about Morton's description is that it is quite unlike that of the first Tasmanian globster, which had "tendon-like threads welded together with a fatty substance" (50). Are these differences great enough to justify separating the New Zealand globster from the other globsters taxonomically? In the opinion of the present author, the answer is probably yes, but it cannot be said for certain, as it appears that no tissue samples still survive from either of these carcasses.

So what are the globsters from Tasmania and Australia? Let us briefly review a few of the ideas that have already been proposed:

1. Giant Ray: A.M. Clark, a University of Tasmania zoologist, suggested that the first Tasmanian globster was a giant ray (51). There appears to be no evidence to support this conclusion.

2. Outer Space: The same can be said for Ivan Sanderson's suggestion that globsters are from outer space (52).

3. Whale: Senator John Gorton proposed a whale as an explanation for the first Tasmanian globster (53). This does not appear to be a well-founded hypothesis. Certainly a whale would have to be severely decayed to even begin to resemble a globster.

But how badly have the globsters decayed? Both Fenton's and the Hobart Mercury's accounts agree that the first Tasmanian globster was still in good condition (54, 55). Boote, who said that it had decomposed when he examined it, seemed to say that it was still in good condition when it was discovered (56). A drawing of the globster by Fenton no doubt dates from this time, and it closely resembles a 1962 drawing of the same carcass. Neither drawing shows any signs of decay, and neither of them could be from a whale.

The presence of gill-like slits on both the first Tasmanian globster and the Queensland specimen also argues against a case of severe decay. If they really were a product of decay, it would not be expected for them to appear independently in two separate carcass. Also, as far as I know, no one

connected with the first Tasmanian globster was aware of the earlier Queensland carcass, so it would be unlikely that these gill-like structures were dreamed up by people trying to make it more similar to the Queensland carcass. Of course, the gill-like structures could still have been imagined by one or both of the parties.

In any case, it would be impossible for piece of a whale to be the size of a globster without having some organs, as noted above. Whale blubber would also not be very tough, unlike at least some of the globsters.

Also, it is impossible to imagine how the spines on the first Tasmanian globster could have come from a decayed whale.

4. Basking Shark: Michael Bright theorized that both the Queensland carcass and the first Tasmanian globster might be basking sharks (57). Hugh Trotti also suggested that the globsters were sharks (58). Bright's argument is that the "hair" on the carcasses was really muscle fibres that fan out when the skin decays away, creating the hairy appearance on so many basking shark carcasses that are claimed to be from sea serpents. Trotti also bases his hypotheses on the hair-like appearance. As well, Bright suggests that the "gills" reported on some of the globsters are really the gills of a decayed basking shark.

This explanation is not very sound. The gills of a basking shark are, after all, one of the first parts to decay away (59). Also, as with whales, there are no globster-sized chunks in a basking shark that would be free of internal organs.

So, since none of the above discussed theories work, what *are* the globsters? At this point, the best explanation is that they are some type of very large invertebrate. It is not at all clear, however, what type of invertebrate we are dealing with here.

The only way that we will ever have a chance of solving the mystery of the globsters is if another one washes up some place and a thorough scientific study is conducted. Unfortunately, due to the rarity of occurrences of these strange carcasses, that may not be for a long time.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Ben Roesch, Robert Tuck, Darren Naish, and Richard Ellis for providing valuable comments on the manuscript. Ben Roesch also provided a copy of Michel Raynal's INFO Journal article.

Notes and References

(1) GREENWELL, J.R. (Ed.), 1988. "Bermuda Blob Remains Unidentified." *ISC Newsletter* (Autumn), p. 4.

(2) Details of this case come from GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5, unless otherwise noted.

(3) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

(4) ANONYMOUS. 1962. "Nearly As Big as a House! It Was Covered with Fine Hair." *Hobart Mercury*, March 9. Reprinted in ELLIS, R. 1994. *Monsters of the Sea.* Alfred A. Knopf (New York), p. 314.

(5) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.*
(6) Quoted in GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
(7) Quoted in GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
(8) Quoted in DINSDALE, T. 1972. *Monster Hunt*. Acropolis Books (Washington D.C.), p. 159.
(9) DINSDALE, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.
(10) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.
(11) MANGIACOPRA, G.S. 1976. "Monster on the Florida Beach." *INFO Journal* (May), p. 2.
(12) VERRILL, A.E., 1897a. "Additional information concerning the giant Cephalopod of Florida." *American Journal of Science*, ser. 4, vol. 3, p. 163.
(13) MANGIACOPRA, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
(14) VERRILL, A.E., 1897b. "The supposed great Octopus of Florida; certainly not a Cephalopod." *American Journal of Science*, ser. 4, vol. 3, p. 355.
(15) VERRILL, *op. cit.* (1897a), pp. 162-163.
(16) VERRILL, *op. cit.* (1897b), pp. 355-356.
(17) VERRILL, A.E. 1897c. "The Florida Sea-Monster." *American Naturalist* (April), pp. 306-307.
(18) GENNARO, J.F. 1971. "The Creature Revealed." *Natural History* (March), pp. 24, 84.
(19) MACKAL, R.P. 1986. "Biochemical Analyses of Preserved Octopus giganteus Tissue." *Cryptozoology*, pp. 55-62.
(20) PIERCE, S.K., SMITH, G.N., Jr., MAUGEL, T.K., and Clark, E. 1995. "On the Giant Octopus (Octopus giganteus) and the Bermuda Blob: Homage to A.E. Verrill." *Biological Bulletin* (April), pp. 219-230.
(21) RAYNAL, M. 1996. "Debunking the Debunkers of the Giant Octopus." *INFO Journal* (Winter), pp. 24-27.
(22) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
(23) Quoted in ELLIS, *op. cit.*, p. 317.
(24) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.
(25) PIERCE, et al., *op cit.*, p. 229.
(26) ELLIS, *op. cit.*, p. 322.
(27) ROESCH, B. 1996. Personal communication to the author, May 2.
(28) BRIGHT, M. 1989. *There are Giants in the Sea*. Robson Books (London), p. 183.
(29) WOOD, G.L. 1990. "Cryptoletter". *ISC Newsletter* (Spring), p. 10
(30) BRIGHT, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
(31) HEUVELMANS, B. 1968. *In the Wake of the Sea Serpents*. Hill and Wang (New York), p. 570.
(32) ANONYMOUS. 1972. "Things in the Sea." *INFO Journal* (Winter/Spring), p. 21.
(33) LEBLOND, P.H. and BOUSFIELD, E.L. 1995. *Cadborosaurus: Survivor from the Deep*. Horsdal and Schubart (Victoria), p. 120.
(34) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1972), p. 21.
(35) LEBLOND and BOUSFIELD, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

(36) *Ibid.*
(37) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1972), p. 21.
(38) LEBLOND and BOUSFIELD *op. cit.*, p. 120.
(39) MANGIACOPRA, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
(40) *Ex. gr.*, ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1962).
(41) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.
(42) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1962).
(43) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
(44) DINSDALE, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
(45) RAYNAL, *op. cit.*
(46) VERRILL, A.E. 1897d. The Florida Monster. Science, new series, vol. 114, p. 392.
(47) DINSDALE, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.
(48) DINSDALE, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
(49) ROESCH, B. 1996. Personal comm., April 28.
(50) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1962).
(51) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
(52) ELLIS, *op. cit.*, p. 316.
(53) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
(54) ANONYMOUS, *op. cit.* (1962).
(55) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
(56) GREENWELL, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
(57) BRIGHT, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
(58) TROTTI, H. 1992. "Explaining Hairy Blobs and Leonardo's Mirror Writing." *Electronic Newsletter of the Georgia Skeptics* (May/June).
(59) HEUVELMANS, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

The Editor welcomes comments on the two articles in this issue, as well as the other features, for inclusion in a letters section for upcoming issues of TCR. Thanks!

Reviews and Resource

Books

"Cadborosaurus: Survivor from the Deep" by Paul LeBlond and Edward Bousfield Horsdal & Schubart Publishers (Victoria, B.C., Canada) 1995. 134 pp. $9.95 Canadian. ISBN 0-920663-33-3

Review by Ben S. Roesch

In this enthralling and scholarly new tome, Drs. LeBlond and Bousfield present in a well-written, scientific and concise manner the history and biology of British Columbia's most famous sea serpent, "Cadborosaurus", more affectionately known as "Caddy". In doing so, the authors also show exactly how a study on a specific cryptid should be conducted.

One of the more appealing facets of this book is the fact that the authors do not attempt to describe in detail every case ever recorded of Caddy (this job is done, albeit in less detail, in the excellent catalogue of Caddy sightings found in the rear of the book). Instead, they discuss the more prominent and interesting cases, beginning with the oldest Indian legends to the most recent sightings, and later on in the book make some very interesting conclusions as to the biology and life-style of Caddy, including the suggestion that Caddy is some sort of reptile, a theory I personally do not agree with, but which is interesting nonetheless.

However interesting this seems, the excellence does not end there; it is the centrepiece of the book which will have you most excited. This centrepiece are several photos, taken in the 1937 and reproduced in the book, showing an alleged dead baby Caddy resting on several boxes at a whaling station on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Taken from the stomach of a sperm whale, the animal is decidedly long and snake-like, with a peculiar camel-shaped head (just as the sightings of Caddy describe) and an equally strange tail, which looks very spiny and almost alien. The photos are very compelling, and they have led the authors to scientifically name Caddy *Cadborosaurus willsi* , in honour of Archie Wills, the so-called "godfather" of Caddy and newspaper editor who brought BC's sea serpent out of obscurity and into the light of the newspapers and media.

All this, and many more surprises, make this book is easily one of the best cryptozoological reads of the decade. It is concise, informative, interesting, fun, and most of all, holds much evidence towards Caddy's existence.

Periodicals

Animals & Men. The Centre for Fortean Zoology, 15 Holne Court, Exwick, Exeter, UK EX4 2NA. Editor: Jonathan Downes. Cost: £7.00 in the UK, £8.00 in rest of Europe, £10.00 in N. America, Australia and New Zealand (£12.00 Air Mail), and £14.00 in other countries (Air Mail). This excellent quarterly magazine, set in a attractive, small format, provides excellent articles and news on all the latest happenings in cryptozoology. Its articles are especially interesting, with a

series on mystery whales, by Darren Naish (one of our esteemed staff members), topping the list. Other topics that have been discussed in this magazine include the Migo, a bibliography of cryptozoology books, various pieces on the Beast of Bodmin, the Orang-Pendek, HongKong tigers and much much more! An excellent publication!

The British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club Newsletter. 3773 West 18th Ave, Vancouver, BC Canada V6S 1B3. Editor: Paul LeBlond (leblond@ocgy.ubc.ca). Cost: $5.00 Canadian funds. This is a great newsletter, between 10-15 pages per issue, and there are four every year, from the author of the "Cadborosaurus", reviewed above. It is more than worth your time. Each issue all the latest cryptozoological news, from British Columbia to Tanzania, is disclosed, in a fun and informative style.

Exotic Zoology. 3405 Windjammer Dr., Colorado Springs, CO, 80920, USA. Editor: Matt Bille (MattWriter@aol.com). Cost: $18.00 US funds in the US, $20.00 US funds for other countries, students and educators pay only $15.00 in the US and $18.00 US funds for other countries. This excellent bimonthly news-magazine of cryptozoology is in a class of its own. Every two months it features 8 crisp and neatly set pages filled with the latest cryptozoological news, as well as two feature articles, usually one on a mystery animal and another on a recent discovery. The latest issue features articles on "Australia's Shadow Predators" and on *Symbion pandora* , the first representative of a new phylum of animal. Each issue also sports several excellent illustrations by Craig Gosling.

Fortean Times. Box 2409, London, UK NW5 4NP. Editors: Bob Rickard (bob@forteana.win-uk.net) and Paul Sieveking (paul@fortmag.win-uk.net). Cost: £26.40 in the UK, $59.40 US funds in the USA, £39.50 or $79 US funds in other countries. This very popular publication, published monthly, is one of the best out there. It has a great format and lots of illustrations, and of course their articles are excellent. Every issue is packed with great news and articles on cryptozoology, as well as on many other fortean subjects. (Internet: http://alpha.mic.dundee.ac.uk/ft/ft.cgi?-1,ft)

International Society of Cryptozoology Journal and **Newsletter**. P.O. Box 43070, Tucson, AZ, 85733, USA. Editor/Secretariat: J. Richard Greenwell. Cost: $32.00 US funds. If you serious about cryptozoology studies, or are interested in the scientific side of the field, joining the ISC is the best thing you can do. For your membership dues you will receive one 120+ page journal and four newsletters (about 12 pages each) per year. These publications are filled with the latest news, great articles, reports and reviews, and are all printed neatly and very professionally. Unfortunately, the ISC has been having financial problems of late and have not been able to publish anything for the last year or two, so please subscribe and help to resurrect this amazing society and its publications!

Strange Magazine. P.O. Box 2246, Rockville MD, 20847 USA. Editor: Mark Chorvinsky (strange@cais.com). Cost: $19.75 US funds for in USA, $24.95 US funds in other countries, both for 4 issues . This great fortean magazine matches Fortean Times in every way except in publication schedule, as it comes out only two times a year, a travesty considering just how excellent Strange is. Each issue contains at least one or two great articles on cryptozoology, as well as book reviews, news clippings and best of all, a spectacular 6-8 page column by UK cryptozoologist Dr. Karl Shuker. Add this to a great format, an easy to comprehend layout, and great illustrations and photos, and you have one heck of a magazine! I cannot praise this magazine highly enough! (Internet: http://www.cais.com/strangemag/home.html)

End Page

(By which we inform you of several important matters)

Contributors for this Issue

Loren Coleman is a Research Associate at the Edmund S. Muskie Institute of Public Affairs, University of Southern Maine, and has been involved with cryptozoology for many years. He is author of five books on the subject, and can be reached by email at lcoleman@usm.maine.edu.

John Moore is a grade 7 student in Park City, Utah, U.S.A., who has been researching cryptozoology for 6 years. He is also interested in paleontology (especially Vendian and Cambrian faunas), and many other areas. He can be reached by email at jmoore@ditell.com.

Ben S. Roesch is a grade 10 student in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, with a keen interest in cryptozoological studies and research. He is also well-read and very interested in marine biology (particularly sharks), animal predatory behaviour, and general zoology.

How to Contact Us!

Any correspondence, manuscripts etc. should be directed to the editor:

Ben S. Roesch
Editor, The Cryptozoology Review
137 Atlas Ave.
Toronto ON
Canada M6C 3P4
phone: (416) 653-4955
email: bz050@freenet.carleton.ca

A Plea for Help!

We are always looking for cryptozoological articles, photocopies, books, files, and other things of this sort to add to our archives. If you have anything cryptozoological that you don't want anymore please send them to us! We will put them to good use. Even more helpful is if you could make copies of relevant material in your own personal files and send them to us. In exchange, we will be happy to send you info on any specific cryptozoological topics you are researching. Thank you!

Coming Soon in TCR: A review of Beast of Buderim sightings in Oz (by Peter Darben); the case for the giant white shark (by Darren Naish); a review of sea monster carcasses from around the world (by Ben S. Roesch); mysterious cave tracks in Mexico (by Ben S. Roesch); great news coverage and much more! The next issue will be out in September.