



# EXOTIC ZOOLOGY

The Bimonthly Magazine of Cryptozoology

Vol. 3., #3 May/June 1996 Matthew A. Bille, Editor

## RECENT DISCOVERIES: NEW ANIMALS AROUND THE WORLD

**Editor's Note:** Not every new animal discovered is newsworthy to cryptozoologists. However, it is important to make the point that new animals, large and small, vertebrate and invertebrate, are being found every day in every part of the world. Accordingly, here is a selection of recent finds:

To start with the mammals: a **new type of rat**, yet unclassified, has been discovered. New rodents are not unusual, but it's always interesting when a zoological discovery comes from a place as densely populated and developed as Hong Kong. The diminutive rodent with white paws was described by one researcher as "quite cute."

In a similar situation, a **new species of bat** "has kept its secret right under our noses," marvels Charles Critchley, head ranger of Britain's Forest Enterprise. The pipistrelle, Britain's most common bat, has turned out to be two species, not one. The clue that led scientists to this discovery came when bat researchers discovered that pipistrelles used two different frequencies for their sonar. Morphological and DNA studies have confirmed the distinction between the bats of Yorkshire and those of Lancaster.

### SPECIAL ISSUE: CATCHING UP WITH THE CRYPTO-NEWS

This issue of *Exotic Zoology* is devoted to bringing readers up to date on the many short items we've been unable to squeeze into the last few issues. That will let us rest assured we've covered all the important developments concerning new or rediscovered species, as well as reader comments and reviews of books, periodicals, etc.

## NEW ANIMALS (Continued):

A new tarsier has been reported from Indonesia. The diminutive primate has been named *Tarsius syrichta*. It is gray with a golden-brown stripe on its back. The species name is provisional, as there is some suspicion the animal could be a hybrid between two known species.

A new fish from South America might be called a "monster" by some despite its size: only 1cm long. The transparent vertebrate, which may be the smallest fish known, is a parasite that fastens inside the gills or other openings of larger creatures and drinks their blood. The "vampire" fish has two specialized teeth, shaped like hooks, to fasten itself to its host. **Source:** Homewood, Brian. 1995. "Vampire Fish Show Their Teeth," *New Scientist*, Dec. 3, p.7.

In the South Pacific, a new species of crayfish, or rock lobster, recently joined the zoological lists. *Jasus caveorum* is the first new species added to its genus in a century. The lobster was picked up by a fishing boat on a seamount southwest of Easter Island in the summer of 1995. The discovery was published in the December issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*.

**Sources:** Anonymous. 1996. "New lobster find rushed to publication," *New Zealand Science Digest* (electronic edition), January/February // Glover, Simon. 1996. "As we suspected, Yorkshire out-bats the Lancs pipsqueaks," *Yorkshire Post*, March 6, p.1. (Thanks to C. B. Chapman for article) // Williams, Jan. 1996. "New rat in Hong Kong," and "New Tarsier?" *Animals and Men*, Issue #9, p.6

## NEWS AND COMMENT

There is more Eastern cougar news (sometimes it seems this creature is the most common "extinct" animal on the planet). Chris Bolgiano's well-written new book, *Mountain Lion: An unnatural history of pumas and people* (1995: Stackpole books) contains a great deal of information on the cougar and its place in American history and folklore. A fascinating chapter on the Eastern cougar includes some very interesting data. For instance, the 1994 *Audubon* magazine picture of a purported Eastern cat has been shown to be a hoax. (Based on the vegetation in the photo, the animal is a Western cougar.) Other tidbits: In 1981, a cougar was reported in a park in the city of Seattle. After initial searches with dogs were unsuccessful, authorities dismissed the reports of seven witnesses as mistakes and "hysteria." A week later, the animal was flushed out. Finally, Bolgiano reports that, while the new genus *Puma* hasn't entered into wide use, it has been accepted by the American Society of Mammologists. **Comment:** I think the new genus is correct: the ancestry of *Puma concolor* cougar is still a matter under study, but the animal doesn't fit well into the "small cats" (*Felis*) or the "large cats" (*Panthera*).

## NEWS AND COMMENT (Continued):

Bolgiano also reviews the puma problem in a new article in *Wildlife Conservation* ("The Case of the Eastern Cougar," June, pp.48-51.)

Another bit of cougar news: add **one more report** to the anecdotal evidence for the problematical "black phase." Don Bille was driving in Eastern Maine in 1954 in daylight when a long-tailed black cat leaped across the road just in front of him. The animal startled him because it was much too large to be a feral domestic, although "not as big as the black panthers (leopards) you see in the circus," and the unmistakable tail ruled out a bobcat. Bille was an experienced hunter and remains certain it was no animal that belonged to the state's known fauna. **Comment:** While this story isn't recent, it's included here because the editor can vouch for the witness' credibility: Don Bille is, as you've probably guessed, my father.)

One more cat item: Frank Dobie's 1947 travelogue, *Tongues of the Monte*, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.), contains an account of the **killing of an onza** in Mexico. The animal he describes - puma-like but "enormous," with huge paws and displaying legendary ferocity - does not sound much like the relatively scrawny cat examined by J. Richard Greenwell and Dr. Troy Best. Dobie did mention small markings on the legs, but that and the general form are the only details that match. Finally, Bolgiano's book (above) also mentions the onza. She notes the DNA evidence marks it as a puma, albeit a "strange animal." **Thanks** to Dan Bruce for sending a copy of Dobie's account.

A United Nations report states that **486 animal species** are known to have gone extinct within the past four centuries. In the United States, there are currently 450 species (plants and animals) which are of unknown status and may be extinct, in addition to the 101 known extinctions. **Source:** *Global Biodiversity Assessment*, quoted in Stolzenburg, William. 1996. "Extinction for the Record," *Nature Conservancy*, May/June, p.6.

**How much life is there in the ocean depths?** It was once estimated there were only 200,000 species of marine life of all kinds. As William J. Broad of the *New York Times* reports, the estimates for life on the sea floor have risen to 10 million species or more. Said one marine biologist, "It's changing our whole view about biodiversity." Most of these are tiny invertebrates, although a giant sea louse 30cm long was recently collected off Australia. (To visualize this bizarre new animal, called *Bathynomus*, imagine a common wood louse blown up to the size of your foot.) It now appears that only the rain forests rival the sea bed for the number and diversity of organisms. Finally, subterranean waters also teem with life: for instance, a dozen or more new species of arthropods turned up in a channel discovered far beneath the bed of Montana's Flathead River. **Sources:** Corliss, William. 1990. "Really Deep Rivers," *Science Frontiers*, No.67 // Broad, 1995. "The World's Deep, Cold Sea Floors Harbor a Riotous Diversity of Life," *New York Times*, October 17 // Williams, Jan. 1996. *Animals and Men*, Issue #9, p.5.)

**NEWS AND COMMENT (Continued):**

The Access Excellence Biotech database on the America OnLine information service (April 10, 1996), quoting the French Ocean Research Institute, reports that **marine worms** six feet (2m) long have been captured in the Pacific at a depth of over 8500 feet (2600m). This report presumably refers to a new species, but **EZ** has been unable to obtain any further information.

The same is true about a report from China's Xinhua news agency claiming that a **tiny monkey long thought extinct** has been rediscovered. This animal weighs a mere 7 ounces (196g) and was reputedly trained in ancient China to perform tasks such as preparing ink and turning pages for the philosopher Zhu Xi. The monkey's location was reported as the Wuyi Mountains of Fujian Province. The species name was not given, and available references offer no clue as to what this animal might be. According to *Rare Mammals of the World* (Burton and Pearson, 1987) the only primate in China with such uncertain status is the Guizhou snub-nosed monkey (*Pygathrix brelichi*, unrecorded since it was described from two specimens 93 years ago), but this animal is far too large to be the subject of this report. **Source:** Anonymous. 1996. "Chinese Report Finding "Extinct" Monkey the Size of a Mouse," *Chicago Tribune*, April 22. **Thanks** to Bufo Calvin for bringing this subject to our attention.

There is reportedly some **hard evidence for large mystery cats** alleged to exist in Peru. Two skulls were obtained in 1994 by Peter Hocking. One, allegedly from an animal known to Peruvians as the "striped tiger," is described by Dr. Karl Shuker as narrower than a jaguar's skull and not matching any known cat species. The other is from a feline called the "speckled tiger." Shuker describes the skull as very heavily built, with canine teeth that look like tusks. The cat, according to witnesses, is a montane forest dweller sporting a gray coat flecked with black. Both skulls are still under study, but they make a very strong case for further investigation of Peru's feline fauna. **Source:** Shuker, Karl P. N. 1996. "South American Mystery Cats," *Cat World*, January, pp.36-37.

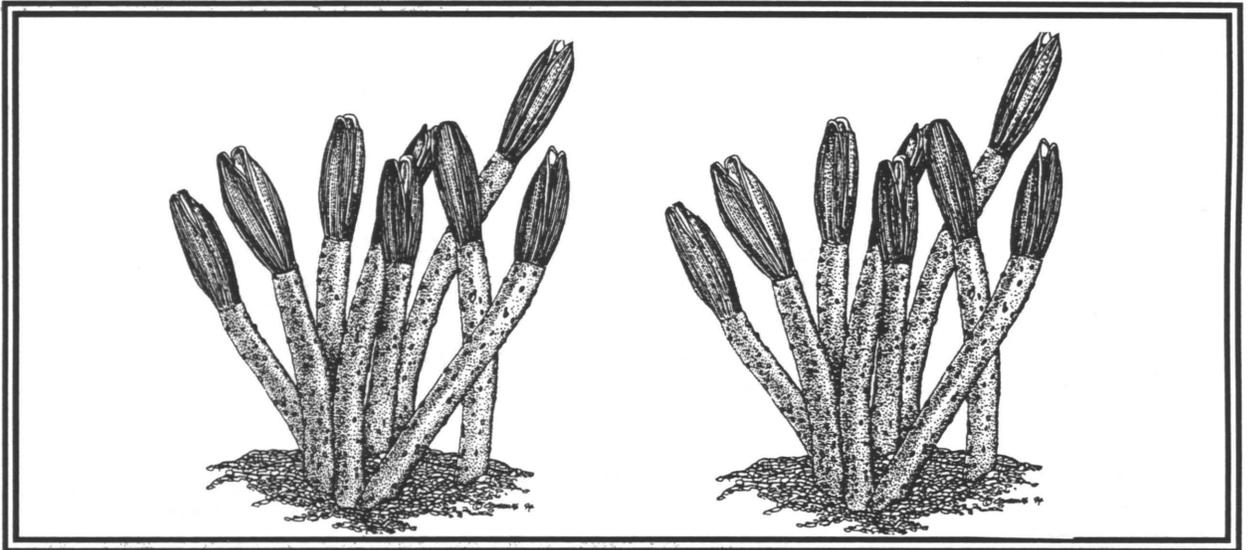
**A tricolored panda?** Chinese police recently confiscated a panda pelt and gave it to the Xian Zoo, where experts were startled by the presence of an elliptical golden stripe, about 20 cm long, on the left buttock. No color aside from black, white, and gray has ever been recorded on pandas. **Source:** Anonymous. 1996. Reuters dispatch, March 28. In another case involving a strange specimen of a known species, the first photograph ever has been taken of a completely **maneless male lion**. The animal was spotted in Zimbabwe. **Source:** *The Electronic Telegraph*, February 22, 1996: Forwarded by Ben Roesch.

*Rana subaquavocalis*, the frog that calls underwater and the subject of the first-ever **EZ** lead story, is down to 25 individuals and faces extinction only six years after discovery. **Source:** Anonymous. 1995. "Is Newfound Frog Already Croaking?" *National Geographic*, December.

## RESOURCES

### BOOKS.

Ballard, Robert D. 1995. *Explorations*. New York: Hyperion. 407pp. In this fascinating account of Ballard's undersea discoveries, the explorer and geographer tells about the finding of a totally new ecosystem - the deep-sea hydrothermal vent colonies. Ballard recounts how the first report was received with disbelief by biologists, and how the myriad of animals discovered at these vents has contributed to our understanding of the origin and development of life.



One of Ballard's most famous zoological finds, the giant tube worm *Riftia pachytila*.

Bass, Rick. 1995. *The Lost Grizzlies*. New York: Houghton Mifflin. 240pp. The second recent book on the possible survival of the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) in the state of Colorado, where these huge predators were supposedly exterminated in the 1950s. Bass covers much of the same territory as Craig Peterson's *Ghost Grizzlies* (reviewed in *EZ*, Vol.2, No.6), but concentrates more on the people looking for the animals. Bass, a first-rate wilderness writer and author of *The Ninemile Wolves*, believes he got a brief but unforgettable glimpse of one of these wary bruins.

### PERIODICALS.

McCarthy, Paul 1993. "Cryptozoological Quests," and "Cryptozoologists: an Endangered Species." *The Scientist*, Vol. 7, No.1.) In a pair of articles for this electronic magazine, McCarthy sketched the work of the International Society for Cryptozoology and described the travails of scientists trying to find support for their research.

**PERIODICALS (Continued):**

McCarthy also notes that some cryptozoologists believe the discipline should spend less time on sasquatch and Loch Ness and more on what might be called "microcryptozoology." (See Reader Comments, below.) A followup letter in Vol. 7, #8, by Forrest Mims, editor of *Science Probe* magazine, makes the interesting point that evolutionary biologists do much the same thing cryptozoologists do - speculate about and search for unproven forms of life - but, as long as they stick to extinct forms, avoid the ridicule accompanying cryptozoology.

Stolzenburg, William. 1996. "The Lost World, Part II," *Nature Conservancy*, May/June, p.7. Quick review of the startling new discoveries in the animal kingdom over the last few years.

Etter, Matt, and Nancy Ruggeri. 1996. "First Adult Saola Sighted," *Wildlife Conservation*, March/April, p.9. First report of an adult Vu Quang ox, or saola, captured alive. (The only two previous captures of this species involved calves).

**PUBLICATIONS.**

**The Gate.** Beth Robbins, Ed. This quarterly publication includes some zoological and cryptozoological news clippings and book reviews among a variety of other phenomena reports. Sticks basically to reputable sources (newspapers, wire services, etc.) and avoids the sensational. Address: P.O. Box 43516, Richmond Heights, OH 44143, U.S.A.

**Steven Simpson Natural History Books.** Stocks a wide array of new and used books on all aspects of zoology, including cryptozoology. For catalog, write: 23 Melton St., Melton Constable NR24 2DB, England.

**Paul Gritis Natural History Books.** Specializes in used and out-of-print books on all areas of natural history. Also handles many cryptozoological interest. Address: P.O. Box 4298, Bethlehem, PA 18018, U.S.A.

**The Cryptozoology Review.** New publication being started by Ben Roesch, whose guest article on the strange elephants of Nepal appeared in *EZ* (Vol. 3, No.1.) Planned to be 10-15 pages per quarterly issue, with an initial cost estimate of \$7.50 (U.S.) per year. Address: 137 Atlas Ave., Toronto, ON, Canada M6C 3P4.

**Science Frontiers.** William Corliss, Ed. The newsletter of The Sourcebook Project, which collects unusual data from reliable sources all over the world. Most issues include one or two items of cryptozoology. Well-written and -referenced. The Project also issues Sourcebooks, compendiums of information in each field. The biology/zoology collections are entitled *Strange Life*. Address: P.O. Box 107, Glen Arm, MD 21057.

## ORGANIZATIONS.

**The Bigfoot Research Project.** This group's internet site at <http://www.teleport.com/~tbrp> describes an effort conducted with the assistance of the Academy of Applied Science (Robert Rines' institute, best known for Loch Ness research). Text on the site describes the group, gives contact information, and briefly describes the evidence in a generally pro-sasquatch manner.

The leading name in cryptozoology is **Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans**, who basically invented the field. The current address for his **Centre de Cryptozoologie** is:

9, Allee des Acacias

78110 Le Ve'sinet, France

Heuvelmans' landmark book, *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, has been republished in a revised and updated English version. It's available in the U.S. for \$44.50 from Strange Bookshop, P.O. Box 2246, Rockville, MD 20847.

## READER COMMENTS

Subscriber Chad Arment has written to make some interesting points concerning this publication's approach to cryptozoology. First, he suggests the definition, "the subspecialty of finding new or supposedly extinct species," is **too broad**. He notes that Dr. Heuvelmans describes the science as one focusing on animals "unexpected in time or place." **Response:** I'm not trying to dispute Dr. Heuvelmans. I define the subject broadly for two reasons. First, as noted on page 1 of this issue, the worldwide discovery of animals of all types provides the scientific credibility for the search for those species which are especially startling or unlikely. Second, I want to avoid the error made in 1983 by the great paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson. In a critique on "Mammals and Cryptozoology," Dr. Simpson defined a "cryptozoological discovery" so narrowly that he was able to exclude virtually everything.

Chad also suggests that **more primary sources** should be given: for example, that **EZ** should reference a journal article directly instead of a news article derived from that journal. **Response:** This is a valid point. Tracking down articles, especially in specialized journals, can be surprisingly difficult and expensive when one lives far from the nearest university with a zoological department, but I'll try to do a better job of it.

Nobuyuki Masuya of Japan has sent in a **postage stamp depicting the Iriomote cat**. The last definite species of cat discovered (in 1968), *Felis iriomotensis* is facing extinction. Mr. Masuya also states the correct English spelling of this cat's local name is *yamaneko*, not *yameneko*, the spelling I used in my book *Rumors of Existence*.



## EDITOR'S PAGE

**PURPOSE:** Cryptozoology is the zoological subspecialty of finding new or supposedly extinct species. The term has been misapplied by some to sensationalized "monsters" and even "ghost" animals. I hope that *Exotic Zoology* can help restore the word's proper usage: the name of a science devoted to collecting and studying evidence.

### IN CLOSING:

Some of the most significant publications in this field have come from the International Society of Cryptozoology, which labors to make searching for new animals a respectable scientific specialty. The current status and future of the ISC and its publications are, unfortunately, financially uncertain. Contact J. Richard Greenwell, Secretary, ISC, P.O. Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733.

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**Logo illustration:** the mysterious cetacean *Delphinus rhinoceros*, described by French naturalists Quoy and Gaimard in 1819 and not reported since. Reconstruction by Craig Gosling copyright 1994.