The ISC Newsletter

International Society of Cryptozoology

Winter 1982
Vol. 1, No. 4

Editor
J. Richard Greenwell

The ISC Newsletter is an official publication of the International Society of Cryptozoology, and is published for Society members. Membership is $25 annually. Membership inquiries and correspondence should be addressed to ISC, Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA; (602) 884-8369.

ISSN Pending

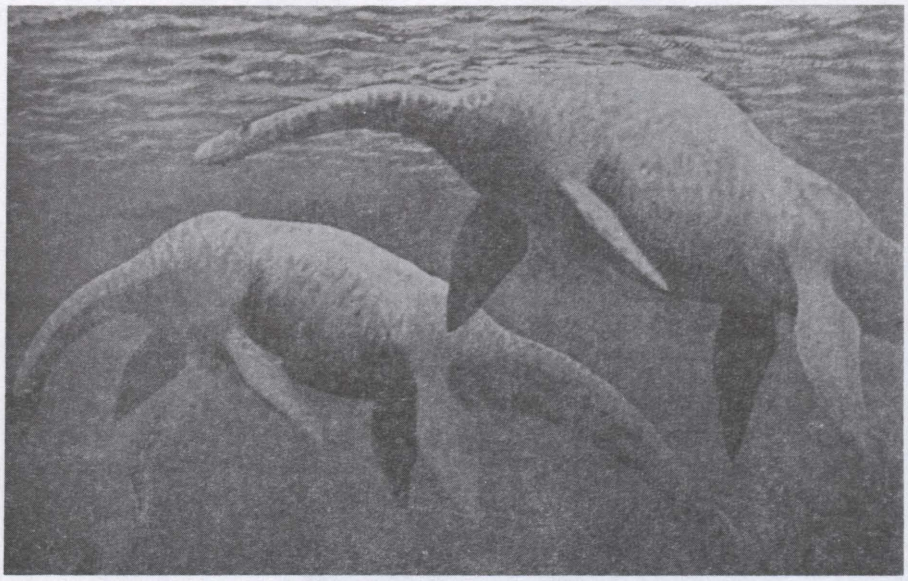
Log Ness Monster?

The ruins of Urquhart Castle overlook the deepest part of Loch Ness, over 700 feet. Urquhart Bay is the site of many "monster" observations and a popular tourist location.

While Chessie, Champ, and Sasquatch have received a lot of recent public and scientific attention, related mainly to analyses of photos, videotapes, and casts, the Loch Ness Monster ("Nessie"), probably the cryptozoological animal par excellence, has again been suffering from the blows of debunking and criticism. It has not been a good year for Nessie.

The first attack was from Maurice Burton, a well-known British mammalogist and former Deputy Keeper at the British Museum (Natural History). Dr. Burton once accepted the likelihood of a new species of animal in Loch Ness -- perhaps even a plesiosaur -- but he radically changed his position following some on-site work at the loch in the late 1950s. His 1961 book The Elusive Monster proposed that, at best, Nessie represented a large, long-necked species of otter, but that most of the sightings were a result of vegetation mats surfacing and moving rapidly about under the pressure of gases originally created by bacteria on the lake bottom.

Now, two decades later, Dr. Burton is again publicly attempting to explain the Loch Ness events in conventional terms. His new arguments have been published in a three-part article in New Scientist for June 24, 1982 (Vol. 94 [No. 1311]), July 1, 1982 (Vol. 95 [No. 1312]), and July 8, 1982 (Vol 95 [No. 1313]). His latest treatment of the subject concludes that "... after nearly 50 years [of evidence] ... there must be something wrong with the evidence or its interpretation," and that " ... stern waves from ships passing through the loch have been of increasing importance [but] ... above all, I



Loch Ness Monsters by nature artist and conservationist Sir Peter Scott (an ISC Honorary Member) based on many witness descriptions.

would emphasize the part played by otters in the origin and development of the story as a whole." He believes that his original (1962) "otter tail" interpretation of the classic Wilson photograph (which closely resembles the neck and head of a plesiosaur), is correct, and that the Gray photograph shows an otter at play. He dismisses the O'Connor photograph as an outright fake -- which most observers believe it is.

Dr. Burton seems more convinced than ever that otters are the key to the puzzle, and that "once one has built up a picture of otters' antics in water it is surprising how so many of the sightings drop into place." He now seems to place less emphasis on an unrecognized species of otter, however, stating that otters in northern latitudes often grow to large size, up to six feet, with a supposed record of eight feet. As to the long neck he previously wrote about, he now states that "we have only to remember that otters, like other mustelids, often 'make a long neck' which the counter-shading serves to emphasize."

He also continues to believe that gases from the loch bed bring up mats of rotting vegetation, as well as branches and logs, all of which are mistaken for living animals. Motorboats seen at a distance are also supposedly mistaken for a "monster," and Dr. Burton dismisses the object in the Dinsdale movie as just such a vessel. He points out that Tim Dinsdale, as a result of his movie, has pursued an intensive surveillance program at Loch Ness, and he was active in the founding of the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau in the 1960s, which, he states, produced "negligible results."

Although he addresses some of the older events assocated with Loch Ness, between the 1930s and the 1960s, Dr. Burton, for reasons which are not made clear, makes no mention of the results obtained by the Academy of Applied Science since it began Ness operations about 12 years ago. Many biologists are convinced that vegetation mats, otters, motorboats, and stern waves cannot account for the large, moving targets tracked by sonar and (sometimes simultaneously) photographed by subsurface time-lapse cameras. Dr. Burton's opinion of these more recent data would be of interest.

A month later, in its August 5 issue (Vol 95 [No. 1317]), New Scientist published another article debunking Nessie, entitled "Loch Ness: The Monster Unveiled." The article was written by Robert P. Craig, a Scottish electronics engineer, who dug up an old idea to explain Nessie: logs brought to the surface by trapped gas under pressure.

Mr. Craig begins his article by describing the attempts to gather data at Loch Ness as "hundreds of observers aided and abetted by teams from universities [crowded] the lochside armed with every conceivable electronic device to stuff into the water. Each and every one seemed mesmerized by the phenomenon ... there was a local school headmaster who dared to suggest it was logs floating about in strong currents. I wonder if he is still alive. Hanging was abolished in Calton Hill only a little while ago."

He then goes on to formulate his tree trunk explanation by pointing out, erroneously, that, of the 500 or so freshwater Scottish lochs, only three, Ness, Morar and Tay, have had "monster" sightings. Coincidentally, these are supposedly the only lochs which harbor the Scott's pine Pinus sylvestris, which once covered most of Scotland as part of the majestic but now extinct Caledonian Forest. Mr. Craig attributes this coincidence to the "monsters" actually being old pine trees.

His scenario works as follows: An old pine tree falls and sinks to the bottom of the Loch Ness. The pressure at the bottom of the loch (25 kilograms per square centimeter) is enough to compact the log's surrounding

bark, cork, and cambium, and an outer water-proof "skin" is formed by resins, encapsulating the log. As decay forms within the trunk, gas accumulates inside, pushing the resins to the extremities, where they form large "blisters" full of gas bubbles. As the blisters grow, they become "buoyancy tanks," raising the log to the surface. As it breaks surface, the gas escapes, and the log sinks again to the bottom of the loch, but not before having appeared before observers as a living animal: the Loch Ness Monster.

The reaction of most knowledgeable observers has been that Mr. Craig's hypothesis, as many other explanations before it, lacks elegance. In the first place, "monsters" have been reported in at least nine Scottish lochs (Loch Tay is not one of them), and most of these lochs do not harbor the Scott's pine. Secondly, Mr. Craig, as did Dr. Burton a few weeks previously, ignores a body of data accumulated for over a decade which many experts believe indicates the presence of subsurface mobile objects corresponding to the general size and appearance of the objects observed from shore. Subsurface sonar and time-lapse photography, such experts think, has clearly demonstrated a horizontal as well as a vertical displacement capability by large objects (at least seven to eight meters in length), and that these objects possess appendages corresponding to the general morphology of living (albeit undescribed) animals. Any new hypothesis formulated as an explanation to a problem, regardless of how wittily or cynically presented, fails when it is purposefully selective and does not account for a major component of the data.

The cynicism and emotions surrounding the Burton/Craig explanation are not new. Such disputes have been ongoing since Nessie was first reported in the press, almost 50 years ago. The first issue of the Inverness Courier bearing the monster's name had barely been printed, on May 2, 1933, when observers fell on both sides of the issue. In an effort to explain the sightings and photographs, a large number of hypotheses were advanced, some more bizarre than the sightings themselves: a whale, a giant squid, and, more recently, an elephant! The pro-monster researchers, meanwhile, were no less imaginative, proposing different kinds of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and even invertebrates to explain the sightings. The fact is that, with no organic evidence on hand, identification is as distant as it was 50 years ago.

It was in 1960 that Tim Dinsdale filmed an object many have interpreted as one of the animals. Since that time, he has spent every summer at the loch, attempting to obtain clear, indisputable photographs. Other persons entered the investigation, and the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau (LNIB) was formed. The LNIB catalogued all the sightings it could, and posted both fixed and mobile lookouts with telescopic cameras around the loch. Roy Mackal, of the University of Chicago, joined the group, got American funding, and helped bring in new technology, such as hydrophones and mini-submarines.

But Loch Ness is not an easy place to work. Originally part of a fault which is splitting Scotland apart, Ness was scarred by glacial action in the late Pleistocene, became an arm of the sea, and finally, about 7,000 years ago, became a freshwater lake. It is at least 750 feet deep in some parts, about 24 miles long, and up to half a mile wide. It has 263 billion cubic feet of water, making it the largest freshwater body in Britain, and a surface area of 14,000 acres. As if all this were not formidable enough, the loch's water is "stained" by suspended peat particles brought in by many rivers and brooks coming from the glenns. Thus, visibility is reduced to only a few feet, even with the most powerful underwater strobe lights, making observation and photography of elusive, subsurface animals almost impossible. Thus, sonar eventually proved to be the most productive tool.

With lack of success, the LNIB closed down, Dinsdale and others continued their individual efforts, and Mackal, now ISC Vice President, moved on to other cryptozoological pursuits.

The Academy of Applied Science (AAS) entered the picture in the early 1970s. The group, more or less centered in New England and headed by patent lawyer Robert Rines, concentrated for the first time on subsurface photography. A number of strategies and instruments were used, combining sonar detection with time-lapse photography. Martin Klein of Klein

Tim Dinsdale, veteran Loch Ness Monster hunter, has been trying to obtain clear shots of Nessie for over 20 years.

and Associates provided his newly developed side-scan sonar units, and many other persons with specific expertise contributed their time and energy. One of these was Harold "Doc" Edgerton, professor emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. Edgerton, inventor of the strobe light and famous for capturing high-speed events on film, provided his "Old Faithful" time lapse camera.

Various forms of lures were deployed, all unsuccessfully. The principal evidence obtained were three "flipper" photos taken in 1972, and the "body/neck" and "head" photos taken in 1976 (see article by Rines in Cryptozoology, Vol. 1).

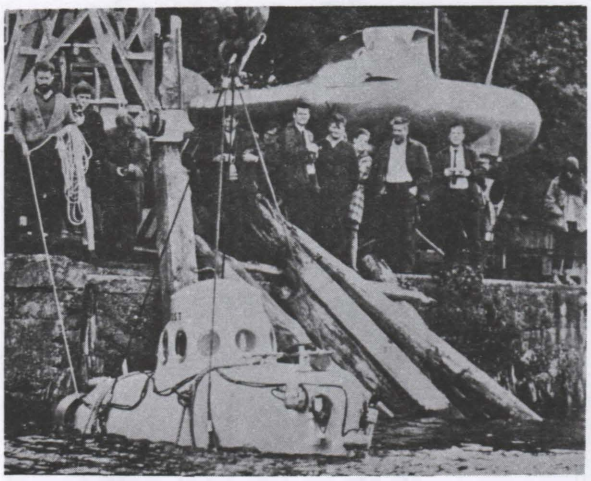
Despite the associated sonar data, the photos have failed to convince the scientific world that Nessie exists as an unknown biological species. While reaction among British biologists was almost invariably negative, recent surveys of American and Canadian aquatic biologists show that acceptance of Nessie as an unknown species now stands at almost 40 percent. No prior surveys exist, but attitudes were undoubtedly more negative prior to the AAS results.

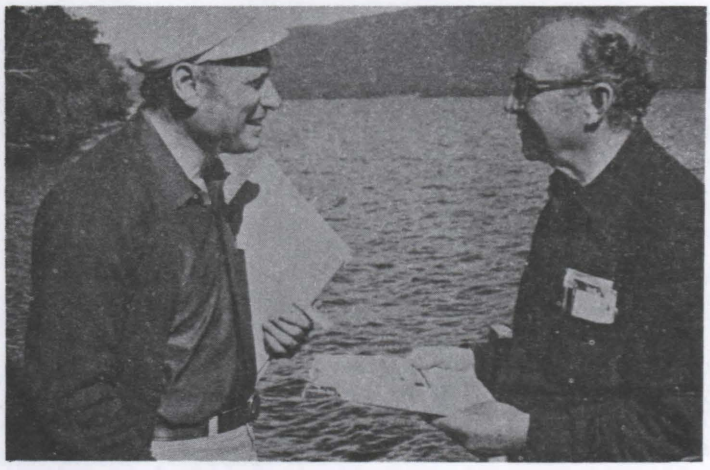
While scientists debate the issue, Nessie continues to make appearances. On July 16, 1982, Glasgow's Daily Record reported that a busload of American tourists had spotted "three black humps" in the waters off Lochend. They were stationary at first, but then moved towards shore, and sank. Graham Roby, who reportedly brought the bus to an abrupt stop so the passengers could also see it, stated: "They couldn't possibly have been rocks." Engineer Bruce Klemeus, of Clifton, New Jersey, stated: "I don't know what it was, but I have never seen anything like it before." This sentiment was echoed by engineer William Firstenberg, from Shelton, Connecticut, who stated: "I am a cynic, but I saw something I can't explain."

As with many other cryptozoological animals, there is both the myth and the monster. The myth, based on an old Scottish tradition of a "water horse," has metamorphosed into a modern dragon of journalistic usefulness, something to bring smiles to the faces of jaded readers concerned with the uncertain state of the world. Indeed, some journalists have even chided attempts to track Nessie down, under the humanistic pretext that modern society could lose something to wonder about.

As for the "monster," if "it" exists at all, it could continue to elude its pursuers for a long time to come. Due to various aspects of their behavior, some animals remain relatively hidden from human observation, and it is the task of cryptozoology to crack the difficult cases, which "normal" zoology has chosen to ignore.

Nessie, perhaps the most famous "monster" in the world, will doubtless continue to arouse passions in scientists and laymen alike until the animal is found or the myth is forgotten.





***Left**: mini-submarine, armed with biopsy dart guns, being deployed in Loch Ness during the 1960's Loch Ness Investigation Bureau effort. Vickers mini-submarine Pisces is seen in the background.*
***Right**: AAS President Robert Rines discussing strategies with Harold "Doc" Edgerton at Loch Ness. Dr. Edgerton, inventor of the strobe flash, loaned his "old faithful" time-lapse underwater camera, which successfully captured Nessie on film.*

Gray's Harbor Update

The Summer 1982 Newsletter reported on the Sasquatch footprint casts recovered by the Gray's Harbor Sheriff's Department. Grover S. Krantz, ISC Board member and Washington State University physical anthropologist, has examined four original casts held by the Sheriff's Department and is tentatively considering them "legitimate." That is, that the footprints were probably deposited by a large, unknown, bipedal primate.

Dr. Krantz, who has been heavily involved in the Walla Walla Sasquatch case (see separate article, this issue) several hundred miles to the east of Gray's Harbor County, has carefully measured the four casts from the sites. Although the casts vary in width, up to half an inch, they are morphologically very similar, leading him to conclude that they may have been deposited by the same individual. As in the Walla Walla casts, there are a number of biomechanical features which tend to authenticate them. Dr. Krantz has studied such features in previous Sasquatch casts over the years, but he declines to identify them for fear that hoaxers may use such information in future attempts to discredit Sasquatch events. No dermal ridges are visible on the Gray's Harbor casts.

Gray's Harbor Deputy Sheriff Dennis Heryford and Arizona State Museum physical anthropologist Walter H. Birkby examining Gray's Harbor Sasquatch footprint cast in the Human Identification Laboratory at the University of Arizona.

Although Dr. Krantz has the casts to work with, other Sasquatch investigators saw the tracks themselves. Cliff Crook, from Bothell, Washington, examined the Elma Gate tracks in person, making his own cast of one of them. In May of 1982, Crook, Robert Walls of Seattle, and Rene Dahinden of Vancouver, conducted an on-the-spot investigation. They believe that further investigative work needs to be done before these incidents can be accepted as authentic Sasquatch events.

Deputy Sheriff Dennis Heryford, the officer responsible for the departmental investigation, visited the Editor in September of 1982 with the original casts, and several University of Arizona faculty examined them at a meeting held in the Human Identification Laboratory of the Arizona State Museum. The Gray's Harbor Sheriff's Department is continuing to monitor Sasquatch events occurring in its jurisdiction and will investigate important incidents if and when they occur. The Department will keep the Society posted on future developments.

Walla Walla Update

As reported in the Autumn, 1982 Newsletter, the casts made of the Walla Walla Sasquatch tracks (involving two animals) show clear dermal ridges. A considerable number of forensic features, plus the eyewitness testimony of a former U.S. Forest Service patrolman, make it the strongest case on record.

Grover S. Krantz, the Washington State University physical anthropologist and ISC Board member investigating the case, has been attempting to interest other specialists in order to conduct a joint, interdisciplinary study which would lead to scientific publication of the data.

In November of 1982, Dr. Krantz wrote letters to about a dozen leading physical and paleoanthropologists to determine their interest in the new evidence. Three 8"x10" photographs showing dermal ridges (see Newsletter, Autumn, 1982) were enclosed with each letter.

The letters stated that "... if this material appears to show promise, and if you are seriously interested in pursuing the matter, please let me know ... The original casts are in my possession on long-term loan from the U.S. Forest Service and are available for examination." About half of these leading experts have not bothered to respond at all, despite the fact that original casts exist (made by U.S. government employees), and that some forensic experts believe the dermal ridges could not have been hoaxed.

Of those who did respond, about half expressed total disinterest, assuming the whole business to be a hoax. One leading European specialist even stated that "the sweat gland openings on the ridges are usu-

ally so minute that they would not give any impression in moist soil, even if the soil is fine-grained." Yet, it is a documented fact that the dermal ridges (and thus the sweat glands) were impressed and visible in the ground prior to the casts being made; they were observed by Forest Service personnel, and also by U.S. Border Patrol tracker Joel Hardin, who, in fact, considered the case a hoax because of their existence.

Some anthropologists did respond more favorably, however, expressing interest in the case, and a desire to be kept informed. Even so, Dr. Krantz has not found the earnest support he had hoped for from his professional colleagues, which means that he must proceed with the work more or less alone.

A similar letter was also mailed to seven forensic and criminal specialists in dermatoglyphics, most of whom have responded favorably and enthusiastically. Dr. Krantz will be making personal contact with some of them, showing them the original casts. He attributes the more positive response from the forensic specialists as an indication that, not being "intellectually threatened" by such evidence, they are being more objective. It is curious that the anthropologists, without even examining the evidence first-hand, tend to dismiss it as an obvious hoax (as they have consistently tended to do in the past regarding all Sasquatch evidence), while the forensic scientists, who are better qualified to determine the merits of the case technically, have not challenged it, and seem generally less perturbed by its implications.

The most thorough work on the evidence so far has been done by Benny Kling, a dermatoglyphics specialist at the Law Enforcement Academy, in Douglas, Wyoming (see Newsletter, Autumn, 1982). He maintains that the ridges are authentic (i.e., natural), and do not correspond to any known primate, human or non-human. It should also be noted that he had no knowledge of (or interest in) Sasquatch prior to his analysis.

That was the situation as it stood when Dr. Krantz visited Washington, D.C., in early February of 1982, with three original Walla Walla casts. He met with a number of scientists at the U.S. National Museum, including physical anthropologist Dale Stewart, archaeologist Dennis Stanford, and zoologist Richard Thorington. Other Smithsonian scientists who examined the casts included George Zug, the Chairman of the Department of Vertebrate Zoology, who serves on the ISC Board of Directors.

While all seemed impressed by the evidence, conclusions were mixed. Dr. Thorington was the only one who thought that the casts represented some kind of transfer copies from real skin by plastic molding. He could not specify, however, the source of such skin, which shows unidentified ape-like dermal ridges.

Three Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) dermatoglyphics experts also went to the National Museum to examine the casts. Robert J. Hazen, the Supervisor of Fingerprint Instruction at the FBI Academy, who had previously corresponded with Dr. Krantz on the topic, concluded that the implications of the evidence, if authentic, were too incredible; thus, he could not accept the evidence. George Bonebrake, his predecessor (now retired), felt the evidence was strong, and expressed a desire to work further on the case. Dr. Krantz will be sending him further information.

In a communication following his Washington, D.C. trip, Dr. Krantz wrote: "Those opposing the legitimacy of the tracks could offer no satisfactory explanation for their origin. All agreed that a skull would constitute definitive proof, but none were willing or able to do anything to attempt to acquire such evidence."

Message from the Editor

With this issue (Winter, 1982), members will have received the four newsletters and one journal corresponding to the first year of the Society's existence. Things ran late. The first (Spring, 1982) issue did not appear until June, and this issue is not being printed until March of 1983. It was therefore decided to "postpone" 1983 until March, and membership renewals will become due upon receipt of the journal, which should already have been received by 1982 members.

The journal, mailed out by Allen Press, the publisher, contains a convenient membership renewal return envelope. If they have not already done so, members are requested to mail in their checks or money orders in this handy envelope as soon as possible. Not only is the Society totally dependent on these membership dues, but less clerical work and expenses will be incurred if renewals are received promptly. The Spring 1983 issue of the Newsletter will probably be printed in late April. Unfortunately, any members who have not renewed by that time will simply not receive it.

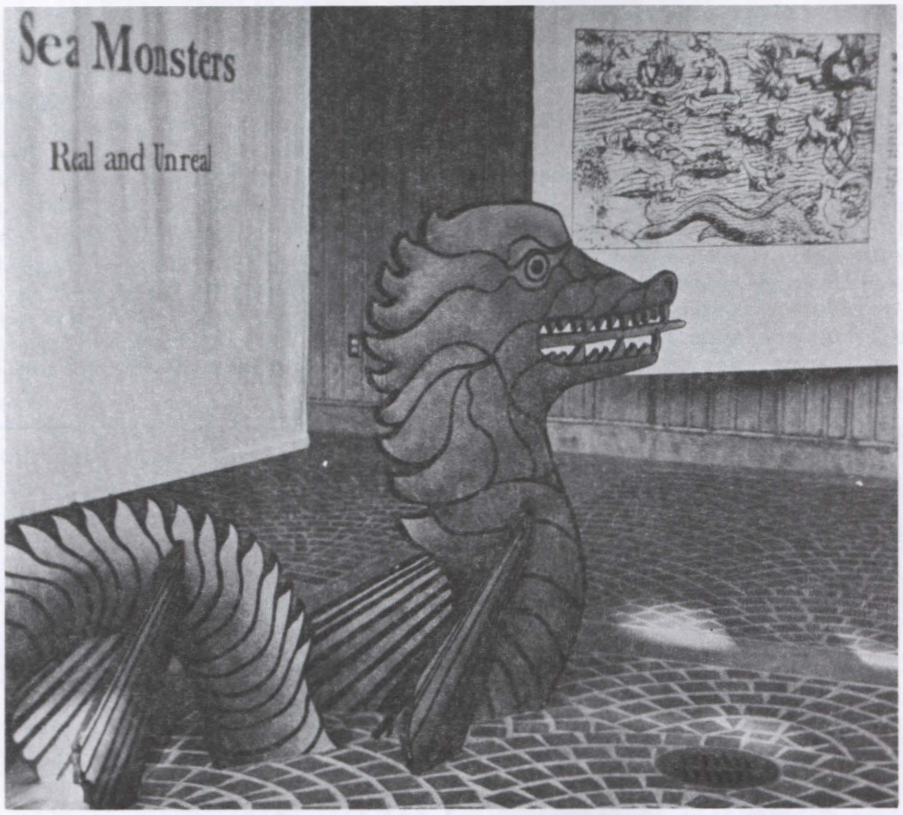
Features currently being planned for future newsletters are listings and descriptions of all cryptozoology books published since 1978, and interviews with well-known researchers in cryptozoology. Also,

beginning with this issue, the Newsletter will allocate some space to "unexpected" invertebrate animals. While the "monsters" which have dominated Newsletter space in 1982 are indeed of potentially great scientific importance -- and 1982 was a busy year for "monsters" -- we should not ignore the many new and interesting finds of "small" and/or invertebrate forms. Cryptozoology draws no lines based on an organism's size or phyla, although it is generally felt that cryptozoological interests should be restricted to the Kingdom Animalia, which contains such classes as the sponges, the jellyfish, the gastropods, the clams, the crabs, the insects (which probably account for 60 to 70 percent of all living animals), and many kinds of worms. One Subphylum of the Kingdom Animalia known as Vertebrata also contains several interesting but relatively obscure Classes of vertebrate animals, such as the fishes, the amphibians, the reptiles, the birds, and the mammals.

We hope that ISC Charter Members have found their first-year affiliation with the Society intellectually rewarding and stimulating.

J. Richard Greenwell
Editor

Sea Monster Exhibit at the Seattle Aquarium



Sea Monster exhibit at the Seattle Aquarium which will run through April 1983.

The Seattle Aquarium is currently presenting a new and unprecedented temporary exhibit entitled Sea Monsters, Real and Unreal. Designed to further public awareness of marine cryptozoology, the exhibit, opened in December, presents information on "monster" sightings in pre-industrial times, the giant squid, the coelacanth, the classifications of Bernard Heuvelmans, and the optical distortions hypothesis of W. H. Lehn (see "Recent Scientific Literature 1981-1982," Newsletter, Spring, 1982).

The exhibit places strong emphasis on how ordinary animals (at least ordinary to us today) may have formed the basis for certain claims and/or legends of the past, such as the manatee and the mermaid, the narwhal and the unicorn, and the rosmarin and the walrus. The exhibit takes an objective, historical stance on marine cryptozoology, and does not rule out the possibility of further significant discoveries. The Society collaborated with the Aquarium, and a notice on the Society is posted as part of the exhibit.

The opening of the exhibit was highlighted by the presentation of fictional movies (including The Creature from the Black Lagoon), and a special lecture on unknown "sea monsters" of the northwest Pacific Coast by University of British Columbia oceanographer Paul H. LeBlond on December 29, which was attended by about 100 people. A reception for Dr. LeBlond, an ICS Board member, was later held at the home of ISC member Joyce Bergen, the Aquarium's Curator of Exhibits. Ms. Bergen designed the "sea monster" exhibit.

ISC members and others are encouraged to view the exhibit, which is attracting about 1,000 persons a day. The exhibit will be open through April.

Mini-"Lost World" at 8500 Feet

Writers and adventurers have often speculated about a "lost world," where supposedly extinct or unknown animals thrive in their own isolated environment, unknown to humans and unaffected by human activities. Not only has such a "lost world" been found, but even more astonishing, it does not depend on the sun for energy, a situation believed almost unique in the Earth's natural history.

The "lost world" in question is located at a depth of 8,500 feet in the Pacific Ocean, about 150 miles south of Baja California, where scientists aboard the U.S. Navy's three-person submarine Alvin have been studying it. The focus of interest is a number of volcanic vents with slowly seeping lava which support enormous worms, snails, crabs, clams, jellyfish, and other invertebrates, all of which are new to marine science. The first such vents were found by Alvin crewpersons about five years ago near the Galapagos Islands, west of Ecuador, and the U.S. National Science Foundation is now funding a $1.7 million project called Oasis, being managed by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, at La Jolla, California, to further study these ecosystems.

These animals which have never seen sunlight derive all their sustenance from the vents, in the form of bacteria which feed on hydrogen sulfide produced by the vents. A symbiotic relationship exists. The worms, for example, provide sulfide to the bacteria for which they serve as hosts; the bacteria provide sustenance to the worms (it is thought that the sulfide, combined with oxygen and carbon dioxide, releases the chemical energy to support life). What is not clear is how these organisms survive while subjected to what would normally be lethal doses of hydrogen sulfide. "Nobody understands how the animals are taking care of this poison," says Robert Hessler, a biologist at Scripps.

Of perhaps more significance, however, is the fact that these ecosystems exist at all, totally independent of the sun's energy, and relying exclusively on the energy generated inside of the Earth. Holger Jannasch, a microbiologist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, said: "If the sun didn't shine any more, these deep-sea populations would still be growing, while we and all the green plants would die. They depend only on Mother Earth."

While most of these "cryptic" organisms are invertebrates, there is one vertebrate citizen of this mini-"lost world," a white fish which looks like something in between an eel and a lungfish. Until it is given a respectable scientific name, the almost one-foot-long vertebrate is being referred to as the "21-degree-north vent fish" -- in honor of the latitude of one of the true wonders of the zoological world.

Errata

Please note the following corrections corresponding to the last (Autumn) Newsletter (Vol. 1, No. 3):

- P. 2, Col. 1, line 22: "Tiger Creek (one from the Forest Service...)" should read "Tiger Creek; two left foot casts are available (one from the Forest Service...)"
- P. 2, Col. 2, line 3: "that U.S. Border Patrol" should read "why U.S. Border Patrol."
- P. 2, Col. 3, line 13: "dermatology specialist" should read "dermatoglyphics specialist."
- P. 2, Col. 3, line 15: "Agency" should read "Academy."
- P. 4, Col. 3, line 24: "publicize" should read "publish."
- P. 5, Col. 1, line 30: "(at most at 4 m/sec)" should read "(at most) at 4 m/sec."
- P. 6, Col. 1, line 64: "wouldn't" should read "couldn't."
- P. 7, Col. 3, line 31: "Walter H. Birkly" should read "Walter H. Birkby."
- P. 7, Col. 3, line 36: "Eugene Clark" should read "Eugenie Clark."
- P. 8, Col. 1, line 12: "Robert Rives" should read "Robert Rines."
- P. 8, Col. 2, line 41: "Allan Press" should read "Allen Press."
- P. 10, Col. 1, line 46: "Robert Rives" should read "Robert Rines."
- P. 12, Col. 1, line 33: "Solubility is surely the the principle" should read "Solubility is surely not the principle."

We regret these errors, and will attempt to keep future Newsletters free of misteaks.

Society Expeditions Mechanism Established

At its special meeting held in Vancouver in October of 1982 (see Newsletter, Autumn, 1982), the ISC Board of Directors established a mechanism for the Society's sponsorship of cryptozoological expeditions.

It is unlikely that the Society itself will ever have funds available for such field work, but under the new mechanism ISC members may donate "expedition funds" which can be allocated to the fieldwork of their choice. For example, one or more ISC members may wish to go to destination X to investigate a certain cryptozoological problem, and have the funds to do so. They must first write up a brief proposal outlining the aims and methods of the expedition, and submit such a proposal to the Secretary of the Society. The proposal is then reviewed by three ISC Board members to evaluate its scientific soundness. If the project is believed to compromise the scientific integrity of the Society, it will not be accepted as an ISC expedition. If it is found acceptable, the proposer(s) may then donate the necessary funds to the Society, and the Society, in turn, will allocate the funds to the expedition, with the proposer(s) participating in the expedition in any capacity previously agreed upon.

The proposer(s) will thus benefit by utilizing the name and prestige of the Society for their expedition, and the Society will benefit by increasing its visibility in fieldwork. Donations made to the Society, even for specific, already planned projects, will be tax-deductible, at least for U.S. members, once the Society obtains its tax-exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

Several points regarding these procedures should be noted: 1) In order for proposals even to be considered by the ISC Board, the proposer(s) must be paid-up members of the Society; 2) This mechanism has no bearing whatsoever on members or non-members who wish to sponsor their own (private) expeditions. They may do so at any time; however, if they want the project to be sponsored by the Society, they must submit a proposal and have it approved first; 3) Any equipment donated by outside firms for expedition use will remain the property of the Society once the expedition is ended (rented or loaned equipment must, of course, be returned) and will be available to the same or other ISC field researchers in the future; 4) Surplus expedition funds, if any, will remain with the Society for its discretionary use, but may be allocated to specific expenditure categories, including future expeditions, if so requested.

It is also a requirement that the expedition leader, or one of his or her associates, submit a report to the Society, if possible immediately after the expedition, but certainly no more than three months after the expedition's completion. It is possible that the Society may wish to publish such a report in the Field Reports section of its journal Cryptozoology, so such reports should be written in the appropriate style and format (Introduction, Narrative Description, Results, and Future Plans). The expedition report, whether published in Cryptozoology or not, remains the property of the Society, and may not be reproduced without permission. This does not preclude the author(s) from writing and publishing elsewhere other commercial or academic treatments of the expedition.

Proposals requesting ISC sponsorship of expeditions may be submitted at any time. They must be typed double-spaced, and four copies must be submitted. The minimum expected length of such proposals (unless the Board subsequently requests further details or clarifications) is 1,000 words. The maximum length should be 2,500 words. An estimated budget should be included.

Due to the many details still being worked out in connection with ISC expeditions sponsorship, it is strongly recommended that ISC members planning to submit such proposals consult with the Secretary first. He will provide advice and assistance.

Cryptotrips

Dmitri Bayanov, an ISC Board member, traveled from his home base in Moscow to Soviet Central Asia in August and September of 1982 to investigate, first-hand, reports of unknown hominoids. The places visited were an area of Eastern Kazakhstan, along the Kurchum River, an area southeast of the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk, and three areas in Tajikistan. A Field Report is expected for the second issue of Cryptozoology.

Richard Greenwell (ISC Secretary and Editor of Publications) and Susan Greenwell traveled to Bear Lake in late August, 1982. Bear Lake is on the Utah-Idaho border, and is a reputed "monster" lake. An article on their findings will be submitted to Cryptozoology.

Tony Healey traveled from Canberra to the Kangaroa Valley in October to conduct Australian cryptozoological inquiries. One "black panther" witness was interviewed (yes, they have them there too).

Sustaining Members

When joining (or renewing), ISC members may opt to become Sustaining Members simply by checking the appropriate box and donating to the Society any amount above the required US $25 for membership (Joint Sustaining Memberships are also available to couples for any amount above the required US $30).

The following Sustaining Members generously contributed in this capacity during the 1982 membership period:

William Bailey
N. B. Cooke
Loren Coleman
Phil Leslie
Michael Martin
Aaron Pearl
Gale Raymond
Steven Shiver
Millie Small
Richard Smith
Gary Tillery
James Torreti
Thomas Wilkinson

The Society is particularly indebted to Gale Raymond of Houston, Texas, who provided considerable financial support toward the end of the 1982 period, which enabled the Society to publish the first journal. The Society's financial status should considerably improve during 1983 because of decreasing operating and publishing costs and increasing membership income, but the continued generous support of Sustaining Members will still be needed and appreciated.

ISC Sustaining Member Gale Raymond standing at the geographic North Pole in 1979 -- the first ordained missionary ever to do so. He wore a 300-year-old Ethiopian Coptic cross under his parka. Dr. Raymond, whose Ph.D. is in geography, is an accredited philatelic judge and International Courier; he was thus able to cancel the stamps he "mailed" at the Pole. He is also President of the Armadillo Growers and Breeders Association based in his home town, Houston. Following his Arctic adventure, he was appointed as Texas Representative of the Resolute Bay Snow Snake Mutual and Benevolent Society by Tom Frook, the pilot who rescued Japanese dogsled explorer Naomi Uemura at the Pole in 1978.

First Issue of Cryptozoology Published

The first issue of ISC's journal, Cryptozoology, has been published by Allen Press, and should have been received by most members and subscribers by the time this Newsletter is delivered (recipients outside of the U.S.A. should note that the Newsletter is mailed abroad by airmail, while the journal is sent by surface mail).

Initial response to the journal has been positive, and material for the second issue is being submitted. A section of the journal which was not utilized in the first issue is called "Comments and Responses." This section has been designed to enable readers to comment on or critique any previously published material (even field reports or book reviews), and for authors to respond to such comments or critiques. It is hoped that ISC members will take an active role in these exchanges, and the Editor will allow all opinions to be expressed, provided they are consistent with biological principles and scientific methodology. Instructions to Contributors for this and all other sections may be found on the inside back cover of the journal.

Comments not directly related to material published in the journal should not be submitted for publication in the journal. Authors should submit such comments for publication in the letters section of the Newsletter.

Members affiliated with universities and research institutions are requested to urge their libraries to subscribe to the ISC publications. Subscriptions to libraries, institutions or corporations (subscriptions are no longer available to individuals) are US $35, and include the receipt of the annual journal and four quarterly newsletters. Income from such institutional subscriptions could help improve the Society's financial status.

Cryptoletters

Dear Editor:

Concerning your article on the Chessie videotape (Newsletter, Summer, 1982), I had an opportunity to view the videotape when it was shown at the Smithsonian Institution on August 20, 1982, and I would be pleased to provide my own comments.

To my eye, this did not appear to be an artifact (floating branch, etc.), but some kind of living creature: elongate or serpentine in shape without visible appendages, or possibly two or more things swimming close together or in tandem. If I recall correctly, its estimated length was 40 feet; I cannot think of any known creature that would exhibit this combination of size and shape.

I would say guardedly that the largest known eels (morays, Fam. Muraenidae) would probably show a maximum length of about 10 feet and are known only from tropical reefs in the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans. Assuming that the thing was alive, I would not expect it to be an eel unless it were stressed or injured, as eels normally do not breach the surface as they swim.

At one point, the object looked as if it might be a swimming snake of some kind. the true sea snakes (Fam. Hydrophidae) are found only in the tropical or subtropical Pacific and Indian oceans, and none of them are particularly large. The two largest known snakes are the regal python (Python reticulatus) of Asia, which reaches a maximum length of about 30 feet, and the South American anaconda, which may grow to be as long as 20 feet. The anaconda (Eunectes murinus) is a giant aquatic boa, but to my knowledge does not normally enter salt water.

Around 1953, I experimentally allowed a young, tame anaconda to swim a short distance in the surf at Crandon Park Beach, Key Biscayne, Florida. Despite the snake's presumed nearsightedness it unerringly headed for shore each time I released it. Were any pythons or boas released in Chesapeake Bay, I would expect them to immediately make for shallow water and remain in that area. Also, a large tropical snake in this situation would almost certainly be unable to find the proper food, and would not survive for long should the ambient temperature drop much below 70°F.

Occasionally, large oarfishes or ribbonfishes (Fams. Regalecidae and Trachipteridae) are known to become stranded on shore. One species may reach a length of at least 20 feet, and during the late 1960s, I saw a 12-foot specimen of one of these fishes that washed ashore in good condition near Marineland of the Pacific in California. However, these particular species are silvery, highly compressed like a ruler standing on edge, and have a steep forehead surmounted by a bright pink or red crestlike dorsal fin. The "thing" in the videotape certainly did not look like an oarfish to me.

Other possibilities are a school of fishes swimming in line, or two or more otters, muskrats, or harbor seals leaving a long wake behind them. Seen at a low angle and at a distance, almost any submerged object may appear as an elongated shadow at first. Other creatures, such as sharks, dolphins, swordfish, tuna, etc., would almost certainly show a visible dorsal fin before any other part of the body broke the surface.

Beyond this, I have no further comments. I shall be pleased to offer any future assistance that I can, and I certainly hope that the thing can eventually be identified.

Craig Phillips
Division of Hatcheries and
Fishery Management Services
Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Phillips was formerly Director of the National Aquarium.

-- Editor

Dear Editor:

A recent Newsletter (Summer, 1982), certainly unveiled the questionable Duffy film of a Mokele-Mbembe (shown on "That's Incredible") as a shabby hoax. The flimsy excuse of faking the film for entertainment purposes underscores the error on Duffy's part.

I can't help thinking of a parallel situation: Dr. Frederick Cook -- the man who had claimed in 1908 to have "discovered" the North Pole a year before Robert Peary -- passed off photographs of a mountain called "Fake Peak" in Alaska as the summit shots of Mount McKinley; this he supposedly "conquered" in 1906. Naturally, later climbers easily noted the difference between "Fake Peak" at its highest point of 8,000 feet and Mount McKinley's 20,270 -foot summit. Cook claimed that he wasn't faking his achievement -- that he had simply substituted the lesser mountain's highest point photos to present readers with an impression of what it looked like!

Does Duffy's excuse for "creating" a Mokele-Mbembe on film ring any bells?

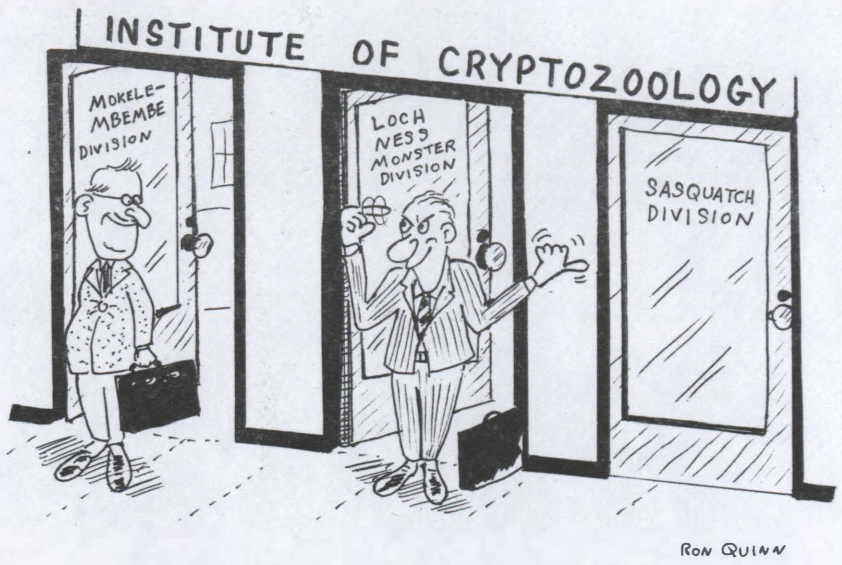
John E. Edgerly
Honolulu, Hawaii

Cryptoquote

"...The many new animals being discovered nowadays are rarely very novel, but there are exceptions. It is , of course, on these exceptions that the romanticist centers attention -- and quite properly... It is significant that the dates for increasingly novel discoveries tend to recede in time -- although there are exceptions such as the okapi... The last really new family of living mammals to be discovered, and perhaps the last ever, was not named until 1939, but it is based on small burrowing rodents at which no one but a zoologist would look twice... Far more striking novelties have, indeed, been discovered still more recently, but they are invertebrates, mostly quite obscure aquatic forms...

"... Heuvelmans argues as follows: We know that some living animals belong to groups that have not changed greatly in millions of years. We know also that some groups believed to be extinct for millions of years have proved to have living representatives. Therefore, it is likely that any "extinct" group, such as that of the dinosaurs, will turn up little changed in the modern fauna. That is generalizing from the plainly exceptional case, and that is where the scientist, although equally fascinated by the romance of his subject, parts company with the nonscientific romanticizer. It is a matter of judging probabilities. A negative cannot be proved in the full sense of the word. There is some probability that there are little men on the far side of the moon, but the probability is infinitesimally small...the probability that there are living dinosaurs is only a little larger."

George Gaylord Simpson
(From: Review of On the Track of Unknown Animals, by Bernard Heuvelmans. Natural History, Vol. 68 (9), November, 1959).



The ISC Newsletter
International Society of Cryptozoology
P.O. Box 43070
Tucson, Arizona 85733
U.S.A.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TUCSON, ARIZONA
PERMIT NO. 1786

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED