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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:07,000

Alaska, a vast remote wilderness twice the size of Texas.

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00:00:07,000 --> 00:00:11,000

There are dangerous, unpredictable forces at work here.

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00:00:11,000 --> 00:00:14,000

In one of the most mysterious corners of the globe.

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00:00:14,000 --> 00:00:18,000

A lot of things can kill you out here without even trying.

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00:00:18,000 --> 00:00:23,000

This is a place hundreds of times more deadly than the Bermuda Triangle.

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00:00:23,000 --> 00:00:24,000

Oh my God.

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00:00:24,000 --> 00:00:27,000

Stories of alien abductions.

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00:00:28,000 --> 00:00:31,000

I believe it was a UFO.

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00:00:31,000 --> 00:00:35,000

The paranormal, vanishing airplanes and strange beasts.

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00:00:35,000 --> 00:00:36,000

The Alaskan Bigfoot.

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00:00:36,000 --> 00:00:38,000

He can rip you in half.

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00:00:38,000 --> 00:00:40,000

These accounts are really widespread.

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00:00:40,000 --> 00:00:42,000

It peaked out of the tree right there.

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00:00:42,000 --> 00:00:46,000

Have hunted those who dare set foot here.

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00:00:46,000 --> 00:00:52,000

In the last 30 years, 16,000 people have disappeared without a trace.

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00:00:52,000 --> 00:00:55,000

More people have disappeared than the Bermuda Triangle.

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00:00:55,000 --> 00:00:57,000

Two to three times the amount.

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00:00:58,000 --> 00:01:01,000

Witnesses tell us their shocking stories.

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00:01:01,000 --> 00:01:02,000

I was petrified.

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00:01:02,000 --> 00:01:06,000

And we've gathered some of the world's leading experts in their field.

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00:01:06,000 --> 00:01:11,000

I'm always after scientific evidence that can be independently corroborated.

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00:01:11,000 --> 00:01:16,000

To try and unlock the mystery of the Alaska Triangle.

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00:01:23,000 --> 00:01:34,000

Just like the Bermuda Triangle, the Alaska Triangle is a place of mysterious events and unexplained phenomena.

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00:01:34,000 --> 00:01:41,000

And one of the strangest stories has emerged from the depths of this vast and isolated lake.

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00:01:41,000 --> 00:01:47,000

Both outside experts and locals have been left asking the question,

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00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:52,000

what exactly is it that lies beneath these waters?

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00:01:52,000 --> 00:01:58,000

I was sitting there and all just dumbstruck of what the heck am I looking at?

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00:01:58,000 --> 00:02:02,000

There's definitely something big down here.

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00:02:03,000 --> 00:02:08,000

In Alaska, there are over 3,000 rivers and 3 million lakes.

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00:02:08,000 --> 00:02:11,000

Most still unexplored.

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00:02:12,000 --> 00:02:17,000

Local folklore tells of hidden channels slinking the waterways.

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00:02:17,000 --> 00:02:20,000

And monstrous beasts slurking in the depths.

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00:02:20,000 --> 00:02:24,000

We're not dealing with a mirage, a deluded individual.

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00:02:24,000 --> 00:02:27,000

We're not dealing with mistaken identities.

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00:02:27,000 --> 00:02:31,000

We've got something that needs explaining.

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00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:38,000

The most terrifying creature of them all is said to live here in Lake Iliamna.

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00:02:38,000 --> 00:02:46,000

And now, multiple eyewitnesses have stepped forward to suggest that this monster is no mere legend.

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00:02:54,000 --> 00:03:01,000

At 77 miles long and 25 miles wide, Iliamna is the biggest lake in Alaska.

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00:03:01,000 --> 00:03:05,000

It's the second biggest freshwater lake in the whole of the United States.

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00:03:05,000 --> 00:03:10,000

It's also one of the hardest places to get to in the whole of the U.S.

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00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:14,000

It's hundreds of miles from the nearest main road.

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00:03:14,000 --> 00:03:19,000

When viewed from the air, the lake shaped like a giant fish.

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00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:22,000

Could this be a clue to what lurks within?

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00:03:27,000 --> 00:03:33,000

Cryptozoologist Cliff Berwickman, one of America's leading bigfoot investigators,

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00:03:33,000 --> 00:03:37,000

now has his sights fixed on finding the monster of the lake.

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00:03:41,000 --> 00:03:46,000

His first stop is the Lake Southern Shore, close to the village of Kokonok.

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00:03:52,000 --> 00:04:00,000

I'm Cliff Berwickman, and I am in Kokonok, Alaska, on the shores of Lake Iliamna, Alaska's largest lake.

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00:04:00,000 --> 00:04:04,000

In some places, this lake is over a thousand feet deep.

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00:04:04,000 --> 00:04:08,000

There's no telling what could be swimming around in the bottom of this lake.

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00:04:09,000 --> 00:04:12,000

Cliff is here to meet the latest eyewitness.

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00:04:12,000 --> 00:04:16,000

It's none less than the borough manager, Nathan Hill.

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00:04:18,000 --> 00:04:26,000

On this beach, one afternoon in 2017, Nathan was one of a handful of people at this very spot,

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00:04:26,000 --> 00:04:29,000

who witnessed the monster out on the lake.

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00:04:29,000 --> 00:04:37,000

So, Nathan, the reason I came up here is to investigate some of the stories about the creature that lives in the lake.

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00:04:37,000 --> 00:04:39,000

What's your experience with the creature?

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00:04:39,000 --> 00:04:43,000

It was a calm day, and as I looked out, and I saw something in the lake.

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00:04:43,000 --> 00:04:49,000

And there was at least half a dozen people that had gathered around to see what was out there.

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00:04:49,000 --> 00:04:58,000

And at that time, I had my cell phone out, and I was recording in case something was to surface.

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00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:04,000

Probably somewhere between three and five hundred yards off the beach, there was something that made some pretty big wakes,

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00:05:04,000 --> 00:05:09,000

and everybody there witnessed it, and I got it on a short video clip.

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00:05:09,000 --> 00:05:13,000

Nathan hasn't posted his video online.

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00:05:13,000 --> 00:05:18,000

In fact, this is the first time he's agreed to show it to any outsider.

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00:05:19,000 --> 00:05:28,000

At first, it doesn't look as if there's anything to see, but then, towards the top left of the frame, something strange appears.

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00:05:28,000 --> 00:05:31,000

No, look right there. Look at that. Right there.

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00:05:31,000 --> 00:05:32,000

See it?

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00:05:32,000 --> 00:05:33,000

What is that?

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00:05:33,000 --> 00:05:34,000

There is?

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00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:35,000

What is it?

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00:05:37,000 --> 00:05:42,000

It looks like a giant sea serpent, with three humps breaking the surface.

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00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:52,000

If Nathan's right about the distance, that would make just the visible part of this lake creature, 40 to 50 feet long.

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00:05:52,000 --> 00:05:53,000

Wow.

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00:05:53,000 --> 00:05:55,000

That's cool. That's really cool.

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00:05:55,000 --> 00:05:57,000

That's great.

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00:05:57,000 --> 00:06:02,000

The quality is poor, so we're going to send off the video for some expert analysis.

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00:06:05,000 --> 00:06:08,000

Shortly after, Nathan's right about the distance.

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00:06:08,000 --> 00:06:09,000

Really?

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00:06:11,000 --> 00:06:17,000

Shortly after this sighting, Nathan's friend, Fanyal, had a monster experience of his own.

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00:06:17,000 --> 00:06:23,000

He's a fisherman, and was out in his canoe when the creature's surface just yards from him.

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00:06:23,000 --> 00:06:25,000

What did it look like?

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00:06:25,000 --> 00:06:28,000

Like a giant snake creature.

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00:06:28,000 --> 00:06:29,000

Uh-huh.

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00:06:29,000 --> 00:06:39,000

It's wide as the canoe, and three to four times longer than the canoe, and black, leathery-looking kind of skin.

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00:06:39,000 --> 00:06:49,000

It had like that arch where, you know, it didn't just go straight, it actually had like a little arch with it or something.

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00:06:49,000 --> 00:06:50,000

Like a jaw.

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00:06:50,000 --> 00:06:52,000

Like this, now it came out.

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00:06:52,000 --> 00:07:00,000

An arched neck means this was no giant fish, and it didn't move like a fish either.

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00:07:00,000 --> 00:07:06,000

Where it has like the head, a hump, and a hump, it would do its, like it was like that.

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00:07:06,000 --> 00:07:12,000

I was sitting there in awe, just dumbstruck of what I'm, what the heck am I looking at?

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00:07:12,000 --> 00:07:21,000

Fanyal's description does seem to match the monster that Nathan caught on video, a giant serpent-like creature with humps.

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00:07:22,000 --> 00:07:24,000

It's a lamp.

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00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:35,000

And from the safety of the shore, Fanyal took his own video.

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00:07:35,000 --> 00:07:41,000

He managed to capture this glimpse of the creature just before it disappeared under the surface.

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00:07:41,000 --> 00:07:43,000

Yeah, what is that?

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00:07:43,000 --> 00:07:58,000

It's only in modern times that people around the lake have had phones and cameras, but stories of the creature go way back.

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00:07:58,000 --> 00:08:03,000

The native people of the area have lived here for nearly 10,000 years.

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00:08:07,000 --> 00:08:11,000

For them, the story of the lake monster is no fairy tale.

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00:08:13,000 --> 00:08:15,000

It's part of their oral history.

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00:08:18,000 --> 00:08:21,000

Raymond Wassily is a native elder.

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00:08:22,000 --> 00:08:41,000

I heard stories from all my elders before me of how they sought and stories are the ones that tell the truth for the nomads, because they didn't know how to write it.

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00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:50,000

As a young man, Raymond himself had a close-up encounter with the monster when he was out on the lake with his family.

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00:08:53,000 --> 00:08:59,000

My dad was on the cabin looking at it. He said it's longer than the boat.

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00:08:59,000 --> 00:09:04,000

And the boat, the boat was almost like 32-footer end to end.

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00:09:05,000 --> 00:09:09,000

It looked like it had a hump.

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00:09:09,000 --> 00:09:18,000

And then I couldn't judge it, but it looked like it had three on the way back to it.

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00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:22,000

Then it kind of sloped and it had a tail.

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00:09:22,000 --> 00:09:28,000

And the head looked like it could swallow you.

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00:09:28,000 --> 00:09:35,000

Three humps, just like in the video filmed by Nathan.

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00:09:41,000 --> 00:09:46,000

Anthropologist Robin Levine is an expert on the native folklore.

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00:09:46,000 --> 00:09:52,000

As an outsider, she was always skeptical about these stories of a lake monster.

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00:09:52,000 --> 00:09:57,000

That is, until one July day back in 2008.

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00:09:57,000 --> 00:10:03,000

A colleague of mine and I were flying back into a fish camp where we'd been conducting research.

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00:10:03,000 --> 00:10:08,000

And we were on our way down, flying over a bay. We're very close to landing.

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00:10:08,000 --> 00:10:12,000

And I saw something in the shallows, something I hadn't seen before.

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00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:16,000

At first I thought it were two seals twisting together.

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00:10:16,000 --> 00:10:20,000

And then I realized, no, it was one creature.

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00:10:20,000 --> 00:10:24,000

Robin's first thought was a beluga whale.

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00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:31,000

Belugas do swim in the waters of Alaska, and the size was about right.

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00:10:31,000 --> 00:10:39,000

But belugas are almost white in color. The creature Robin saw was dark.

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00:10:39,000 --> 00:10:46,000

It was pebble-colored. It had a simuous movement about it, but it was definitely not an eel.

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00:10:46,000 --> 00:10:51,000

I could see pictorial fins. I could see tail fins.

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00:10:51,000 --> 00:10:56,000

As soon as we landed and we were taxing up to the shore, I asked the pilot,

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00:10:56,000 --> 00:10:59,000

well, what was that that we saw just in the bay as we were descending?

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00:10:59,000 --> 00:11:04,000

And he got really excited. What did you see? What did you see? And I told him.

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00:11:04,000 --> 00:11:08,000

And he said, congratulations. You've seen the Eleon the Lake Monster.

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00:11:12,000 --> 00:11:17,000

I was really surprised, but it was at that time then that I recall the stories I'd heard,

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00:11:17,000 --> 00:11:22,000

the stories that I dismissed years earlier about something in the water.

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00:11:24,000 --> 00:11:31,000

Kiddu Viduak Lichard is a native shaman who was brought up on tales of the Lake Monster.

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00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:35,000

So I've heard stories like this ever since I was little. My mom would tell me them.

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00:11:35,000 --> 00:11:40,000

And I've heard similar stories from elders. I've heard these stories growing up my whole life.

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00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:45,000

Nobody knows how old the stories are, but they go back hundreds, if not thousands of years

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00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:50,000

before Western civilization arrived in America. These stories are not new.

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00:11:52,000 --> 00:11:57,000

People have been living on Eleon the Lake for generation upon generation.

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00:11:57,000 --> 00:12:00,000

The local people would say since time immemorial.

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00:12:00,000 --> 00:12:06,000

And the way they pass on their knowledge, local knowledge,

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00:12:06,000 --> 00:12:10,000

is from one generation to the next, from elders to their youth.

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00:12:10,000 --> 00:12:16,000

And these stories help people survive. These stories help people develop a unique understanding

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00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:19,000

of their landscape and their resources.

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00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:26,000

This is where stories of the Eleon the Lake Monster have also come from.

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00:12:26,000 --> 00:12:33,000

People, while they call it a monster, may be something that was picked up from the more recent

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00:12:33,000 --> 00:12:38,000

Euro-Western visitors when they came and they heard some of these stories.

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00:12:38,000 --> 00:12:45,000

But I imagine that the local people have stories about the Eleon the Lake Monster

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00:12:45,000 --> 00:12:49,000

that helps them understand their natural environment.

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00:12:51,000 --> 00:12:55,000

Since I was a baby, I've heard stories of these strange creatures.

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00:12:55,000 --> 00:13:00,000

But instead of being thought of as fake or maybe they're real,

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00:13:00,000 --> 00:13:04,000

Native Americans tend to take them very literally like we know they're real.

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00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:07,000

They're just a part of life. They're a part of the world.

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00:13:07,000 --> 00:13:11,000

Native communities accept it as part of reality.

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00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:13,000

And that's how I grew up.

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00:13:13,000 --> 00:13:17,000

I want our stories and our knowledge to be taken seriously.

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00:13:19,000 --> 00:13:23,000

They go way further back than when Westerners came here.

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00:13:23,000 --> 00:13:26,000

The Native people knew about them for a long time.

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00:13:26,000 --> 00:13:28,000

And they weren't considered a mythology for the Native people.

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00:13:28,000 --> 00:13:30,000

They're just considered a fact of life.

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00:13:30,000 --> 00:13:33,000

You respect them. You don't mess with them because they're powerful.

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00:13:33,000 --> 00:13:37,000

Come on, take our word for it. We've been here for a long, long time.

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00:13:37,000 --> 00:13:39,000

We know what's in our own backyard.

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00:13:41,000 --> 00:13:47,000

All over the Alaska Triangle, there's talk of undiscovered species and strange animals.

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00:13:50,000 --> 00:13:56,000

The best known is the monstrous beast said to live in Lake Iliamna, the state's biggest lake.

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00:13:57,000 --> 00:14:02,000

But the mystery surrounding this lake go beyond what lurks beneath.

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00:14:04,000 --> 00:14:08,000

School teacher Sarah Armstrong lives overlooking the lake.

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00:14:08,000 --> 00:14:15,000

But she grew up most in fear of Iliamna's bigfoot creature, what the locals call the hairy man.

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00:14:16,000 --> 00:14:22,000

I remember growing up as a little girl, we would tease each other when we were out late at night.

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00:14:23,000 --> 00:14:29,000

Watch out for the hairy man. And it would kind of give you this spooky feeling and the chills.

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00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:34,000

But it was as an adult that Sarah had a first-hand experience.

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00:14:35,000 --> 00:14:39,000

Myself and two of my friends, we were going on a camping trip.

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00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:46,000

And Ray, who's up in the bow, says, what the hell is that?

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00:14:47,000 --> 00:14:54,000

And we're all looking in this direction and our mind are just wondering what it is we're seeing

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00:14:54,000 --> 00:14:56,000

and trying to focus your eyes.

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00:14:58,000 --> 00:15:02,000

And within just a blink of an eye, it was gone.

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00:15:03,000 --> 00:15:11,000

It just disappeared and we were just kind of in awe and stunned for a moment.

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00:15:12,000 --> 00:15:18,000

And then we look at each other like, is that what we think we just saw?

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00:15:19,000 --> 00:15:20,000

Did we just see this?

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00:15:20,000 --> 00:15:26,000

It just looked like a tall black figure.

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00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:41,000

I didn't really feel scared. I was just maybe more curious about the whole thing and kind of amazed at what we saw is what we saw.

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00:15:42,000 --> 00:15:47,000

Something I've heard about my whole life I actually witnessed.

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00:15:51,000 --> 00:16:02,000

There have been sightings of other strange cryptids around the lake too, including a bird the size of a small plane said to resemble a prehistoric pterodactyl.

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00:16:04,000 --> 00:16:12,000

But the greatest is the lake-illumina creature. If it exists, it would dwarf anything in Alaska.

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00:16:13,000 --> 00:16:22,000

In fact, there's only one obvious comparison, the most famous lake monster in the world, the Loch Ness Monster.

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00:16:27,000 --> 00:16:32,000

Does Lake Illumina in Alaska really have its own prehistoric monster?

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00:16:33,000 --> 00:16:43,000

Dr. Robert Alley is a retired professor from the University of Alaska and an expert cryptozoologist.

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00:16:44,000 --> 00:16:51,000

Everyone's heard of the Loch Ness Monster. Well, it stands to reason if there could be a monster in the Loch Ness, there could be monsters elsewhere too.

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00:16:52,000 --> 00:16:59,000

There's definitely something there. There have been photos, sonograms, pictures that have caused waves around the world.

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00:17:03,000 --> 00:17:16,000

Many researchers have hypothesized that Loch Ness could hold a relic population of plesiosaur, that is extinct marine reptile.

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00:17:17,000 --> 00:17:25,000

The head of a plesiosaur would be an exact match for the monster spotted by Fanyal Kiesling when he was out in his canoe.

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00:17:26,000 --> 00:17:28,000

It had like an arch, like a jaw.

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00:17:28,000 --> 00:17:30,000

It was like the snout came out.

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00:17:32,000 --> 00:17:36,000

And it's a good match for the traditional image of the Loch Ness Monster.

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00:17:39,000 --> 00:17:50,000

And this Loch Ness photo from the 50s seems to show a huge water creature with humps, just like the monster seen by Nathan Hill.

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00:17:51,000 --> 00:18:01,000

Every year, a million people visit Loch Ness in the hope of catching a glimpse of the mysterious beast.

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00:18:02,000 --> 00:18:07,000

Compared to Loch Ness, Lake Iliamna is remote and isolated.

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00:18:08,000 --> 00:18:13,000

Few tourists come here and only about 600 people live on its shores.

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00:18:14,000 --> 00:18:18,000

The lake is also over 50 times bigger than Loch Ness.

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00:18:19,000 --> 00:18:24,000

If finding the Loch Ness Monster is difficult, then what are the chances here?

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00:18:26,000 --> 00:18:30,000

There's one man who thinks the monster may already have been found.

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00:18:31,000 --> 00:18:39,000

We got a quick giveaway here. This Memorial Day weekend, Americans will take time to remember and honor those who died while serving our country.

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00:18:39,000 --> 00:18:50,000

Local radio DJ Bob Bird has unearthed evidence that back in 1967, the monster of Lake Iliamna was not only found, but caught.

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00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:59,000

In a plane like this, Chuck Crappershott, who was a missionary, Christian missionary, spotted from the air and radioed some friends.

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00:19:00,000 --> 00:19:03,000

I've got this large fish swimming right underneath the surface.

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00:19:04,000 --> 00:19:13,000

Word quickly spread around the airwaves that this could be the lake monster, and the idea was mooted to try to catch it.

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00:19:15,000 --> 00:19:32,000

Somebody, with a sense of adventure, took a float plane, put on some probably very strong halibut line with large hooks, and cinching them to a cleat like that, tossed the meat into the water.

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00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:41,000

Well, as he lollygagged on the floats itself, well, before too long his plane was being towed around.

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00:19:43,000 --> 00:19:50,000

Beneath the surface, some giant creature with immense strength was pulling the plane across the water.

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00:19:51,000 --> 00:20:01,000

Eventually, the monster broke free. On inspecting the damage, it was clear that it was well beyond the capabilities of any known lake creature.

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00:20:03,000 --> 00:20:12,000

His plane was towed around. He looked at the hooks. They'd been straightened out, and maybe others had been bitten off.

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00:20:13,000 --> 00:20:21,000

It would take unbelievable strength to straighten out the large tuna hooks and bite through the thick, stainless steel cables.

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00:20:22,000 --> 00:20:27,000

The creature would have to be gigantic, as big as a dinosaur, perhaps.

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00:20:28,000 --> 00:20:36,000

If we're talking about a plesiosaur, a creature like this would absolutely have no problem towing a plane around on the surface of the lake.

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00:20:36,000 --> 00:20:43,000

These creatures were huge, up to 50 feet. To them, a float plane on the surface of the lake would be like a toy.

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00:20:45,000 --> 00:20:55,000

If there is a giant dinosaur-like creature hiding in the lake, then cryptozoologist Cliff Berwickman is determined to find it.

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00:20:55,000 --> 00:21:00,000

He's decided to put all his trust in local fisherman Richard Walton.

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00:21:05,000 --> 00:21:10,000

Thank you for letting me on your boat and showing me around a little bit. Safe to say, you know this lake pretty well.

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00:21:10,000 --> 00:21:16,000

We've traveled this lake quite a bit over the course of a lifetime, you know, because it's kind of what you do here.

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00:21:16,000 --> 00:21:20,000

This is your road system. This is how you get around all the different communities.

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00:21:21,000 --> 00:21:30,000

Like Loch Ness, Lake Iliamna is exceptionally deep, and what lies beneath the surface is largely unexplored.

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00:21:30,000 --> 00:21:35,000

There's anywhere a lake monster can lie hidden in the depths. It's here.

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00:21:37,000 --> 00:21:42,000

But for Cliff, comparisons with Loch Ness go deeper than you might think.

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00:21:43,000 --> 00:21:50,000

All throughout British Columbia and Alaska, there are literally hundreds of lakes that have reported lake monsters living in them.

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00:21:50,000 --> 00:21:59,000

And what I find interesting about that is that the latitude is very similar to that of Scotland, where the Loch Ness monster is.

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00:22:00,000 --> 00:22:05,000

Similarities of climate and water temperature may partially account for this.

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00:22:05,000 --> 00:22:13,000

And in these colder parts, it's easier for creatures to remain hidden, as there's more wilderness and fewer people.

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00:22:19,000 --> 00:22:24,000

But there are times when something strange is spotted, even in a populated area.

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00:22:36,000 --> 00:22:51,000

In the Alaska Triangle, it's not inconceivable that strange, unknown creatures could be hiding in the forests or lurking in its waters.

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00:22:53,000 --> 00:22:56,000

Even large new animals are still being discovered.

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00:22:57,000 --> 00:23:06,000

In June 2016, this 24-foot whale washed up in Alaska and was found to be an entirely new species.

225

00:23:10,000 --> 00:23:20,000

Now, journalist and researcher Andrew Goff has pinpointed the Alaska Triangle as being ripe for new discoveries of river and lake creatures.

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00:23:21,000 --> 00:23:27,000

It's really a perfect storm, a remote location with huge bodies of water.

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00:23:28,000 --> 00:23:34,000

It's full of species that we've yet to identify or even begun to understand.

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00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:37,000

So the natural reaction is to call them monsters.

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00:23:37,000 --> 00:23:41,000

You can understand that, but really, they're just new species.

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00:23:41,000 --> 00:23:45,000

And they probably have been here even longer than we have.

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00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:52,000

It's the ideal spot for species to go unnoticed for hundreds of years.

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00:23:55,000 --> 00:24:00,000

In November 2016, there was a sighting that created an online storm.

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00:24:01,000 --> 00:24:06,000

This video appeared linked to the Alaska Bureau of Land Management.

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00:24:07,000 --> 00:24:11,000

Within days, it racked up over a million views.

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00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:24,000

The location? The China River Fairbanks, right in the middle of the Alaska Triangle.

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00:24:26,000 --> 00:24:31,000

Where government worker and keen photographer Craig McCaw happens to be based.

237

00:24:33,000 --> 00:24:38,000

He was out on a routine job inspecting the river from this bridge.

238

00:24:39,000 --> 00:24:43,000

I was walking out on the bridge that you can see behind me there

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00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:47,000

and taking some photos of ice beginning to form.

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00:24:47,000 --> 00:24:50,000

This was in late October, which is early winter in Fairbanks,

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00:24:50,000 --> 00:24:53,000

and took out my camera, pointed at this direction,

242

00:24:53,000 --> 00:24:58,000

and my attention was caught by movement in the river right beneath me.

243

00:24:59,000 --> 00:25:02,000

I looked down in the water and I did a total stop.

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00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:06,000

When Craig looked down, he saw something extraordinary.

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00:25:06,000 --> 00:25:11,000

So he got out his phone and took this video.

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00:25:16,000 --> 00:25:22,000

Right below him was what looked like a giant serpent-like ice monster,

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00:25:22,000 --> 00:25:26,000

strong enough to be swimming upstream in the fast-flowing current.

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00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:33,000

So I'm looking at it now, right in the river, right over there.

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00:25:33,000 --> 00:25:39,000

It's a little strange to see this thing swirling back and forth in the river.

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00:25:39,000 --> 00:25:44,000

It's got a rough texture. You can see that it has ice on it,

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00:25:44,000 --> 00:25:48,000

and a lot of the rest of it is obscured by the murky water.

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00:25:49,000 --> 00:25:56,000

Close analysis of the video puts this strange creature at about 20 feet long,

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00:25:56,000 --> 00:25:59,000

but that's just the visible part.

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00:25:59,000 --> 00:26:05,000

There's no known animal in this river with the size anything like that.

255

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:11,000

Send this shiver down my spine. I'd never seen anything like that.

256

00:26:12,000 --> 00:26:17,000

Is this an unknown species or a relic from prehistory?

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00:26:25,000 --> 00:26:30,000

It's certainly true that prehistoric creatures do exist in these waters.

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00:26:32,000 --> 00:26:35,000

These blood-sucking fish, known as lampreys,

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00:26:35,000 --> 00:26:39,000

were around 200 million years before the dinosaurs.

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00:26:41,000 --> 00:26:48,000

And they can still be found in Alaska, even here, in the middle of Fairbanks.

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00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:56,000

In fact, in June 2015, bizarrely, they began falling onto the streets of the city.

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00:26:57,000 --> 00:27:03,000

Fish literally started raining from the sky. How on earth does that happen?

263

00:27:04,000 --> 00:27:11,000

In Cardiff, in the United Kingdom, Dr. Rhys Jones is a senior lecturer in biosciences

264

00:27:11,000 --> 00:27:13,000

and an environmental researcher.

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00:27:14,000 --> 00:27:19,000

When I say fish, I mean fish like this one here. This is a lamprey.

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00:27:19,000 --> 00:27:22,000

Superficially, it looks a little bit like an eel,

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00:27:22,000 --> 00:27:27,000

but actually, if I turn it around, have a look at the face on there.

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00:27:28,000 --> 00:27:36,000

These are sharp tooth, foot-long, blood-sucking eel-like fishes.

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00:27:36,000 --> 00:27:44,000

These are vampire fishes that attach themselves to other animals and suck their blood.

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00:27:44,000 --> 00:27:47,000

Now, they're rarely seen, let alone caught,

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00:27:47,000 --> 00:27:54,000

but here they are falling from the sky miles from any river.

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00:27:54,000 --> 00:27:56,000

How can that be?

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00:27:57,000 --> 00:28:01,000

It's hard to imagine what these ordinary people would have thought.

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00:28:02,000 --> 00:28:07,000

They must have been terrified, mystified, and utterly freaked out.

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00:28:08,000 --> 00:28:13,000

How the lamprey came to be falling from the sky has never been established.

276

00:28:14,000 --> 00:28:21,000

But could the serpent-like ice creature be a kind of giant prehistoric blood-sucking fish?

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00:28:21,000 --> 00:28:28,000

When I started filming this object in the river, I didn't really know.

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00:28:28,000 --> 00:28:30,000

I still don't know what it was.

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00:28:32,000 --> 00:28:36,000

It moved like a giant fish. I have to say that the way it undulated in the current,

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00:28:36,000 --> 00:28:38,000

and it kind of held its place.

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00:28:41,000 --> 00:28:46,000

Generally speaking, what's in the Chino River is some species of freshwater fish,

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00:28:46,000 --> 00:28:49,000

like Arctic graling, north of the Chino River.

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00:28:49,000 --> 00:28:56,000

There's some mammals that pass through the river or a beaver that live in and around the river.

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00:28:56,000 --> 00:29:00,000

But I can't think of anything that's more than three or four feet long,

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00:29:00,000 --> 00:29:03,000

and what I saw was much, much larger than that.

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00:29:05,000 --> 00:29:09,000

Nature still provides these mysteries from time to time that force you to stop

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00:29:09,000 --> 00:29:13,000

and think, what am I looking at? How can I explain this?

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00:29:14,000 --> 00:29:21,000

Whether a strange giant fish or not, could this creature be related to the monster of Lake Iliamna?

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00:29:24,000 --> 00:29:28,000

The Chino River is a tributary to the mighty Yukon River,

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00:29:28,000 --> 00:29:33,000

which connects many of the waterways and lakes of Alaska to the coast.

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00:29:33,000 --> 00:29:37,000

And then from there, it's a short journey upriver to Lake Iliamna.

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00:29:37,000 --> 00:29:42,000

This means that there's a ready network for these creatures to disperse throughout the triangle.

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00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:48,000

But is there any evidence of more than one lake monster?

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00:29:51,000 --> 00:29:55,000

The local radio station has been taking calls on the subject.

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00:29:59,000 --> 00:30:02,000

Welcome back to the Birds Eye View on Lake Iliamna.

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00:30:02,000 --> 00:30:06,000

Welcome back to the Birds Eye View on KSRM.

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00:30:10,000 --> 00:30:11,000

Uh, Celtic.

298

00:30:11,000 --> 00:30:17,000

DJ Bob Bird has had one call that suggests the Lake Iliamna creature is not alone.

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00:30:17,000 --> 00:30:20,000

We saw three,

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00:30:20,000 --> 00:30:24,000

identical creatures.

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00:30:24,000 --> 00:30:29,000

And these things were just, absolutely, he was going to have no idea what they could have been.

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00:30:29,000 --> 00:30:32,000

Rounded, slightly rounded,

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00:30:32,000 --> 00:30:37,000

long, darkish, blackish gray,

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00:30:37,000 --> 00:30:40,000

is well over 60 feet.

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00:30:41,000 --> 00:30:46,000

Increasingly, the calls to Bob's show aren't just about Lake Iliamna.

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00:30:46,000 --> 00:30:52,000

Bob's many listeners have added to the evidence of monsters elsewhere in the region too.

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00:30:53,000 --> 00:30:57,000

There's also similar sightings in other large lakes.

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00:30:57,000 --> 00:31:02,000

Lake Clark, which feeds into Lake Iliamna, has its own legends.

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00:31:02,000 --> 00:31:07,000

Basharov Lake, which is south of Iliamna, had a very credible sighting.

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00:31:08,000 --> 00:31:12,000

Bob's now convinced that witnesses to the monster are genuine.

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00:31:13,000 --> 00:31:17,000

We're not dealing with a mirage, a deluded individual.

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00:31:17,000 --> 00:31:20,000

We're not dealing with mistaken identities.

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00:31:21,000 --> 00:31:24,000

We've got something that needs explaining.

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00:31:27,000 --> 00:31:34,000

Bob's own investigations have led him to what could be a secret government report on these lake monsters.

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00:31:35,000 --> 00:31:41,000

As I understand it, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game kept once a file on the sightings

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00:31:41,000 --> 00:31:44,000

to see what sort of consistency there might be in the reports.

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00:31:45,000 --> 00:31:49,000

I don't know if that file exists anymore because as a journalist, two years ago,

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00:31:49,000 --> 00:31:53,000

I asked them to find it for me and they didn't have it.

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00:31:53,000 --> 00:31:56,000

I have no doubt there was once a file.

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00:31:57,000 --> 00:32:00,000

What was in that file? We don't know.

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00:32:00,000 --> 00:32:05,000

But the caller to Bob's show has agreed to tell his story on camera.

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00:32:06,000 --> 00:32:10,000

These things were awful big and there was a lot of them.

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00:32:10,000 --> 00:32:18,000

One clear afternoon in the late 90s, local businessman Gary Nielsen was out on the lake with his wife.

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00:32:19,000 --> 00:32:27,000

My wife was looking over the side and she screams and she's on my side of the boat in my lap

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00:32:27,000 --> 00:32:34,000

screaming at me to go faster so I just automatically hit the throttle fast forward.

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00:32:34,000 --> 00:32:38,000

And as I looked back to where she was looking, there was these two heads.

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00:32:38,000 --> 00:32:43,000

Probably about that long and about that wide and I was just the heads.

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00:32:43,000 --> 00:32:47,000

And they were traveling like that and they were looking at us as we were going by.

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00:32:49,000 --> 00:32:56,000

The heads were maybe two feet long, maybe longer, 16 to 18 inches wide.

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00:32:57,000 --> 00:33:03,000

Triangular shaped, very sleek looking and the bodies were awful long

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00:33:03,000 --> 00:33:07,000

but I couldn't tell the body length because I was too busy trying to get into the shallow water.

332

00:33:07,000 --> 00:33:09,000

These things were big.

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00:33:10,000 --> 00:33:17,000

Gary's detailed description matches that of other witnesses and also that of the Loch Ness monster.

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00:33:18,000 --> 00:33:22,000

For the scientists, multiple monsters is a given.

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00:33:23,000 --> 00:33:26,000

If there's one monster, there has to be more than one.

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00:33:26,000 --> 00:33:30,000

There has to be a breeding population. There can never be just one.

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00:33:30,000 --> 00:33:37,000

When you have a biological population, you've got to have significant numbers for maintaining a gene pool.

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00:33:38,000 --> 00:33:44,000

There's one particular aspect of the lake creatures that haunts Gary to this day.

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00:33:44,000 --> 00:33:46,000

The eyes were so huge.

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00:33:47,000 --> 00:33:50,000

They were just big, round.

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00:33:51,000 --> 00:33:54,000

The best description is dead black eyes.

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00:33:55,000 --> 00:34:00,000

Like they were made for deep water where there's less light.

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00:34:01,000 --> 00:34:08,000

Huge eyes made for deep water could be a clue to how these monsters are connected to the triangle.

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00:34:09,000 --> 00:34:16,000

There's an old native belief that the separate waterways and lakes are linked by underground channels.

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00:34:19,000 --> 00:34:24,000

It's a story that Robin Levine has come across as a part of her work with the native people.

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00:34:26,000 --> 00:34:35,000

One of the stories I heard when I was out there was that there's a possibility that the elders say that there may be an underwater passage,

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00:34:35,000 --> 00:34:41,000

a tunnel from Iliamna Lake to the saltwater inlet.

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00:34:43,000 --> 00:34:46,000

Could it really be possible that these links exist?

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00:34:48,000 --> 00:34:51,000

Well, there's some firm science that suggests they do.

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00:34:52,000 --> 00:35:00,000

And with access to the sea through large underwater passageways, any number of giant creatures could be in there.

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00:35:06,000 --> 00:35:14,000

Bruce Wright is a former professor from the University of Alaska, and he's been researching the bed of the lake.

352

00:35:15,000 --> 00:35:25,000

It's so deep. It's at least 1200 feet, but nobody knows. Nobody's taken a rock tied to a string and dropped it down to the bottom.

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00:35:27,000 --> 00:35:33,000

As well as being of unknown depth, the lake lies on top of unstable bedrock.

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00:35:35,000 --> 00:35:40,000

It's a geologically active area. There probably are cracks down at the bottom of the lake.

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00:35:41,000 --> 00:35:45,000

Kind of makes you wonder, well, maybe there's a link to the ocean through these things.

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00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:53,000

From the coast, any number of creatures could navigate their way up into Lake Iliamna.

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00:35:57,000 --> 00:36:03,000

For Gary Nielsen and his wife, spotting two lake monsters was just the start.

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00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:09,000

As I was watching them, I saw all these other wakes all around and up in front.

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00:36:10,000 --> 00:36:13,000

And some of the ripples were, or wakes, were like two feet high.

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00:36:14,000 --> 00:36:21,000

Multiple wakes two feet high, they could only be caused by something massive moving in the water.

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00:36:22,000 --> 00:36:28,000

We didn't bother to go out and try to see how big those big ones were, because we were busy trying to stay alive in shallow water.

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00:36:28,000 --> 00:36:33,000

They wouldn't go in the shallow water for whatever reason.

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00:36:34,000 --> 00:36:39,000

When I say shallow, my skiff draws about 14 inches with the motor down.

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00:36:40,000 --> 00:36:43,000

I had my motor jilted up to stay in the shallow water, so I was probably in the flipperless water.

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00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:48,000

I mean, I was literally scraping over the rocks where the seals were.

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00:36:49,000 --> 00:36:55,000

And I didn't care if I'd dinged up my prop or anything, because I just did not want to be out there in the deep water with whatever the hell those things were.

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00:36:55,000 --> 00:36:57,000

I neither did the seals.

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00:36:58,000 --> 00:37:01,000

I had my rifles, I had two rifles, a .22 and a .06.

369

00:37:02,000 --> 00:37:06,000

And I could have got everyone on those seals if I wanted to, but I had no interest in the seals at that time.

370

00:37:07,000 --> 00:37:08,000

I just wanted to stay away from those creatures.

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00:37:09,000 --> 00:37:14,000

I go into the shallow water just enough for my, so my kicker doesn't hit.

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00:37:15,000 --> 00:37:18,000

Trying to avoid these fish.

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00:37:19,000 --> 00:37:23,000

There's a little island there, and it's full of rocks.

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00:37:24,000 --> 00:37:30,000

There's got to be a hundred seals up on the rocks, just to scare them off of us or whatever it was in the water.

375

00:37:31,000 --> 00:37:32,000

They would not go in the water.

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00:37:33,000 --> 00:37:36,000

Their rivers, we could have reached out and touched them, because they would not go in the water.

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00:37:37,000 --> 00:37:42,000

If they went and they come right back out on the rocks, because these fish were out there circling, just waiting for them to get into the water.

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00:37:43,000 --> 00:37:48,000

And we were there by the island, and we couldn't stay there.

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00:37:48,000 --> 00:37:52,000

There were these wakes between us and the mainland.

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00:37:53,000 --> 00:37:54,000

So we waited until the wakes went by.

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00:37:55,000 --> 00:37:59,000

We went into the mainland, into the shallow water, followed the beach for about three miles.

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00:38:00,000 --> 00:38:02,000

There were no more wakes. We went to Pal Bay.

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00:38:03,000 --> 00:38:06,000

But that's the scariest I've ever been when I saw something in the water.

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00:38:07,000 --> 00:38:08,000

I don't really get scared.

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00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:13,000

I crawl into a brush after a wounded animal, big wounded animal like bears and moose that are not happy.

386

00:38:14,000 --> 00:38:15,000

That's a different kind of fear.

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00:38:15,000 --> 00:38:17,000

You know, you're scared, but you're aware, you're hunting.

388

00:38:18,000 --> 00:38:22,000

This was a different kind of fear. It was like, I can get the hell out of here kind of fear.

389

00:38:23,000 --> 00:38:24,000

You don't want to be here kind of fear.

390

00:38:25,000 --> 00:38:27,000

It wouldn't take much for them to use to jump up near us.

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00:38:28,000 --> 00:38:29,000

They were that big.

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00:38:30,000 --> 00:38:38,000

I'd been in extremely rough weather and a sinking skiff, where everything I had in the skiff washed overboard, except for me and the tank that my kicker was connected to.

393

00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:41,000

I'd been after wounded animals.

394

00:38:42,000 --> 00:38:44,000

They knew would probably kill me if they had a chance.

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00:38:45,000 --> 00:38:47,000

I was scared, but I'm not that kind of scared.

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00:38:50,000 --> 00:38:53,000

But there's another scientific question that needs answering.

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00:38:54,000 --> 00:39:00,000

If the lake has a large population of giant prehistoric beasts, what are they feeding on?

398

00:39:01,000 --> 00:39:02,000

How are they surviving?

399

00:39:04,000 --> 00:39:06,000

The answer lies in the water.

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00:39:06,000 --> 00:39:10,000

The answer lies in Alaska's abundant wildlife.

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00:39:13,000 --> 00:39:18,000

Alaska has a really wide variety of marine animals because it's so productive up here.

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00:39:19,000 --> 00:39:26,000

A lot of that's driven by the cleanliness of the waters off of Alaska, but also there's high oxygen levels.

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00:39:27,000 --> 00:39:35,000

So we have good phytoplankton bloom and that energy drives this really rich, valuable set of organisms that live up here.

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00:39:36,000 --> 00:39:37,000

And lots of fish.

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00:39:38,000 --> 00:39:43,000

If a large unknown species was to exist anywhere, this would be the place.

406

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:45,000

Food is plentiful.

407

00:39:47,000 --> 00:39:52,000

And one fish in particular provides a direct link to Loch Ness in Scotland.

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00:39:54,000 --> 00:40:00,000

There's five million salmon that are entering this big lake, moving up into the rivers or spawning right along the shoreline.

409

00:40:01,000 --> 00:40:05,000

And the salmon really drive the terrestrial ecosystem.

410

00:40:06,000 --> 00:40:14,000

The energy from the salmon moves through the ecosystem via bears and eagles that eat the salmon and move those nutrients up into the ecosystem.

411

00:40:15,000 --> 00:40:24,000

In fact, if you go out and you look at the stable isotopes of certain atoms in the trees, you'll find out that they're mostly made of salmon.

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00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:38,000

Like Loch Ness, because of the salmon, Lake Iliamna could sustain any number of fish eating plesiosaurus and multiple monsters would increase the danger out on the lake.

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00:40:42,000 --> 00:40:46,000

It's a theory that Gary now holds to because of his own encounter.

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00:40:47,000 --> 00:40:54,000

And there's old stories about that that I never ever believed from way back when of them pulling people out of kayaks or boats even.

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00:40:54,000 --> 00:40:56,000

I never believed until that moment.

416

00:41:01,000 --> 00:41:08,000

Out on the lake, cryptozoologist Cliff Berwickman is determined to investigate what's going on beneath the surface.

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00:41:09,000 --> 00:41:14,000

If there was just one lake creature, it could be anywhere.

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00:41:16,000 --> 00:41:21,000

But multiple creatures would significantly increase his chance of seeing something.

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00:41:21,000 --> 00:41:26,000

And the boat's sonar can detect anything big moving beneath them.

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00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:35,000

A lot of fishermen rely on tools like this, you know, for their livelihood, you know, to find big schools of fish for the same nets and all that stuff.

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00:41:36,000 --> 00:41:47,000

But this would also be a very effective tool to see any large animal under the surface too, not just smaller fish, but like something large like one of these lake creatures.

422

00:41:57,000 --> 00:42:03,000

Mysterious shapes pass by beneath them, but it's impossible to identify what they are.

423

00:42:05,000 --> 00:42:10,000

Is this a plesiosaur? Head up, swimming deep beneath them.

424

00:42:10,000 --> 00:42:13,000

It's something moving across the screen.

425

00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:15,000

That's a big one, whatever it is.

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00:42:16,000 --> 00:42:22,000

The best image Cliff has is the video taken by Nathan Hill, the local borough manager.

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00:42:23,000 --> 00:42:28,000

It's this video we're keen to have analyzed, and we're showing it to Dr. Alley.

428

00:42:29,000 --> 00:42:43,000

I'm looking here at a video of Lake Ilieumid, and we can actually see three objects above the water that appear to be curved and not linear like a wave would be.

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00:42:43,000 --> 00:42:57,000

So it's suggestive of a biological creature, and in fact, if you had to compare it with something, with any one thing, you'd want to compare it with those three hump little statues that you see in the water.

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00:42:58,000 --> 00:43:04,000

There's a picture of them in the gift shops at Loch Ness showing head, middle, bump, one, two, three.

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00:43:04,000 --> 00:43:11,000

And you know you don't have schools of porpoise jumping in Lake Ilieumid, and a stelfel of three sturgeon are going to arise.

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00:43:11,000 --> 00:43:21,000

What this suggests is something that's swimming in the manner, not of a reptile or a fish with a lateral undulation or amphibian, but rather a mammal.

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00:43:21,000 --> 00:43:24,000

This is a tremendously exciting thing to watch.

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00:43:25,000 --> 00:43:35,000

Possibly unidentified species or fossil mammals that we think are extinct may actually still be living trapped in fresh water.

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00:43:35,000 --> 00:43:42,000

It would suggest just as equally aplesiaast are. So there are those who say it's a mammal, there are those who say it's no, it's got to be a reptile.

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00:43:42,000 --> 00:43:47,000

We know it's got to be something, something's in there, but what is it?

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00:43:48,000 --> 00:43:55,000

Out on the lake, Cliff and Richard find no conclusive evidence.

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00:43:55,000 --> 00:44:01,000

Considering the size of the task in hand, this is no great surprise.

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00:44:01,000 --> 00:44:10,000

According to scientists, even with a large number of lake monsters, sightings could still remain very rare.

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00:44:11,000 --> 00:44:27,000

If you have salty water at the bottom of the lake that is oxygenated by some geological phenomena, you could have some really unusual animals living down there that could stay down there, be inactive.

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00:44:27,000 --> 00:44:33,000

And then when the salmon show up, go eat your 5,000 pounds of salmon and then just go back down there.

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00:44:33,000 --> 00:44:40,000

For those who've seen the monster, an unknown species certainly fits the bill.

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00:44:40,000 --> 00:44:48,000

It's easy to dismiss what we call myths, what we call legends, until you've actually witnessed it yourself.

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00:44:48,000 --> 00:44:57,000

And then you realize that what people might refer to as a myth, what people might refer to as a legend, is actually local knowledge.

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00:44:58,000 --> 00:45:08,000

What I saw was perhaps its own unique type of species, as yet undiscovered.

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00:45:12,000 --> 00:45:20,000

At first I wasn't convinced. I'm pretty skeptical scientists. I like to hold in my hand what we're talking about.

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00:45:20,000 --> 00:45:27,000

But it's hard to talk to anybody out there that hasn't interacted with this animal or seen it.

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00:45:27,000 --> 00:45:32,000

You talk to all these people and it's just convincing there's something out there.

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00:45:35,000 --> 00:45:41,000

We have so many more questions to answer. And that's the wonder of Alaska.

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00:45:43,000 --> 00:45:48,000

Be aware. A lot of things can kill you out here without even trying.