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in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Aug](#) -> **Skunk ape crosses the line**

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Skunk ape crosses the line

From: XianneKei@aol.com
Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 02:36:51 -0400 (EDT)
Fwd Date: Mon, 11 Aug 1997 09:27:20 -0400
Subject: Skunk ape crosses the line

<http://www.naplesnews.com/today/local/skunkape.htm>

Brent Batten: Skunk ape crosses the line

Saturday, August 09, 1997

OK, that's it.

The thousand injuries inflicted on my home state I have borne as best I could.

I'll nod sympathetically as I hear for the umpteenth time from the exteenth different person the story of the car with the Ohio license plates, driving slowly down U.S. 41 with a right turn signal flashing then suddenly swerving left across two lanes of traffic to get to Morrison's.

After all, I've told similar stories myself, just substituting Michigan or Indiana plates.

I'll force a laugh when subjected to that Florida tourism radio commercial that says that if you take away Florida's warm weather, sunny beaches and lush golf courses you are left with -- Cleveland.

Even we Ohioans used to have an occasional chuckle at Cleveland's expense. That was among family.

But I draw the line at the skunk ape.

Novelist Randy Wayne White believes the skunk ape, the bigfoot-like creature reputed to be wandering the wilds of eastern Collier County, is "The result of an Ohioan mating with a Canadian."

The skunk ape has been sighted several times in the past few weeks by residents and tourists around Turner River Road. It is big, hairy and smells bad.

According to Ochopee resident David Shealy, who became an instant celebrity and expert on the skunk ape on Tuesday when he presented a set of plaster footprints and a blurry photo to Collier County commissioners for their inspection, the Florida skunk ape likes dried beans, especially lima beans, and is more aggressive than its northern cousin, the sasquatch.

Now as anyone born of Ohio parents can tell you, lima beans are not a favorite food. Too many summer afternoons spent shelling beans under a mother's watchful eye tend to ruin one's enthusiasm for the dish.

And as for aggressiveness, the few Canadians who do summer in the

Florida heat generally do so within the confines of central air. These genes are not predisposed to stalk the swamp in late July.

It can therefore be deduced that the skunk ape is not descended from an Ohioan and Canadian. This finding is every bit as clinical as the pronouncement of Robert Smith, a private investigator working for the Bigfoot Research Organization, who, when declaring the sightings authentic, said: "With the heat and the mosquitoes, I can't believe it's some guy in a gorilla suit."

You can't argue with a body of evidence like that.

Skunk ape sightings will likely boost tourism in a part of the county that could use it right about now. Some have even suggested that the entire flap may be a hoax intended to do just that.

Such cynicism aside, the scientific method requires that we try to disprove the various theories behind the skunk ape. One of the first that can be discarded is Mr. White's hypothesis about the Ohioan and the Canadian.

After all, any self-respecting parent from my home state would have this kid, at 7 feet, 600 pounds, wearing an Ohio State football jersey.

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