

Bigfoot and other monsters still stalk science

WASHINGTON — The reports started coming in to officials in Truro, Mass., last fall. A large, cat-like animal was killing cats and pigs, running in front of cars, and generally alarming the populace of the Cape Cod community.

"It's been compared to Bigfoot, to the Loch Ness Monster, to everything," says Edward A. Oswalt, the town's selectmanassessor and chairman of its board of health.

"We've had trackers out everywhere, and we've followed up on all leads. To this day, we haven't found anything conclusive to indicate there was such an animal in the area."

But the animal has been named "the Beast of Truro," and no one has yet explained it.

Dinosaur Hunt

Mysterious creatures of this sort are reported nearly everywhere. Just last fall a University of Chicago biologist went off to central Africa to search for Mokele-Mbembe, said to look like a dinosaur with a long, flexible neck and a muscular tail. So far he's had no luck; Mokele-Mbembe hasn't turned up.

The Loch Ness Monster has North American counterparts in "Champ" of Lake Champlain, and in "Ogopopo," the sea serpent of Okanagan Lake in British Columbia. Then there is the Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas, the Wildman of Hubei in China, Yowie of Australia, and the Soviet Union's Chuchunaa and Wild Man of Dagestan.

But the most famous North American creature is Bigfoot, or sasquatch, as he was known to British Columbian Indians. Like many such creatures elsewhere, he is described as at least 8 feet tall, covered with hair, and emitting a foul odor; like creatures elsewhere, he goes back centuries in folklore and myth.

The number of Bigfoot sightings reported each year depends on who is doing the counting. The creature has been reported in every region of the continental United States, though the Pacific Northwest, with its dense forests, is its most common "home."

Apart from sightings, the evidence in favor of its existence consists of footprints, some hair samples, a little blood and some droppings, an occasional photograph, and a short film sequence shot in California in 1967.

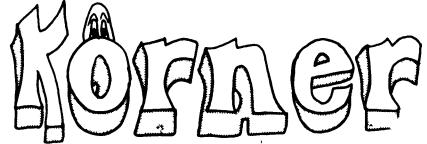
But every piece of evidence has proven to be controversial, leading Grover Krantz, an anthropologist at Washington State University, to say that only a specimen or a skeleton would convince other scientists. Krantz himself is already convinced.

Foot Not Human

"I've examined evidence that I can't explain any other way," he says. "I've analyzed the footprints, and I can deduce that it's not a gigantic human foot involved. It's been modified exactly the way you'd have to modify a foot for an 800-pound body in order to keep it walking correctly.

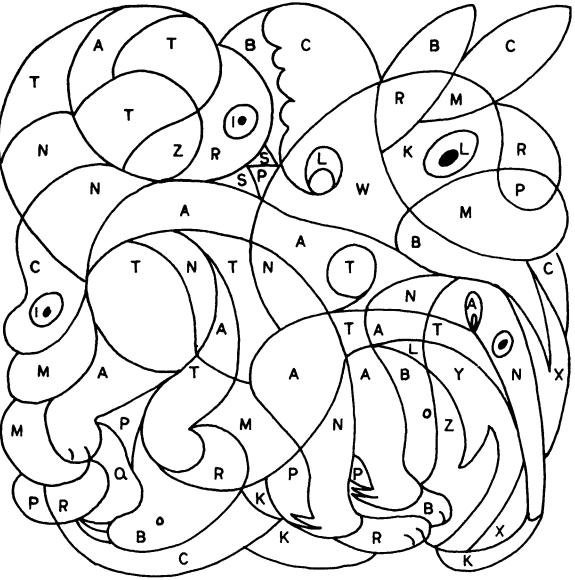
"There's a lot of pig-headedness about scientists. If science has missed an animal this big, science would look a little funny. So better not look for it."

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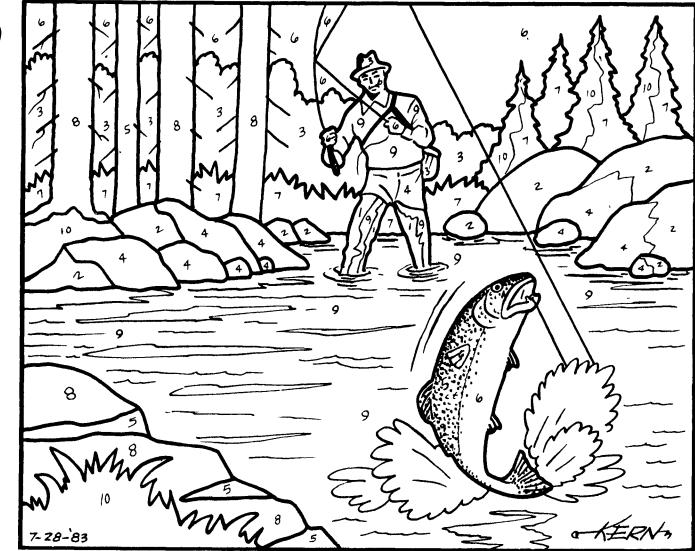
Who's Here?

I'm welcome at any picnic I go to. Fill in every space you can find with an A, N, or T in it. Then you'll see what I look like. To find out my name, unscramble the following letters: **RAETTENA**



Answer: anteater





5. BROWN 10. LT. GREEN

FISHING IS ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST WIDELY ENJOYED SPORTS, BRINGING PLEASURE TO SMALL BOYS MEN AND WOMEN. EACH FISHER-MAN HAS A DIFFERENT WAY OF ENJOYING THIS SPORT. SOME LIKE TO SIT QUIETLY ON A RIVER BANK AND FISH WHILE OTHERS EN-JOY AN EXCITING FIGHT WITH A GAME FISH.