

Woman claims Bigfoot is real, and is in the Goethe State Forest



A copy of an image taken by Denise DeChenes that she perceives to be Bigfoot is shown.

By Bruce Ackerman

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Most people think Bigfoot is a hoax. But Denise DesChenes is convinced that she has seen the mythical creature — once in person, and other times when it was unknowingly captured in pictures and videos she took during walks in the Goethe State Forest.

DesChenes never believed in Bigfoot before. She said she really never had time to pay attention to what was around her when she used to ride horses in the woods.

But what she has witnessed over the last few years during her walks in the woods has changed her mind.

“I hear them walking with me and I know they're there,” she said, deliberately using the plural. DesChenes said there is more than one creature out there.

DesChenes said she stopped riding her horses in the Goethe State Forest because her bad back made riding too painful. Instead, she started taking long walks with her dog in the forest and other preserves near Dunnellon.

“When I started walking, that's when I started noticing things,” she said.

She started taking still pictures and video and remains convinced that, in the background, she has captured Bigfoot. She has even asked professional photographers their opinions on what the large footprints and dark figures lurking around bushes and trees could be.

“I just had to ask someone else,” she said.

According to the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO) website, www.bfro.net, there have been several other Bigfoot sightings in the same area over the past several years: two in the Goethe State Forest, which is in Levy County, and another in Rainbow Springs State Park near Dunnellon.

According to a witness report on the BFRO website, on Jan. 9, 2012, a hunter in the Goethe State Forest claimed to see some scrapings high up on a tree — and higher than any animal native to the area could make.

The entry then states: “I went further into a game trail and I heard a noise as if someone, or something, was flanking me. It moved when I moved.”

As it got darker, the same entry states, the hunter heard an unfamiliar screech/growl and later found large footprints.

Another witness report on the BFRO website registers a strange encounter in the Goethe State Forest in September 2005.

The report describes a morning sighting of Bigfoot. Two witnesses claim they observed — and were watched by — two “Skunk-Apes” for about 10 minutes. They also claim they found large footprints.

In the same report, these witnesses claim they smelled something like a dead/rotting carcass mixed with the smell of a skunk.

DesChenes does not claim to have smelled anything or heard any screeches or howls. But she does have an unusual ritual that she believes helps draw Bigfoot to her during her walks in the woods. She said that before entering the woods, she prays and waves and says "hi" before starting off.

She said that she has also left gift baskets in the woods containing items such as beef jerky and crackers, and sometimes loose tobacco. She thinks this might attract the Bigfoot creatures to her the next time she returns because the items she left on previous walks were always gone when she returned.

According to Re Monteith, a BFRO investigator, it is not unusual for Bigfoot to accept gifts. However, many other animals in the forest will take food and objects as well, she said. As a researcher, she states that it is important to know what to look for to eliminate any misunderstandings.

In some instances BRFO investigators have found that Bigfoot can also leave gifts in return, Monteith said. Examples could be unusual rocks, flowers or stick arrangements, turtle shells, shells, nuts and even gutted animals. Many times the objects are not from the local area, she said.

According to Monteith, BFRO has about 10 investigators in Florida who investigate anything reported to them. The reports are only posted on the BFRO website if the witness appears credible. She adds that Ocala and the surrounding area are very active for sasquatch activity.

DesChenes has not contacted BFRO about her alleged encounters with Bigfoot, nor does she have a witness report filed with the group.

A spokeswoman for the Florida Forest Service declined comment when asked whether her agency investigates any such sightings.

1933: Loch Ness Monster sighted

Author: *History.com Staff*

Although accounts of an aquatic beast living in Scotland's Loch Ness date back 1,500 years, the modern legend of the Loch Ness Monster is born when a sighting makes local news on May 2, 1933. The newspaper *Inverness Courier* related an account of a local couple who claimed to have seen "an enormous animal rolling and plunging on the surface." The story of the "monster" (a moniker chosen by the *Courier* editor) became a media phenomenon, with London newspapers sending correspondents to Scotland and a circus offering a 20,000 pound sterling reward for capture of the beast.

Loch Ness, located in the Scottish Highlands, has the largest volume of fresh water in Great Britain; the body of water reaches a depth of nearly 800 feet and a length of about 23 miles. Scholars of the Loch Ness Monster find a dozen references to "Nessie" in Scottish history, dating back to around A.D. 500, when local Picts carved a strange aquatic creature into standing stones near Loch Ness. The earliest written reference to a monster in Loch Ness is a 7th-century biography of Saint Columba, the Irish missionary who introduced Christianity to Scotland. In 565, according to the biographer, Columba was on his way to visit the king of the northern Picts near Inverness when he stopped at Loch Ness to confront a beast that had been killing people in the lake. Seeing a large beast about to attack another man, Columba intervened, invoking the name of God and commanding the creature to "go back with all speed." The monster retreated and never killed another man.

In 1933, a new road was completed along Loch Ness' shore, affording drivers a clear view of the loch. After an April 1933 sighting was reported in the local paper on May 2, interest steadily grew, especially after another couple claimed to have seen the beast on land, crossing the shore road. Several British newspapers sent reporters to Scotland, including London's *Daily Mail*, which hired big-game hunter Marmaduke Wetherell to capture the beast. After a few days searching the loch, Wetherell reported finding

footprints of a large four-legged animal. In response, the *Daily Mail* carried the dramatic headline: “MONSTER OF LOCH NESS IS NOT LEGEND BUT A FACT.” Scores of tourists descended on Loch Ness and sat in boats or deck chairs waiting for an appearance by the beast. Plaster casts of the footprints were sent to the British Natural History Museum, which reported that the tracks were that of a hippopotamus, specifically one hippopotamus foot, probably stuffed. The hoax temporarily deflated Loch Ness Monster mania, but stories of sightings continued.

A famous 1934 photograph seemed to show a dinosaur-like creature with a long neck emerging out of the murky waters, leading some to speculate that “Nessie” was a solitary survivor of the long-extinct plesiosaurs. The aquatic plesiosaurs were thought to have died off with the rest of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. Loch Ness was frozen solid during the recent ice ages, however, so this creature would have had to have made its way up the River Ness from the sea in the past 10,000 years. And the plesiosaurs, believed to be cold-blooded, would not long survive in the frigid waters of Loch Ness. More likely, others suggested, it was an archeocyte, a primitive whale with a serpentine neck that is thought to have been extinct for 18 million years. Skeptics argued that what people were seeing in Loch Ness were “seiches”—oscillations in the water surface caused by the inflow of cold river water into the slightly warmer loch.

Amateur investigators kept an almost constant vigil, and in the 1960s several British universities launched expeditions to Loch Ness, using sonar to search the deep. Nothing conclusive was found, but in each expedition the sonar operators detected large, moving underwater objects they could not explain. In 1975, Boston’s Academy of Applied Science combined sonar and underwater photography in an expedition to Loch Ness. A photo resulted that, after enhancement, appeared to show the giant flipper of a plesiosaur-like creature. Further sonar expeditions in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in more tantalizing, if inconclusive, readings. Revelations in 1994 that the famous 1934 photo was a hoax hardly dampened the enthusiasm of tourists and professional and amateur investigators to the legend of the Loch Ness Monster.

El Chupacabra

[Wikipedia article "Chupacabra"](#)

The chupacabra or chupacabras is a creature said to inhabit parts of the Americas. It is associated particularly with Puerto Rico (where it was first reported), Mexico, and the United States, especially in the latter's Latin American communities.

The name which translates literally from Spanish as "goat-sucker", comes from its reported habit of attacking and drinking the blood of livestock.

Physical descriptions of the creature vary. Sightings began in Puerto Rico in the early 1990s, and have since been reported as far north as the Carolinas and as far south as Chile.

Though some argue that the chupacabra may be a real creature, mainstream scientists and experts generally contend that the chupacabra is a legendary creature, or a type of urban legend.

History

The legend of los Chupacabras began in about 1992, when Puerto Rican newspapers *El Vocero* and *El Nuevo Dia* began reporting the killings of many different types of animals, such as birds, horses, and as its name implies, goats. At the time it was known as *El Vampiro de Moca* since some of the first killings occurred in the small town of Moca. While at first it was suspected that the killings were done randomly by some members of a satanic cult, eventually these killings spread around the island, and many farms reported loss of animal life. The killings had one pattern in common: each of the animals found dead had two punctured holes around their necks.

Soon after the animal deaths in Puerto Rico, other animal deaths were reported in other countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, Brazil, the United States and, most notably, Mexico.

Both in Puerto Rico and Mexico, El Chupacabra gained urban legend status.

Chupacabras stories began to be released several times in American and Hispanic



newscasts across the United States, and chupacabras merchandise, such as t-shirts and baseball hats, was sold.

The chupacabra is generally treated as a product of mass hysteria, though the animal mutilations are sometimes real. Like many cases of such mutilations, however, it is been argued that they are often not as mysterious as they might first appear.

Sightings

Certain South American rain forest natives believe in the "mosquito-man", a mythical creature of their folklore that pre-dates modern chupacabras sightings. The mosquito-man sucks the blood from animals through his long nose, like a big mosquito. Some say mosquito-man and chupacabras are one and the same.

Notable sightings in the United States include one reported by multiple eye-witnesses in Calaveras County, California, and at a recent birthday celebration of a Development Team member of a local charity in Houston, Texas. According to these reports, the creature was sighted for the first time in the early to mid 1990s, harming animals of different species - although it is now thought that people did this themselves.

In July of 2004, a rancher near San Antonio, Texas, killed a hairless, dog-like creature (the Elmendorf Creature) that was attacking his livestock. It was later determined to be a canine (most likely a coyote) of some sort with demodectic mange. In October of 2004, two animals which closely resemble the Elmendorf creature were observed in the same area. The first was dead, and the second was noticed by a local zoologist who was called to identify the animal while she was traveling to the location where the first was found. Specimens were studied by biologists in Texas; the creatures are thought to have been canines of undetermined species with skin problems and facial deformities. El Chupacabra has often been spotted in Michigan, a recent sighting occurring in Grand Haven. A forty-two year old man said he saw it suck the blood out of a cat.

A famous appearance in the city of Varginha, Brazil, (see Varginha incident) is sometimes attributed to the chupacabras, the phenomenon is more frequently associate with extraterrestrials. In 1997, was an explosion of Chupacabra cases in Brazil, were reported in Brazilian newspapers, one report coming from police officer, who claimed to get a nauseous feeling when he saw a dog-like chupacabra in a tree.

Recently, there has been a spate of El Chupacabra sightings in the United States, specifically in the suburbs of Washington DC and outside of the Philadelphia area. However, controversy exists whether these Chupacabra sightings are legitimate; some contend El Chupacabra is simply a beagle named Sophie Peanuts.

Supposed appearances

Descriptions of the physical appearance of each specimen can resemble descriptions of other specimens, or differ from other descriptions. These creatures' different incarnations are described in details that make it impossible that these different descriptions are the result of conflicting perceptions. Therefore, the Chupacabra may be several species, or several breeds of one or more species. Although they have different appearances, Chupacabras are typically 3 ft. (1 m) or taller, they are roughly humanoid in shape as they are bipedal with 2 arms, and are described as otherworldly creatures. Usually, Chupacabras are said to appear in three specific forms:

- The first and most common: a lizard-like being, appearing to have leathery or scaly greenish-gray skin and sharp spines or quills running down its back. It stands approximately 3 to 4 feet (1 to 1.2 m) high, and stands and hops in a similar fashion as a kangaroo. In at least one sighting, the creature hopped 20 feet (6 m). This variety is said to have a dog or panther-like nose and face, a forked tongue protruding from it, large fangs, and is said to hiss and screech when alarmed, as well as to leave a sulfuric stench behind.
- The second variety appears to bear a resemblance to a wallaby and a dog standing on its hind legs. It stands and hops as a kangaroo, and it has coarse fur with greyish facial hair. The head is similar to a dog's, and its mouth has large teeth.
- The third form is simply that of a strange breed of wild dog that is mostly hairless, has a pronounced spinal ridge, unusually pronounced eye sockets, teeth, and claws, but is otherwise a typical canine. This animal is said to be the result of interbreeding between several populations of wild dogs, though enthusiasts claim

that it might be an example of a dog-like reptile. The account during the year 2001 in Nicaragua of a chupacabras corpse being found supports the conclusion that it is simply a strange breed of wild dog. The alleged corpse of the animal was found in Tolapa, Nicaragua, and forensically analyzed at UNAN-Leon. Pathologists at the University found that it was just an unusual-looking dog. There are very striking morphological differences between different breeds, from which wild dogs generally descend. These can easily account for the strange characteristics.

Some reports claim the chupacabra's red eyes have the ability to hypnotize and paralyze their prey—the prey animal is mentally stunned, allowing the chupacabras to suck the animal's blood at its leisure. The effect is similar to the bite of the vampire bat or certain snakes or spiders that stun their prey with venom. Unlike conventional predators, the chupacabras sucks all the animal's blood (and sometimes organs) through a single hole or two holes.

Theories

The Chupacabra is also a center of theories of sorts.

- It is described as being like gargoyles, and it has been theorized that the creatures were seen in Medieval Europe. The theory states gargoyles were carved to resemble them, to keep the public afraid of any place with gargoyles.
- It is also a theory that Chupacabras are alien creatures. Chupacabras are widely described as otherworldly, and on a certain witness report, NASA may be involved. The witness reported that NASA passed through an area in Latin America, with a trailer that was thought to contain an incarcerated creature.

The Colossal Octopus

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The remains of a colossal octopus at St. Augustine.

Known varieties of octopus range in size from a circumference of a few inches to as large as 23 feet. There is some evidence that, deep in the sea, there lives an unknown species of octopus that can grow to over a hundred feet across and weigh 10 tons.

The octopus is a distant cousin of the squid and both belong to a group of animals called cephalopods. Both are invertebrates, that is they have no backbone, and each have multiple arms, lined with suckers, that allow the creatures to hold fast to prey or other objects. Both are fairly intelligent, with large dark eyes. Both are carnivorous.

Squid have ten appendages (two tentacles and ten arms), though, while the octopus has only eight. Squid are also thought to spend most of their time in the mid-waters while the octopus is a bottom dweller using it's arms to move from rock to rock. Finally, while the squid has a reputation for aggression, the octopus has a more shy and retiring disposition.

Not that octopi are entirely harmless. When angered they can be dangerous to both swimmers and divers. With their strong, long arms they can hold a man underwater until he drowns.

The giant squid is a known creature and they have been seen at sea. Several dead, or nearly dead, animals have been found in the shallows or beached. In contrast only one colossal octopus carcass has ever been found and it was, and still is, surrounded in controversy.

The story starts in November of 1896 when two boys cycling along the beach south of St. Augustine, Florida, came across the body of an enormous creature that had been washed up by the tide. Dr. DeWitt Webb, a local amateur naturalist and President of the St. Augustine Historical Society, took an interest in the remains. After an examination of the mutilated and decaying body he believed that he'd discovered the carcass of a huge octopus.

The portion of the creature that remained, the body minus the arms, was eighteen feet in length and ten feet wide. Parts of arms, unattached to the body, stretched as long as 36 feet with a diameter of 10 inches. Dr. Webb estimated weight at four or five tons.

Realizing this was an important find Webb wrote to Yale Professor Addison Verrill, a leading expert on cephalopods, about the creature:

"You may be interested to know of the body of an immense Octopus thrown ashore some miles south of this city. Nothing but the stump of the arm remains, as it had evidently been dead for some time before washed ashore."

Based on photographs sent by Webb, Verrill concluded that the creature was indeed a colossal octopus that might have had a diameter of one-hundred and fifty feet when living. Strangely enough, despite the importance of the find, Dr. Verrill, nor any other scientist, traveled to St. Augustine to view the carcass in person.

Webb finally sent Verrill a sample of the tissue of the creature preserved in formalin. Verrill was surprised to find it had the appearance of blubber and abruptly changed his

mind stating that he now believed the creature was a whale and that the arms were not associated with the body.

The whole matter would have rested like that if it hadn't been for Forrest Wood, the director of Marine Studios (later Marineland) in Florida. Wood came across an old news story about the monster and discovered that Webb's sample was still stored at the Smithsonian Institution.

Wood persuaded the Smithsonian to let Dr. Joseph Gennaro, of the University of Florida, to take some of the samples for analysis. Gennaro immediately recognized that the material was not blubber and examination under a microscope showed the tissue was more similar to octopus than whale or squid. Further tests later confirmed this conclusion.

So it seems that Webb was right and Verrill changed his mind too quickly - maybe.



Dewitt with his carcass.

The scientific community has not yet accepted Gennaro's conclusions, though a later analysis by Roy P. Mackal, a biologist with the University of Chicago, agreed that the material was "not blubber," but consistent with a cephalopod (octopus or squid).

In 1995, four scientists set out to take another look at samples of the St. Augustine carcass. Their results, published in the *Biological Bulletin*, disputes the other findings. These researchers looked at the amino acids in the remains and reached the conclusion they did not come from an invertebrate. They concluded the material was most likely the remains of a whale skin.

Other writers and scientists have disputed *these* findings noticing that it would be extremely difficult to remove the skin from a whale, intact, and get it to solidify into a three-foot-thick solid mass as was observed on the beach at St. Augustine.

How come more colossal octopi haven't been found? Speculation is that as a bottom dweller the colossal octopus bodies, upon death, stay on the bottom and decay leaving few clues for scientists to find. Perhaps as we start to explore the bottom of the sea further we may come face to face with a colossal octopus and look into his huge unblinking eyes.