



Al Hodgson stopped by for a visit recently

www.bigfootdiscoveryproject.com

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Message from the Curator

Now that we are approaching our seventh year of full-time bigfoot research, I thought it might be useful to recap the highs and lows of this endeavor. In the first place I had no idea how competitive the bigfoot research community has come to be when I launched this project. If you peruse the various websites you'll find many examples of this. One group claims to be "the real bigfoot hunters" another boasts it is "the most professional Bigfoot research organization in the world." On the various forums and message boards you'll find countless ad hominem attacks against just about every celebrated bigfoot researcher out there. If you are making any headway at all and getting talked about online, there will be other interested parties out there making personal attacks or suggesting you are a hoaxer or "in it for the money." In case you haven't noticed, there have been dozens of new bigfoot books published since the turn of the century,

and there are soon to be competing reality TV shows depicting bigfoot hunters. There has never been more interest in bigfoot than there is right now.

Its interesting how many researchers will claim they're certain bigfoot exists in specific areas (like the Pacific Northwest for example) but then strike out at another researcher who suggests there might also be bigfoot in New England. There is also a great range in the number of hypotheses put forth to explain bigfoot. I look at it this way: Bigfoot exists primarily in the form of anecdotes or eye witness accounts (we certainly don't have one in captivity) most of which have been compiled since the early '50's. These accounts now range into the tens of thousands, from all over the world in oral and written histories from countless individuals who claim to have seen or otherwise experienced a hairy bipedal primate in wilderness areas (as well as in rural settings where people live.)

The bigfoot reports break down into three distinct research arenas (referring back to the origin of all reports—alleged eyewitnesses):

1. The Mythical Bigfoot— includes legends, traveler's tales, Jungian archetypes, imagination, Munchausenism (tall tales to gain attention), hoaxes, misidentification, psychoses and mass hysteria.

This is the type of bigfoot we can all agree on, scientists and nonscientists alike; these are the type of reports the skeptics concentrate on to show bigfoot is not real.

2. The Biological Bigfoot (Flesh & Blood) — includes stories of close encounters, anomalous calls in the night, and habituation backed by evidentiary materials such as footprints, hairs, scat plus corollary evidence such as alleged shelters and trail markers.

This is the one the majority of researchers are interested in, as it can be proven with scientific methodology, if it is indeed real, through diligent research.

3. The Paranormal Bigfoot— incorporates telepathy, invisibility, shape-shifting, channeling, interdimensional travel, and can involve being seen in and about UFOs.

This type of bigfoot report has inspired many science-fiction characters such as Ewoks and Wookies, but has been traditionally ignored by most researchers due to the difficulty involved in obtaining proof.



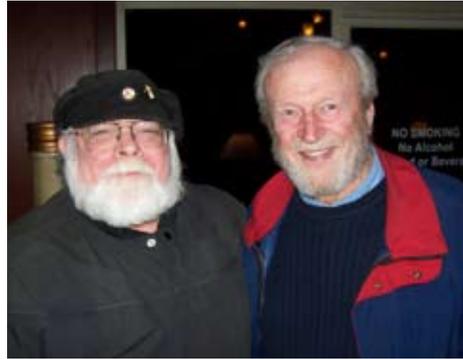
An example of one of our better attended meetings from last year.

Among the “pro”(its real) bigfoot crowd, researchers have traditionally stayed with the bipedal hominoid theory, and tend to argue whether or not its specifically an ape or some sort of aboriginal human. The “con” (bigfoot is not real) side of the argument has tended to suggest all bigfoot evidence is fake, and all eye witnesses are either mistaken or lying.

.The paranormalists are largely ignored by both sides: scientists in general will not accept anything as real until it can be replicated under controlled laboratory conditions, the bigfooters tend to put down the paranormal because they don't want to “explain one mystery with another.” They suggest other bigfooters who fall into this line of thinking are giving up too soon by invoking the paranormal as a last resort because they already are convinced that bigfoot does exist and since the proof still eludes us, they MUST BE PARANORMAL. So there are all these various hypotheses floating around out there, with each proponent decrying the other guy's theory is wrong. What if in actuality they are all correct, in one instance or another? WHAT IF nobody is totally correct, but everybody has some of the truth, and ALL THE ABOVE TYPES OF BIGFOOT DO EXIST IN REALITY? They all most certainly do exist in the minds of certain witnesses.

Anthropologists have maintained a dogma for quite some time that there have never been any apes in the Western Hemisphere other than Homo sapiens. Yet when you enter into cryptoprimatology, the first thing you notice is that these unknown apes are ubiquitous. They're everywhere there is ample undeveloped forest, water and food, including North, Central and South America. Indigenous peoples from these areas have described apelike beings living in the jungles and forests of the Western Hemisphere for thousands of years, yet our scientists stick by the dogma mentioned above. We know there are and have been a multitude of apes all over the Eastern Hemisphere since the Miocene, and before that there were

the precursors to the monkeys--prosimians--- all over the planet in both hemispheres. So why didn't any wood apes or jungle apes evolve from monkeys here in the West? Well maybe they did and “science” is just in denial of their existence just as they were once in denial of the existence of the modern Gorilla, Giant Panda and Duck-billed Platypus.



John Bindernagel and I discussed the videos from Kentucky, which he said were approaching 40 in number last April in Port Angeles, WA.

We are now in the midst of what is purported to be a “breakthrough” in the ongoing discovery of bigfoot.



Melba Ketchum and Adrian Erickson say they have proof of a flesh and blood bigfoot. Ketchum has been working with various tissues and body parts that

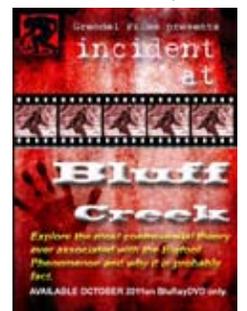
were supplied to her by a number of bigfoot researchers in her forensics lab (DNA Diagnostics, Inc.) and is preparing a paper which we hope will prove that some bigfoot do exist, based on DNA sequencing. This is the first time in the history of bigfoot awareness that so many researchers have come together to pool their findings in a single lab. Erickson has assembled a research team including an Ivy league evolutionary biologist, to attempt documentation of several bigfoot habituations brought to their attention by



experiencers in several parts of North America. Erickson has supplied some of the biological specimens being studied by Ketchum, and claims to have upwards of forty video clips depicting these beings in the wild. Incidentally, there have been a number of recently published books on bigfoot habituation, that further backs up these studies. So we appear to be on the edge of officially discovering some flesh & blood bigfoot. What's ironic about this is the fact that a number of authors have recently come out with books that espouse the paranormal bigfoot, and a number of on-the-fence researchers now seem to be moving in that direction as well.

So what else is going on? Conspiracy theories. MK Davis and some others, encouraged by some purported film evidence combined with some extreme historical theories, has suggested that there was a mass murder of Sasquatches perpetrated in Bluff Creek in 1967 by a number of Canadian researchers in cahoots with a couple of the early California researchers, and that this has been kept secret now for over 40 years. So why did these men—who spent the greater part of their adult lives proclaiming the reality of bigfoot and attempting to convince others of its reality—hide the ultimate evidence? Because after killing several in self-defense they discovered they

were human, and opted to hide the evidence for fear of prosecution. So they have continued their research, insisting that bigfoot is an ape, all the while keeping this “dark secret.” One of these men was just honored with an event celebrating his lifetime achievement as a bigfoot research pioneer! Remember what I said about the bickering and name calling? Some researchers are accusing others of murder and suggesting they must be liars if they won't submit to lie detector tests. Does it get any more extreme than this?



I want to make some predictions as to where this is all headed, at least in the near future, but first I want to point out a few scientific discoveries that have occurred in the last decade which lend credence to the subject at hand.

1.) On a small island in Indonesia called Flores some paleoanthropologists have excavated the skeletal remains of a dozen Hobbit-like individuals who were all diminutive in size (a little over three feet in height). They have named them *Homo floresiensis*, and consider them to be another species of human.

2.) Recently the entire genome of *Neandertal* was sequenced, and comparison with various haplogroups of living humans indicates that a great many of us share up to 4% of our DNA with *Neandertal*. In other words, our *Homo sapiens* ancestors sometimes mated with these "cave men."

(See illustration below about *Homo neandertalis*)

3.) For decades people indigenous to certain parts of the Congo region in Central Africa have spoken of apes they refer to as "lion killers." Said to be chimpanzees the size of gorillas, these apes were the subject of a Michael Crichton book *Congo* which was considered to be fiction when it was made into a film. Now, and for over two years a team of scientists have been studying these chimps. They are named for the territory, "Bili apes."

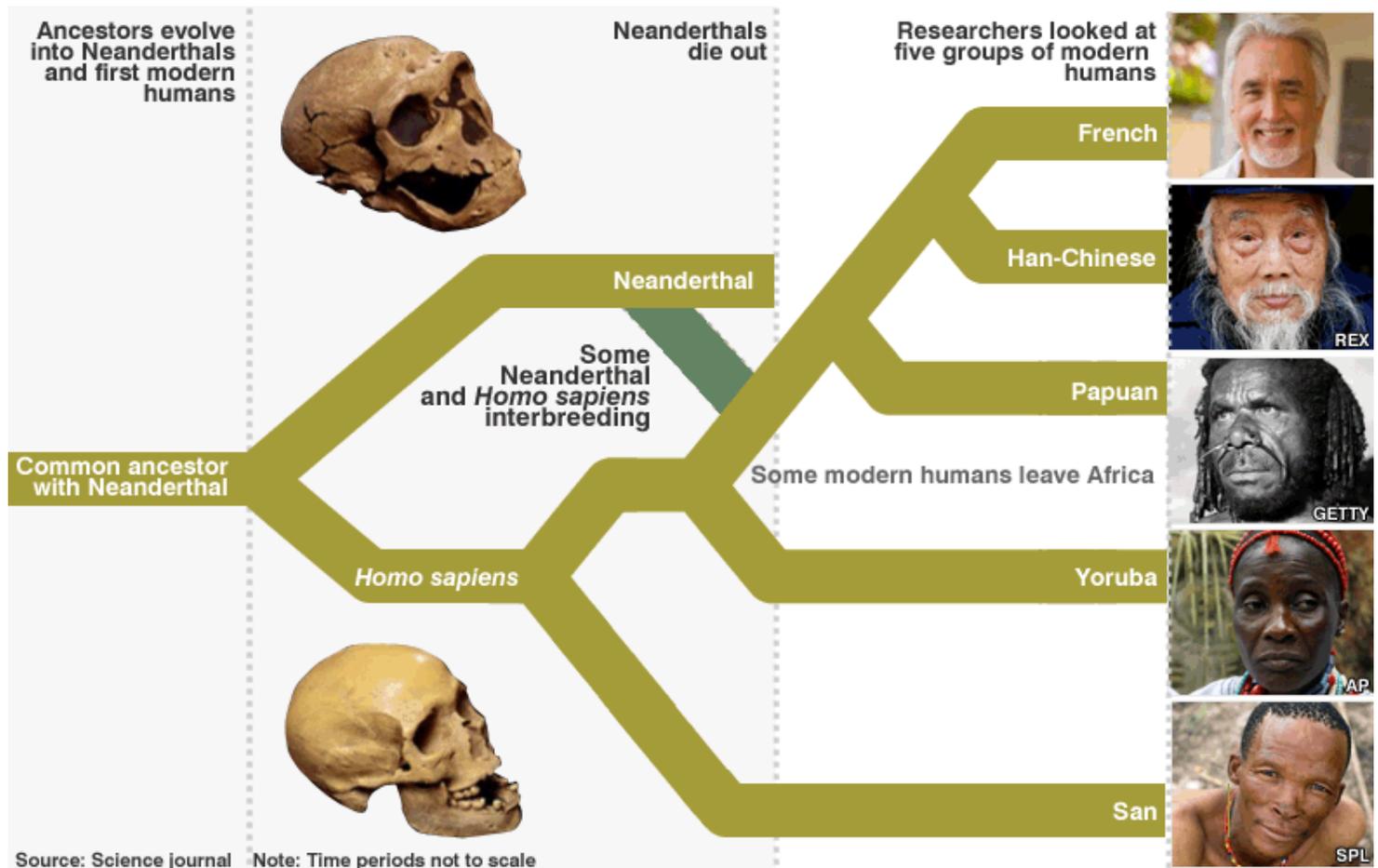
4.) Recently paleoanthropologists discovered a finger bone and a tooth in a cave in the Altai Mountains of Siberia which belong to a previously unknown human type dubbed the "Denisovans," (the name of the cave in which the bones were found). The end result of all this is that most scientists, who once agreed that by 40,000 y.a. there were only two human species still alive on the planet (*Homo sapiens* & *Homo neandertalis*),

now think there were as many as five humans co-existing as recently as 30,000 y.a. (The first two plus *Homo erectus*, *Homo floresiensis* and the Denisovans). I would point out that at least one scientist has admitted these discoveries do seem to add a whole lot more plausibility to the bigfoot phenomenon being grounded in reality.

My prediction is that there are a number of hominoids that account for mystery primate sightings in the biological arena. Bear in mind this is a global phenomenon that has been going on since the beginning of history. Some are gracile and some are robust, they come in a wide variety of human hair colors, some have language and some don't, and some propagate via inbreeding at least part of the time.

In my opinion they are as follows:

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A. Relict Humans (an ancestral species of human that did not become extinct) This would be a full blooded Homo ancestor such as Meganthropus or Heidelbergensis, for example or another unknown human species

B. Throwback Human Hybrids (x chromosomes= Homo sapiens; Y chromosome= Relict human)

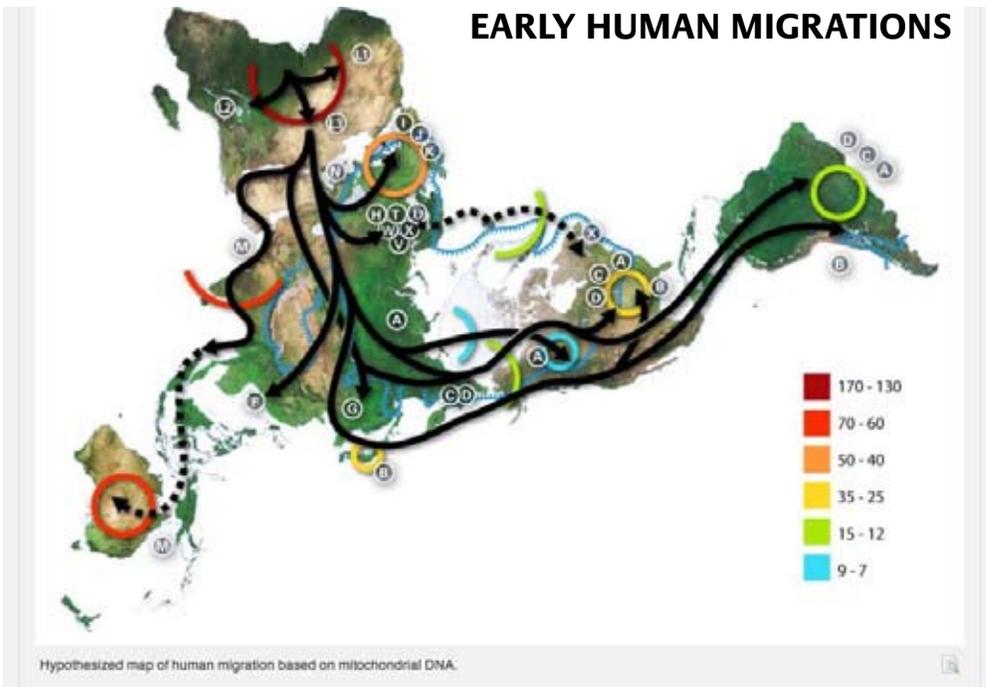
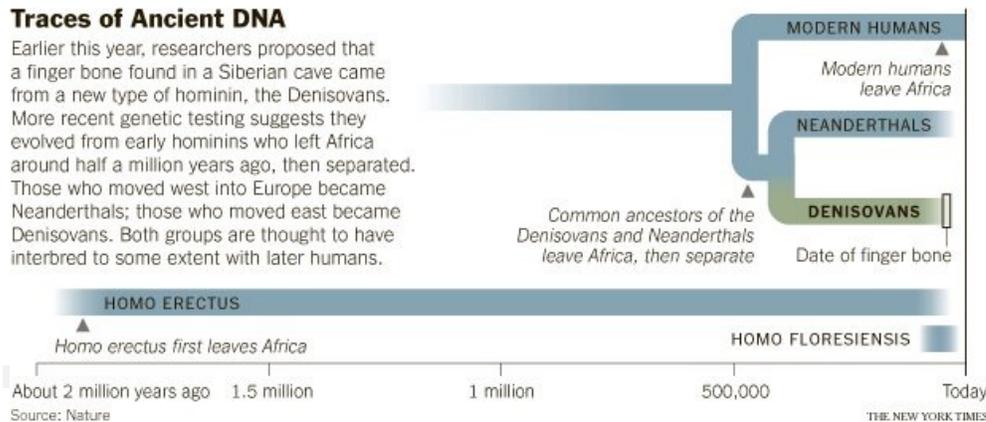
C. Feral Humans (x = Homo sapiens; Y = Homo sapiens) totally off the grid

D. Known Apes seen out of place geographically (chimp, orang, etc.)

E. Cryptid Apes (Contemporary descendent of Gigantopithecus or other unknown bipedal ape)

Traces of Ancient DNA

Earlier this year, researchers proposed that a finger bone found in a Siberian cave came from a new type of hominin, the Denisovans. More recent genetic testing suggests they evolved from early hominins who left Africa around half a million years ago, then separated. Those who moved west into Europe became Neanderthals; those who moved east became Denisovans. Both groups are thought to have interbred to some extent with later humans.



Map of early human migrations according to mitochondrial population genetics (numbers are millennia before present). Early human migrations began when **Homo erectus** first migrated out of Africa over the Levantine corridor and Horn of Africa to Eurasia about 1.8 million years ago, a migration probably sparked by the development of language. The expansion of H. erectus out of Africa was followed by that of **Homo antecessor** into Europe around 800,000 years ago, followed by **Homo heidelbergensis** around 600,000 years ago, where they probably evolved to become the **Neanderthals**.

Homo sapiens evolved in Africa up to 200,000 years ago and reached the Near East around 70 millennia ago. From the Near East, these populations spread east to South Asia by 50 millennia ago, and on to Australia by 40 millennia ago, when for the first time H. sapiens reached territory never reached by H. erectus. Europe was reached by H. sapiens around 40 millennia ago, replacing the **Neanderthal** population. East Asia was reached by 30 millennia ago.

The date of migration to North America is disputed; it may have taken place around 30 millennia ago, or only considerably later, around 14 millennia ago. The Pacific islands of Polynesia began to be colonized around 1300 BC, and completely colonized by around 900 AD. The descendants of Polynesians left Taiwan around 5200 years ago.

I'm guessing the current DNA sequencing being undertaken in Texas and elsewhere will lend support to several parts of the above theory once all the samples are tested. I suspect that there will be a knee-jerk negative reaction from many researchers, especially those whose pet theory may not have been proven yet in the DNA samples tested at the point Ketchum's paper and Erickson's project are released to the public. Skeptics will be looking for signs of hoax or error and latching on to the most surprising aspects of the DNA results and blowing them out of proportion as ad hominem attacks. For example, if some of the "proof" indicates feral humans are involved, scoftics will say things like "We told you so, Bigfoot is just an inbred hillbilly, not a bipedal giant ape." Bigfoot, as I have suggested, could be both; proof of one hypothesis does not automatically rule out all others, including hypotheses made by skeptics.

Many individuals and groups of researchers have contributed biological specimens for testing, which means many of the most active researchers will be part of the proof of discovery. I hope so, as this will help even out the playing field so we can all help solve the mystery through increased cooperation. Once we've proven even one type of mystery primate exists, academia and the media will hopefully take the phenomenon more seriously and funding will be made available to qualified research groups. Then we can move on to solving many more such mysteries of nature and preternature.

--Michael Rugg

