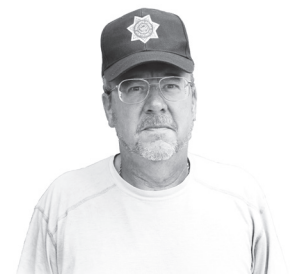


Cryptids of Colorado

Probably the most famous cryptid is Bigfoot, who occasionally visits us in Colorado. Here is a picture of him from the film taken by Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin. (Courtesy image)



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

A cryptid is a creature that some people believe exists or have possibly seen, but that has never been proven to exist. Leprechauns are a prime example. We lived next door to an Irish family when I was just a wee lad. This family had moved to the US from Ireland sometime in the 1950s.

They had 3 kids that I was friends with for many years. The entire family believed in leprechauns and claimed their grandfather had seen one once in the old country. I never had reason to doubt them on their story, but I did not look for leprechauns on my way to school.

I do recall the hysteria the country went through during the summer of 1972 over the famous

Missouri Monster, or Momo as he was called. Momo was reported as being an ape like creature, 7 feet tall, with a pumpkin like head and orange glowing eyes.

Sightings of Momo were reported in Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, and along the Illinois River in Illinois. It came to a head when a local fire chief saw the creature in his headlights along a creek bed. It led to a 20-man posse being assembled, and with torches in hand, took to the woods to find the beast. I suspect most of these sightings were alcohol induced as no creature was ever found.

Colorado has its own share of cryptids, starting with the Navajo skin-walkers from the Four Corners region. A skin-walker is a harmful witch that can turn into, possess, or disguise themselves as an animal or a human form. Skin-walkers must commit an evil act, such as murder of a family member, in order to make the transformation and gain the evil knowledge and abilities of a skin-walker.

In the 1970's, when cattle and livestock mutilations were oc-

curing with alarming frequency, skin-walkers were a prime suspect. Before you scoff, know that then Senator Floyd Haskell summoned the FBI to get involved. Not much ever became of it, and as far as I know, the skin-walkers are still on the loose.

When you are in the mountains, pay attention to hillsides with a slope exceeding 45 degree or more because that is where the Southwest Colorado Slide Rock Bolter lives. This creature has a hooked tail and feeds on tourists. I am not sure how he identifies the tourists, perhaps by the "I went to Colorado" t-shirts.

It is said that the slide rock bolter was killed in an explosion after a local forest ranger tricked it into colliding into a barrel of gun powder and fulminated caps, which took out half the buildings in the town of Rico, as well as sending the bolter to the after-life. Perhaps the bolter is gone now, but there might be more than one.

If you ever take a flight out of Denver's DIA airport, beware of the lizard people that live deep underground beneath the airport.

These lizard people are blamed for everything from delayed flights to lost luggage but should not be taken lightly.

Lizard people have a plan to take over the world, apparently one airport at a time. DIA has made nervous jokes about the lizard people in an attempt to calm the public's fears, but there are many who are still on edge. If these lizard people really want to take over airports, there are a few I would offer up to them.

No report of indigenous cryptids would be complete without mentioning the Yeti. Yeti, also called Sasquatch or Bigfoot is a creature with characteristics of ape and man and reaching enormous sizes. It is reported that Bigfoot stands 8 feet tall and weighs over 500 pounds. He is a very hairy and shy creature, trying to avoid contact with man at all costs. Harry, from "Harry and the Henderson's," is probably pretty close to what Yeti looks like.

Footprints are about the only recorded evidence found of Bigfoot's existence. Those footprints can reach 24 inches in length and 8 inches wide. There have been

many plaster casts made of those prints around the country.

There are about a thousand sighting of Bigfoot each year around the country. About 1/3 are in the Pacific Northwest, with the remainder scattered about the United States and British Columbia. About a dozen sightings are reported each year in Colorado.

One such report comes from Darrel Whitaker, 57, of Glenwood Springs. Apparently, he was walking to his hunting cabin to assess any damage it may have sustained over the winter when a large "gorilla like" creature dropped from a tree in front of him. Whitaker claims the creature punched him in the face.

Whitaker described the Sasquatch as being 8 feet tall, and that the punch knocked him out cold. While he was trying to recover from the punch, the creature began howling and tried to remove Whitaker's clothes.

The report Whitaker gave, detailed how the creature tore his pants and was tearing through his underwear, when he stabbed the creature with a hunting knife in

the shoulder, causing him to run away. The incident was reported to the Glenwood Springs Police Department and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Offices, and an investigation is ongoing. So much for Sasquatch having a political career.

I have never seen a cryptid of any type, anyplace in the world I have travelled, but that doesn't mean they don't exist. Like the mother of the Irish kids that lived next door to us said about the elusive Leprechaun, "Sure, there is no such thing as a Leprechaun, but we all know they are there."

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press, Delta County Independent, and several other newspapers, as well as a feature writer for several saltwater fishing magazines. He is an avid hunter and world class saltwater angler, who travels around the world in search of adventure and serves as a Director and Public Information Officer for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. Personal email is elkhunter77@icloud.com For information about the Posse call 970-765-7033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org

CPW is accepting statewide applications for the Sportsperson's Roundtable through Nov. 8

SPECIAL TO THE MDP

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is accepting applications from hunters, anglers and trappers from across Colorado to join the Sportsperson's Roundtable. The application period is open today through Nov. 8, 2024.

Volunteering for the Sportsperson's Roundtable is a great opportunity to share insights with CPW on important wildlife management and recreation issues.

Roundtable members serve two-year terms. Responsibilities of members include:

Participating in half-to full-day in-person meetings twice a year and occasional virtual meetings. Travel to in-person meetings is at the member's expense. Attending periodic regional CPW sportsperson's meetings

and other meetings with hunters, anglers and trappers in your area. Maintaining strong relationships with fellow sportspeople and staying informed about current events and emerging issues. Identifying topics for discussion at Roundtable meetings. Actively sharing information and ideas with Roundtable members and CPW staff during and between meetings. Providing your contact information on the CPW Roundtable webpage and being available to sportspersons around the state to discuss information pertinent to the Roundtable.

CPW aims to maintain a geographically diverse membership on the Roundtable with representation from around the state. Representatives must reside in the region they represent

(CPW Regions Map). The Sportsperson's Roundtable is currently accepting applications from sportspeople in all CPW regions. To learn more, visit EngageCPW.

How to Apply
Fill out the Sportsperson's Roundtable Membership Application by Nov. 8, 2024.

CPW staff will make selections and notify you whether you are selected. For more information, email Jonathan Boydston at jonathan.boydston@state.co.us.

Sportsperson's Roundtable

Hunters and anglers are vitally important to CPW and the successful management of Colorado's wildlife. Sportspersons are directly affected by the agency's fish and wildlife management decisions and provide much of the state's wildlife con-



Volunteering for the Sportsperson's Roundtable is a great opportunity to share insights with CPW on important wildlife management and recreation issues. (Courtesy image/CPW)

servation funding. CPW encourages effective channels for consulting with the state's hunters and anglers through the Sportsperson's Roundtable.

The Sportsperson's Roundtable comprises members representing a

broad range of hunting, fishing and trapping interests in Colorado. These interests include but are not limited to, small and big game hunting, sport fishing, outfitting and other sportsperson-dependent businesses.

The Roundtable meets in person twice a year to help the agency by sharing information, discussing important topics and identifying emerging issues. For more information about the Sportsperson's Roundtable, visit EngageCPW.