



The Unexplained Sneak Peek #1

I have to admit that I am excited to be bringing you The Unexplained: The Chronicles of the Foundation for Paranormal Investigation. H.P. Lovecraft once said that New England is the spookiest place in the United States, and having lived there all my life, I agree. I have always lived near places that would make the toughest of people shiver and hesitate to go out at night. I myself have seen many things that strike of the paranormal, and although I have come to label most of them “naturally occurring” or explainable, some still haunt me to this day.

I want you all to share my excitement for The Unexplained and very real setting it describes. To do this, I will occasionally release Sneak Peeks like the one you are reading now in order to whet your appetite and give you a good glimpse at the kind of things you will see in the pages of The Unexplained. So, turn out the lights, light a candle and read the pages of this PDF. I hope you enjoy it!

— Bradford Younie, President of Carnivore Games

A Few Words About The Sneak Peek

The following pages contain a small section of the The Unexplained roleplaying game. What is presented here is pretty nearly what will actually be in the final product. However, since this is released early in the development of the product, it is quite possible that some of the details and layout may change by the time it appears in the book. Still, it is not likely that much will change, so you can consider this an excellent peek at what the final product will look like.

The section below is taken from the Cryptozoology section of The Unexplained, and details what the fictional Foundation for Paranormal Investigation knows about Bigfoot. All of the information is based completely on actual sightings and evidence, and is as much a work of non-fiction as any other book on the subject.

The game statistics for Bigfoot are meant to be treated as a template of what Bigfoot might be, based on the description and evidence detailed in this section. The Game Master may feel free to change anything she wishes to fit her plot, or to ensure that the cast is surprised and mystified by the creature when they encounter it.

You can use this Bigfoot section in your games right now if you wish. It is fully compatible with the Now Playing roleplaying game from Carnivore Games, but can also be used as-is in any Fudge-based game.

The Cryptozoology Section of The Unexplained

The The Unexplained book is divided into several sections, where each section has several related chapters. Each section represents a different topic within the game. Some of these sections are about the game rules, such as “Creating Characters,” and “Playing the Game.” Other sections in the book are about a different categories of paranormal phenomena. These will have names like “Ghosts and Spirits,” “Parapsychology,” “Magic & Voodoo,” “Unidentified Flying Objects,” and “Cryptozoology.” The last of these categories, Cryptozoology, is where this Sneak Peek fits.

Cryptozoology comes from the Greek words *kryptos*, meaning “hidden,” *zoon*, meaning “animal,” and *logia*, meaning “study.” So, cryptozoology literally means the study of hidden animals. By “hidden” we mean animals that may truly exist, but have thus far avoided scientific discovery. This means that although many people may have seen them, they have never yet been proven. You must keep in mind that this only counts for creatures that are believed to possibly exist. This means that there has at least been a little evidence to suggest that they exist. Creatures like vampires and werewolves simply do not have enough evidence to suggest that they might exist. They exist, thus far, only in the realm of legend and folklore. If, however, some actual evidence were to surface regarding one of them, then they might cross over into the realm of cryptozoology.

So, cryptozoology, although not fully respected by all branches of the scientific community, is a science. And those who study it follow scientific protocol in their research and investigations. This Sneak Peek covers one of my favorite cryptids: Bigfoot. I researched literally hundreds of actual sighting reports when building the following description of the creature, so the result is an animal that is as accurate and as close to real as it can get!

So, without further ado, here’s the The Unexplained Sneak Peek #1...



Bigfoot

Game Statistics

Brawn: Great
Agility: Superb
Stamina: Superb
Reasoning: Mediocre
Perception: Great
Will: Fair

Size: Large

Skills: Area Knowledge (Good), Brawl (Good), Climb (Mediocre), Dodge (Fair), Intimidate (Good), Jump (Fair), Run (Great), Stealth (Great).

Gifts: High Pain Threshold, Keen Sense (Hearing), Thick ribcage & bones (+2 DF)

Flaws: Hunted.

Summary

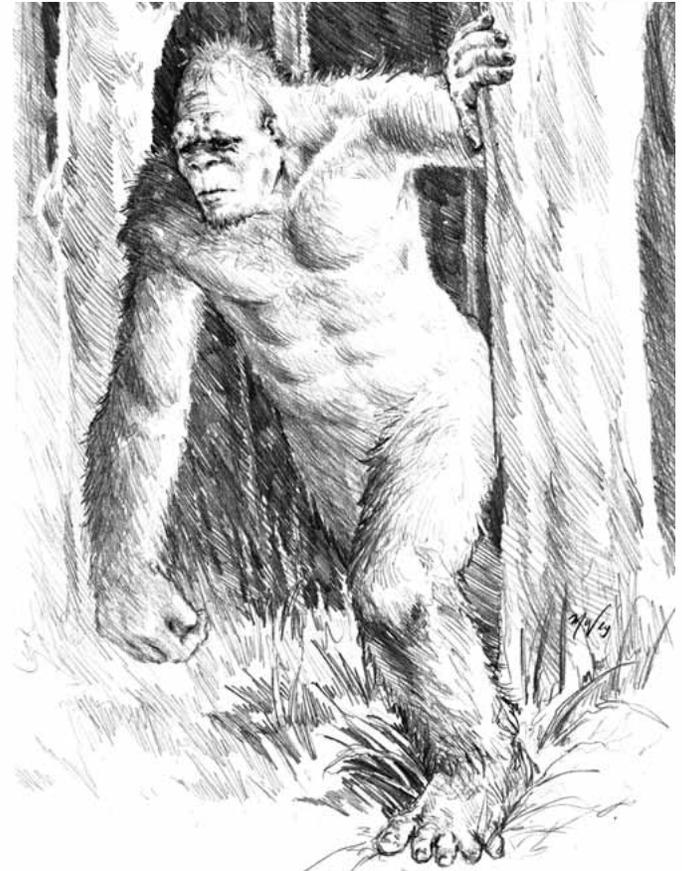
Bigfoot has been sighted frequently in the United States and Canada through the past century and before. The Salish Indians of British Columbia named the creature *Sésquac*, meaning “wild man,” which was later anglicized into *Sasquatch*. Settlers in the United States have since given it the nickname *Bigfoot*, because of the immense size of its footprints, and this name has become the more common. Throughout history, people have reported seeing a large ape-man in the forests of both North and South America. Much evidence has been found of these animals, but as impressive as it is, none of it has been able to conclusively prove Bigfoot’s existence.

Description

After compiling hundreds of sighting reports, the following description can be given. There are some conflicting descriptions, but these are surprisingly few.

Bigfoot stands anywhere from six and a half to nine feet tall and weighs anywhere from five hundred to one thousand pounds. It walks upright, but with a hunch. It has no visible neck, and along with the hunch, it appears as though it’s always looking downward, like it’s sullen. Its arms are abnormally long, hanging past its knees. It swings its arms while it walks. It can move very quickly, even though it appears to be moving at a leisurely pace. It has been said to move faster than a human can run. It has a pointed head, and a flat face that is more human-like than ape, with a thick, deep brow and flat, wide nose. Its shoulders are quite broad and it appears powerful. It has a relatively thin waist and long legs. Its hair is usually black or rusty brown. Occasionally, it’s reported as having red hair. The length of the hair has been reported as being three to four inches long.

Bigfoot is often reported as having a very pungent smell. It’s a kind of musk that has been described as “a cross between a skunk and a wet dog.” Not all reports include the smell, but that could be due to the direction of the wind



or other natural factors. It could be that Bigfoot does not always smell that way. For instance, it’s possible that the animal only smells bad when mating, or that the pungent odor is only produced by one gender.

There are three types of vocalizations that have been attributed to Bigfoot. One is commonly called the “Whoop-Howl.” This vocalization sounds quite ape-like, and is very loud. It sounds like a loud “whoop-whoop-whoop” noise. The second is the “Moaning-Howl”. This is a long, loud, deep moan that lasts for about six seconds, and is then repeated over and over again. When heard in the middle of the woods, it can be very eerie. The third is the worst: a loud blood-curdling scream that lasts for several seconds and is then repeated over and over. This one sounds downright angry, and never fails to fill anyone hearing it with terror. In most cases, the animal is never seen while it’s making these noises, but there have been sightings where the sound was a precursor to an actual sighting.

Habitat

Bigfoot has been sighted mostly in the Pacific Northwest of North America, primarily in British Columbia in Canada, and in both Washington and California of the United States. However, its sightings are not limited to those regions. Bigfoot has been seen throughout all of North America, from Alaska to Texas and from California to Rhode Island. There have been Bigfoot sightings in other countries, including Russia, China, and Indonesia, to name a few.



In all cases, Bigfoot is known to live deep in wooded areas, primarily in forests and mountains. Most of the sightings occur in fringe areas where sparsely inhabited rural land meets wilderness. People living down a dirt road in a wooded area have seen Bigfoot walking across their land or have heard the infamous whoop-howl. There have been many sightings of Bigfoot crossing a road from one section of woods to another.

The majority of Bigfoot sightings have been near rivers, lakes, or creeks, and in areas where yearly rainfall exceeds twenty inches.

Behavior

Not much is known about the behavior of Bigfoot. All we know is what has been described by witnesses and has been shot in the few pieces of film footage. By compiling the sightings and studying the footage, we have been able to identify the following behavioral traits:

Climate: Bigfoot tends to be more active during the colder months of the year. This could simply be that lack of food drives them farther away from the center of the forests, or it could be that they prefer this weather. All we know is that more sightings occur during the early spring, late fall, and winter.

Defense: There has been some evidence of Bigfoot being territorial. There have been reports of a Bigfoot “attack” on campers who had set up their camps close to a riverbank near the location of recent Bigfoot sightings. These attacks consist of no more than loud, ferocious screaming and waving of arms. This behavior has also been reported when witnesses get too close to a female with a young Bigfoot. There are only a few reports of this behavior, but each one shows the same behavioral pattern. Gorillas and other apes use this type of behavior when defending their young or territory. Although extremely intimidating, their intention is usually to scare off would-be attackers.

Fighting: There are very few documented cases of a Bigfoot attacking humans, and in fact, those reports tend to be less believed by experts. However, a Bigfoot is still quite likely to fight if properly provoked.

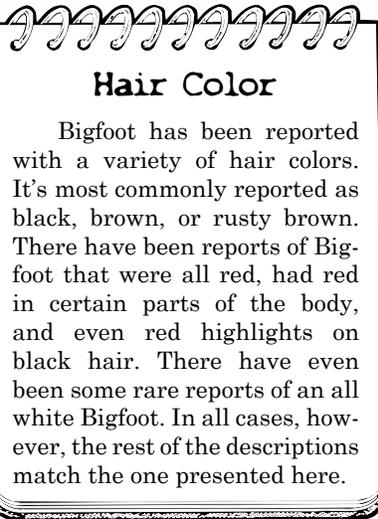
It would most likely attack like a gorilla. A gorilla has very large, sharp canines and will use them to bite and tear flesh. It may also attempt to crush and rend with its arms. Because it’s an expert climber, a gorilla will often climb up high and hurl objects at its opponent. For a gorilla, the object of a fight is to scare the opponent away. Its opponent is never “prey.”

It’s likely that a Bigfoot would fight in a similar fashion. It would start with the chest thumping and the hooting and hollering. If that fails, it will try to hurl objects to scare its opponent away. If that also fails, or if the opponent is

too close, it will then resort to its strength and attempt to crush and rend. The Bigfoot’s teeth have always been reported as “even,” which implies that they have teeth very similar to ours, except larger. For this reason, it’s doubtful that Bigfoot would use its bite as a weapon. Like gorillas, Bigfoot is not reported as having claws, so it will not rake or scratch its opponent.

Diet: It appears to be omnivorous, but mostly eating plants. It has never been seen hunting, although it has been sighted fishing with its hands. It has been known to scavenge. There have been numerous reports of a Bigfoot raiding camps and making off with all sorts of food, including cookies! These raids have never been violent, and in fact, the creatures tended to take little to no notice of the humans as they rummaged through their gear.

Humans: Bigfoot does not appear to be afraid of humans, although it does tend to keep itself isolated from them. Many sightings describe Bigfoot taking notice of the witnesses as it walks, without changing its pace or behavior at all. It’s as though the witness might as well have been a deer or any other kind of wildlife. They have been sighted crossing roads, and even when a car is driving towards it, it continues to lope along at its fast, yet casual pace.



Hair Color

Bigfoot has been reported with a variety of hair colors. It’s most commonly reported as black, brown, or rusty brown. There have been reports of Bigfoot that were all red, had red in certain parts of the body, and even red highlights on black hair. There have even been some rare reports of an all white Bigfoot. In all cases, however, the rest of the descriptions match the one presented here.

Common Sightings

Of all of the myriad sightings of Bigfoot, there are several common types of sightings. When a sighting of this type is reported, it’s important that the investigator compare the details of the sighting to the description given here. This can help to determine if the sighting might be a hoax.

Road Crossings

A very many people have reported seeing Bigfoot cross the road that they were driving on. It would emerge from the woods on one side of the road and disappear into the woods on the other. In nearly all cases, the animal paid little heed to the cars on the road and simply crossed the road at a leisurely pace that was still surprisingly fast.

Yard Crossings

Similarly to the road crossings, people who live in much wooded, rural areas have reported seeing the creature cross their yard in order to get from one part of the woods to another. Animals in the area, primarily dogs, would become very agitated and bark incessantly and try to get out of their houses or break their leash in order to chase the animal. Bigfoot’s presence has been known to agitate other domestic animals as well, but not to as great a degree. There have been some animals, such as sheep and goats, which remained calm during the creature’s appearance. In all cases, the creature paid no mind to those around it.



Vocalizations

Most often, the reports are only of the creature's vocalizations, with no actual sighting occurring. Often, these reports happen in much the same way as yard crossings. Most campers who have a Bigfoot story describe the classic whoop-howl, but never actually see the creature.

Evidence

There has been a lot of evidence collected over the decades, but it all falls into the same few categories. Most of the evidence is of footprints, but there have been hairs, feces and even rare photos and video footage as well. The following describes the legitimacy of each type of evidence found:

Footprints

Many footprint castings have been made. Some of these have been proven to be hoaxes. However, there are a number of castings that appear to be legitimate. These castings show impressions that scientists have agreed to be from an actual animal, as something that realistic would be nearly impossible to fake.

Footprints give us some evidence that a large bipedal animal has been walking in the area, but this evidence by itself is not enough to constitute proof of the animal's existence. When discovering tracks, you must follow the formal procedure for collecting track evidence (See *Track Evidence* in this chapter) in order to maximize the accuracy of the sample.

Hair

Hair can make excellent evidence. Not long ago, you needed to have a skin sample, such as from the root of the hair, but now that is not necessary. With recent DNA technology, it's possible to extract a valid sample directly from the hair itself.

So far, only one hair sample has been submitted for DNA testing that has a skin sample enough for an accurate test. This was several strands of hair that was stuck in the bark of a tree at a place where a Yeti was sighted in Bhutan. They found tracks and some strands of hair that had a bit of skin on it. The hair was examined by a British scientist who performed DNA testing. "We found some DNA in it," he said, "but we don't know what it is. It's not a human, not a bear not anything else we have so far been able to identify. It's a mystery and I never thought this would end in a mystery. We have never encountered DNA that we couldn't recognize before."

Feces

The problem with feces is that it's next to impossible to get a valid DNA sample from it. The only way is to process it when it's still steamy fresh. So far, all samples that have been brought in for testing have been too old to be useful.

Dermal Ridges

Otherwise known as fingerprints, dermal ridges can be an excellent method used for identifying whether a creature

was real or not. A primate's feet also has dermal ridges, and these prints exist in most of the footprint castings that have been taken throughout the country during the past decades. A highly respected fingerprint expert analyzed many of these footprint castings. On humans, the ridges run horizontally across the width of the foot. On primates, the ridges run diagonally. On all the casts he examined, the ridges ran vertically down the side of the foot. These patterns are the same on castings that were made over twenty years apart and over one hundred miles apart.

Photos & Video

Photographs and video footage are perhaps the most controversial form of evidence in existence today. There are very few photographs of either Bigfoot or the Yeti. The ones that do exist are not distinct and could potentially be hoaxes.

Gigantopithecus

This is an extinct species of primate whose description happens to fit Bigfoot's almost to a tee. The animal lived during the Pleistocene era and lived during the time of homo erectus. It's identified only by three jaw bones and thousands of teeth. It lived in Asia, mostly in China, and its remains have often been found in caves along with homo erectus fossils. It lived from about 700,000 to 125,000 years ago. Homo erectus lived in the same area from about 800,000 years ago, and they lived side-by-side for a long time before the gigantopithecus finally went extinct.

Because its description matches that of Bigfoot and the Yeti so closely, it's a common theory that these mysterious animals are simply evolved gigantes. Unfortunately, as exciting as this theory is, there is no evidence to prove the theory.

Famous Sightings

Patterson/Gimlin Footage

The most intriguing video footage of Bigfoot is the Patterson/Gimlin film. It's also the most controversial footage, probably because of how good the footage actually is. In 1967 Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin were following a trail on horseback in Bluff Creek, California, when they suddenly saw a Bigfoot that was apparently drinking from the creek. Patterson's horse reared up when the creature stood up and began walking away. Both Patterson and the horse fell to the ground, and he was pinned under the horse for a minute until he managed to work himself free. Patterson grabbed his hand-held movie camera and began filming the animal as it made its way to the trees. While running, Patterson filmed twenty-five feet of film. Gimlin remained on his horse with his rifle ready. They chose not to follow the creature once it disappeared into the trees.

This footage shows quite clearly what the animal looks like and how it moves. It's seen walking along the bank of the river in a manner that appears casual, although it's moving rather briskly.



Below is a list of evidence that supports the theory that the footage is legitimate and that the creature depicted is not a hoax:

Arms: The creature's arms are abnormally long for its height. No human arms could have that proportion. It's possible to modify an ape suit by extending its forearm at the wrist, but the elbow would still be at a human-like position. The elbow of the creature in the film is much lower than that of a human. If a suit was modified to mimic those proportions, then the human inside the suit would not be able to bend his arms, as his elbow would not line up with the location of the suit's elbow. The footage clearly shows the creature swinging its arms in a very natural way, even though its arms have this inhuman proportion.

Soft Tissue: The footage quite clearly shows the bulges and bends of the creature's muscles. A high-budget movie studio in the 1960's would have a difficult time creating an ape costume that would show that level of muscular detail. Although possible, it's simply not likely that this would have been done.

One notable case is a bulge that can be seen on the creature's right leg. It visibly bulges out and in as it's bending its knee. Scientists have analyzed this bulge and it appears to be some kind of injury, perhaps a rupture of the ITB, or illeo tibial band. This would cause it pain, and could affect its gait.

Stride and Gait: 3D modeling was performed on the footage in order to isolate and better display the creature's gait. They found that the creature had an odd gait that is not normal for a human. The knees would make a somewhat circular motion as it walked. This type of gait could be an adaptation for walking in an uneven forested environment.

Still, the Patterson/Gimlin footage, which is the best footage to date, has been controversial enough to disqualify it as being irrefutable evidence.

Memorial Day Footage

The Memorial Day footage is another famous video taken by campers in 1996 in Northeast Washington. The video clearly shows a large, black-haired bipedal creature running across a large open area from one part of the forest to another. Although clear of trees, the terrain was hilly, uneven and somewhat rocky. Supporters of the footage claim that no human in an ape suit could run that fast on that kind of terrain. Scientists performed extensive tests, which included having a trained runner attempt the same run along the exact same path. The experiment proved that it was possible for a man in an ape suit to make that run in the amount of time shown in the footage. The experiment neither proves nor disproves the authenticity of the footage. It merely proved that it could have been faked.

An interesting discovery in this video is that in the last few seconds of the clip, right before the creature entered the forest, the animal seemed to grow taller by about eight inches. One theory is that the creature had a young animal that has climbed higher on its back.

Conclusion

As popular and exciting as Bigfoot is, the fact remains that there is simply not enough evidence to prove the animal's existence. However, there is enough evidence and sightings to strongly argue the case.

Because of the DNA findings from the hair sample in Bhutan, the convincing detail in some of the footprint casts, and the details discovered in the Patterson/Gimlin footage, it seems likely that both Bigfoot and the Yeti exist, and that they are in fact the same, or related, species.

For the Storyteller: Bigfoot in the Game

Bigfoot is perhaps the most popular cryptid, and in fact it's one of the easiest creatures to create a story around. Because Bigfoot has been sighted all over North America there are plenty of locations for you to set up your story. You can have your team go on an expedition into the mountains or forests searching for the elusive creature. Or, you can even have a story where people living in a rural neighborhood start seeing the creature in their backyards at night! Why is it suddenly showing up in that neighborhood? Could it have anything to do with that new shopping plaza they're building?

Game Rules: Fighting

Here are some special considerations for when the cast encounters a Bigfoot in the game. Using these guidelines will help keep the creature realistic throughout the fight.

Intimidation: Bigfoot has thus far avoided most fights with humans because of its incredible skill in Intimidation. When it hoots and hollers, it makes Intimidation tests. Anyone who fails the test will not go near it or even try to anger it. Even the most stalwart hunter would resist shooting at it.

Throw: Bigfoot's goal in hurling objects is to scare away its opponents. Therefore, its Throw skill is only Fair.

Grapple: If it has one opponent, it will most likely try to grapple him, if forced into a fight. It will attack with a Grapple test. If it succeeds, the opponent is grappled, and Bigfoot will cause its Brawn in damage each round until the opponent escapes its grasp.

Brawl: If Bigfoot is unable to grapple its opponent, it may choose to simply pummel him with its hugely muscled arms. It will use its Brawl skill for this.