



SCIENCE

Scientists uncover the truth about remains of elusive 'Abominable Snowman' found in Himalayan mountains

A new DNA study of purported Yeti samples is providing insight into the origins of the Himalayan legend

f

t

p

COMMENTS

By **Stephen Beech**
17:27, 29 NOV 2017 | **UPDATED** 17:28, 29 NOV 2017

 We are part of the Trust Project



- **Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown** (\$440 - [satchel-page.com](#))
- **How to invest when you're afraid of risk** (Fidelity International)

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Get **Daily** updates directly to your **inbox**

Enter your email

+ Subscribe

Sightings of the Yeti or Abominable Snowman - a mysterious, ape-like creature said to inhabit the high mountains of Asia - have been reported for centuries in Nepal and Tibet.

Footprints have also been spotted, and stories passed down from generation to generation.

Now, [a new DNA study of purported Yeti samples](#) from museums and private collections is providing insight into the origins of the Himalayan legend.

Researchers analysed nine 'Yeti' specimens - including bone, tooth, skin, hair and fecal samples - collected in the Himalayas and Tibetan Plateau.



A femur bone from the decayed body of a purported Yeti found in a cave in Tibet. (Image: PA)

The findings, published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B, showed that one was from a dog. The other eight were from Asian black bears, Himalayan brown bears or Tibetan brown bears.

Lead scientist Doctor Charlotte Lindqvist said: "Our findings strongly suggest that the biological underpinnings of the Yeti legend can be found in local bears, and our study demonstrates that genetics should be able to unravel other, similar mysteries."

The team is not the first to research "Yeti" DNA, but Dr Lindqvist says previous projects ran simpler genetic analyses, which left important questions unresolved.

Dr Lindqvist is an associate professor of biological sciences in the University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences in the US, and a visiting associate professor at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

She said: "This study represents the most rigorous analysis to date of samples suspected to derive from anomalous or mythical 'hominid'-like creatures."





A hair sample from a purported Yeti in Nepal. (Image: Icon Films Ltd.)

Dr Lindqvist says science can be a useful tool in exploring the roots of myths about large and mysterious creatures.

She noted that in Africa, the longstanding Western legend of an "African unicorn" was explained in the early 20th Century by British researchers, who found and described the flesh-and-blood okapi, a giraffe relative that looks like a mix between a giraffe, a zebra and a horse.

And in Australia some scholars have speculated that references to enormous animal-like creatures in Australia's Aboriginal "Dreamtime" mythology may have drawn from ancient encounters with real megafauna or their remains, known today from Australia's fossil record.

But while such connections remain uncertain, Dr Lindqvist said the new work - like the discovery of the okapi - is direct, adding: "Clearly, a big part of the Yeti legend has to do with bears."

Her team investigated samples such as a scrap of skin from the hand or paw of a 'Yeti' - part of a monastic relic - and a fragment of femur bone from a decayed 'Yeti' found in a cave on the Tibetan Plateau.

The skin sample turned out to be from an Asian black bear, and the bone from a Tibetan brown bear.



Himalayan brown bear from Deosai National Park, Pakistan.

The 'Yeti' samples that Dr Lindqvist examined were provided to her by British production company Icon Films, which featured her in the 2016 Animal Planet special 'Yeti Or Not' which explored the origins of the fabled being.

As well as tracing the origins of the Yeti legend, Dr Lindqvist's work is also uncovering information about the evolutionary history of Asian bears.

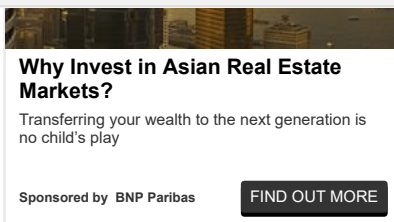
She said: "Bears in this region are either vulnerable or critically endangered from a conservation perspective, but not much is known about their past history.

The scientists sequenced the mitochondrial DNA of 23 Asian bears - including the purported Yetis, and compared the genetic data to that of other bears worldwide.



Photofit of a yeti from the professed eye-witness accounts of Himalayans. (Image: PA)

The analysis showed that while Tibetan brown bears share a close common ancestry with their North American and Eurasian kin, Himalayan brown bears belong to a distinct evolutionary lineage that diverged early on from all other brown bears.



Why Invest in Asian Real Estate Markets?

Transferring your wealth to the next generation is no child's play

Sponsored by BNP Paribas

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

The split occurred about 650,000 years ago, during a period of glaciation, according to the scientists.

The timing suggests that expanding glaciers and the region's mountainous geography may have caused the Himalayan bears to become separated from others, leading to a prolonged period of isolation and an independent evolutionary path.

Dr Lindqvist added: "Further genetic research on these rare and elusive animals may help illuminate the environmental history of the region, as well as bear evolutionary history worldwide - and additional 'Yeti' samples could contribute to this work."

 Like 26K MirrorSciTech

 Follow @DailyMirror

 Subscribe to our Daily newsletter

[Enter email](#)

PROMOTED STORIES

Sponsored Links by Taboola 

Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown

\$440 - satchel-page.com

How to invest when you're afraid of risk

Fidelity International

Chinese Astrology 2018 For The Year Of The Earth Dog

Ace Profits Academy

Hitachi Gets Closer to Eliminating Factory Bottlenecks

Hitachi

37 Times Meghan Markle Defined Princess-Worthy Style

StyleBistro

These Photos Inside Ivanka Trump's Home Will Leave You Speechless

LifeDaily.com

Inside Kendall Jenner's New 5-Bedroom, Spanish-Style Home

Lonny

The Most Daring Met Gala Dresses

Livingly

The Average Man Can't Name These Engine Parts! Can You?

Zoo.com

0 Comments

Sign In

Write a comment...

Sort Comments

M MORE ON

Nanyang Technological University

Rare Animals

Ad



Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown



Satchel & Page

PROMOTED STORIES

Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown

\$440 - satchel-page.com

How to invest when you're afraid of risk

Fidelity International

Chinese Astrology 2018 For The Year Of The Earth Dog

Ace Profits Academy

Hitachi Gets Closer to Eliminating Factory Bottlenecks

Hitachi

Sponsored Links by Taboola



Ad



Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown



Satchel & Page

Ad



Mailbag - PRE ORDER - Brown



Satchel & Page

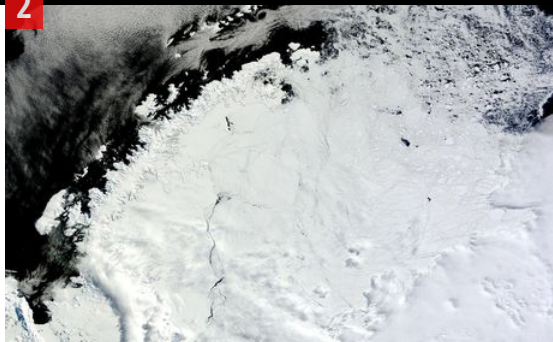


CANNABIS



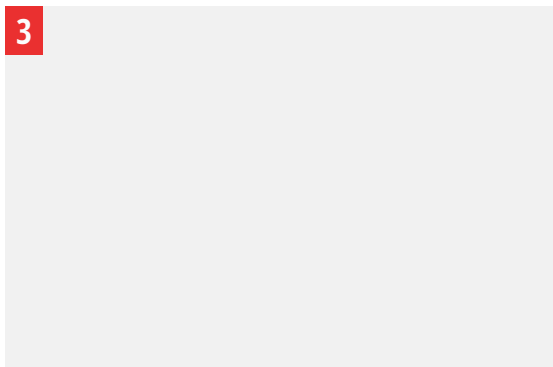
Volkswagen

2



A gigantic hole just opened in Antarctica - and no-one knows what caused it

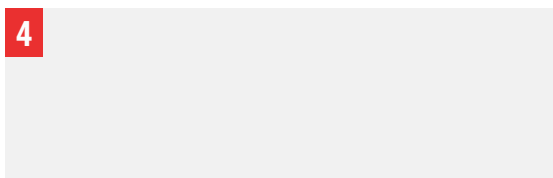
3



TIME TRAVEL

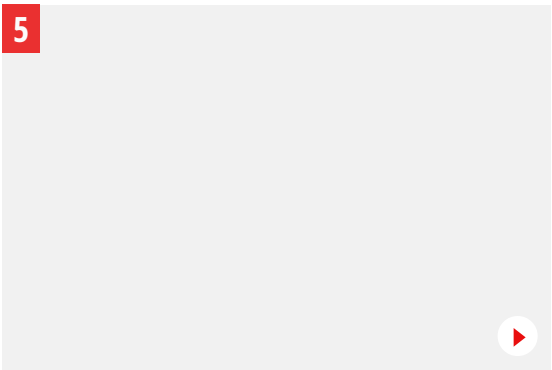
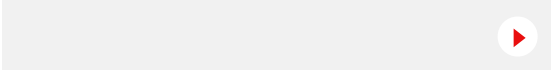
Evidence of time travel? Historic mural from 1937 apparently shows modern gadget - can you spot it?

4



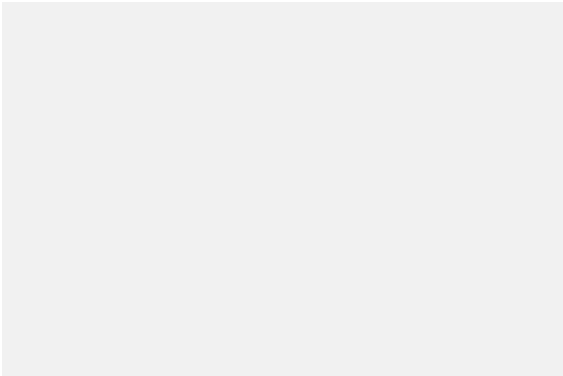
VOLCANOES

Massive volcano in Iceland is ready to BLOW - and experts warn it could cause travel chaos

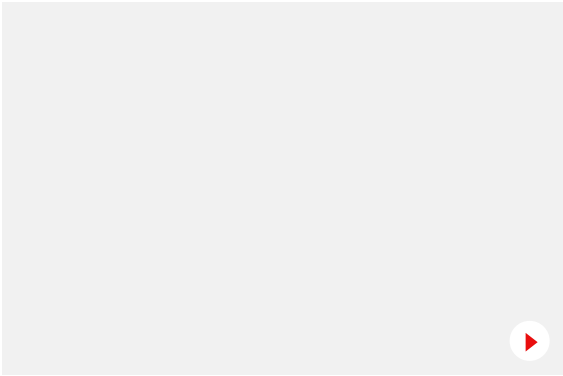


SPACE
Devastating space storms could hit the Earth at any time - and we will only get 15 minutes warning

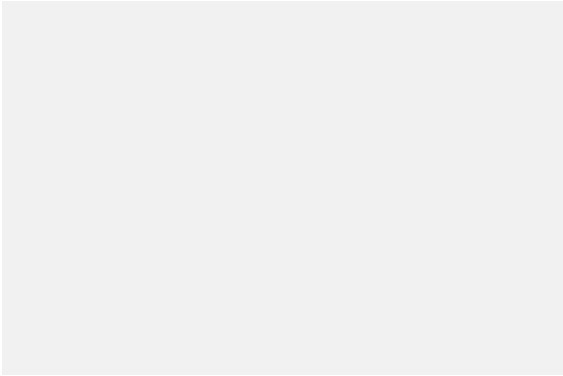
TOP STORIES >



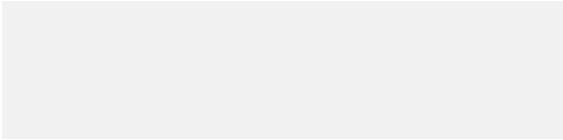
HOSPITALS
Woman lives in constant agony because rare condition makes her internal organs 'stick together like CEMENT'



NORTH KOREA
US warns North Korea regime will be "utterly destroyed" if war breaks out as Trump says Kim Jong-un is a "sick puppy"



CRIME
Mum who lost leg in boat tragedy that killed husband and daughter has prosthetic limbs stolen by thieves



HOLIDAYS
Tourists face five years in jail after posting very cheeky holiday snap on Instagram