

The Cryptid Zoo: Skunk-Apes

Skunk-apes are hairy humanoids sighted in many areas of North America, but especially in swamps, and especially in the South. They are held distinct from [Bigfoot](#) by having a different home range (Bigfoot is generally considered as being restricted to the Pacific Northwest) and by having both a different physical appearance and a different set of habits ascribed to them. The Florida variety of skunk-ape is sometimes referred to as the "Florida Sandman" and other local varieties often have local nicknames.



At least two, if not three, distinct varieties of skunk-ape exist in these legends. This is partly because the definition of skunk-ape has varied from one cryptozoologist to the next and because this definition has also evolved over time. Another reason why it is hard to think of the skunk-ape as just one kind of creature is because the creatures in these reports show enough natural variation that it is hard to lump them all together.

The most consistent characteristic ascribed to skunk-apes is the smell. It is generally said that all of them have a rather extreme odor that is nauseating. In other respects, the definition varies. In the past, this horrible odor was the one characteristic used to define a skunk-ape, but today more non-smelly beasts are given the label of "skunk-ape." Some skunk-apes are generally said look something like [Bigfoot](#), but they tend to be really large, and sometimes have oversized heads that look more monster-like than ape-like. Other creatures labeled as skunk-apes look more like a cross between a dog, a giant monkey, and a kangaroo.

The fur color of skunk-apes is usually dark, with many individuals who are black or deep brown, and there may be a tail. When it exists, this tail is often

bushy like the tail of a wolf or fox (thus linking skunk-apes to [North American devil monkeys](#)). Some individuals are described as particularly big, up to ten feet tall, but the average height seems to be about six feet.

Skunk-ape feet are often described as being different from Bigfoot, especially in terms of the foot shape and the number of toes. Skunk-ape toe numbers are sometimes quite variable, with three-toed footprints often being found. Since the number of toes is one of the slowest-changing features as a species evolves, it is not generally thought that a primate could have developed such a foot. This leaves a lot of problems for those who hope to prove that skunk-apes with atypical feet are real creatures, because the skunk-apes' feet really ought to match up to biological expectations better.



Skunk-apes tend to be very aggressive towards dogs, and are often reported as carnivorous. In any case, they seem to kill a lot of livestock, especially the smaller varieties such as goats and chickens. Every so often, a panic breaks out about the idea that skunk-apes are about to start eating humans, but reports of man-eating are extremely rare and often based on very old legends, so that it cannot be verified that anyone even died, let alone that an unidentified creature killed them.

All too often, skunk-apes exhibit paranormal characteristics as well in these reports, features that make them decidedly unattractive to cryptozoologists who hope to uncover a new species instead of a mere urban legend. They may be described as having glowing red eyes, or they might be bulletproof at close range or have other weird abilities. Like many mythical creatures,

they seem to be mysteriously attracted to anyone who has sex in a car in a remote area. Most of them are bipedal, but they show a tendency to drop to all fours and run that way at times.

Some creatures labeled as skunk-apes seem very much like known primates, especially chimps and orangutans. These sightings could represent feral populations that have developed from abandoned pets or lab animals, and this is the interpretation given to skunk-ape reports by some researchers working in the field of cryptozoology. However, mystery hairy humanoids that resemble known primates are more properly known as [napes](#), short for "North American apes."

The Florida variety of skunk-ape is seen most often in swampy areas such as the Everglades. Florida skunk-apes tend to be more physically normal than skunk-apes found elsewhere, so that some researchers define them as a unique type that is much more likely to turn out to be a real species. Some people think that these creatures smell so bad because they spend most of their time in underground dens, curled up with carrion stolen from alligators. It is said that this underground lifestyle is the also the reason why they are rarely sighted and have not yet been captured by scientists.

Since certain types of skunk-apes often sound more like supernatural creatures such as [werewolves](#) or hairy ogres from some fairy tale than a legitimate variety of Bigfoot, and even the more normal varieties often suffer from other weird characteristics that seem unlikely from a biological viewpoint, skunk-apes have a credibility problem and they have received less attention and funding in the [cryptozoological](#) community than their more respectable cousins in the Pacific Northwest. Some examples of famous skunk-apes include the [Honey Island Swamp Monster](#), the [Fouke Monster](#), [Momo](#), the Myakka Skunk-Ape, the Green Chimp, the Holopaw Gorilla, the Abominable Swamp Slob and the Everglades Ape.

You can find out more about Skunk-Apes from the following sources:

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~Authors~

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Wikipedia, The. [Skunk Ape](#)

Wikipedia, The. [Fouke Monster](#)