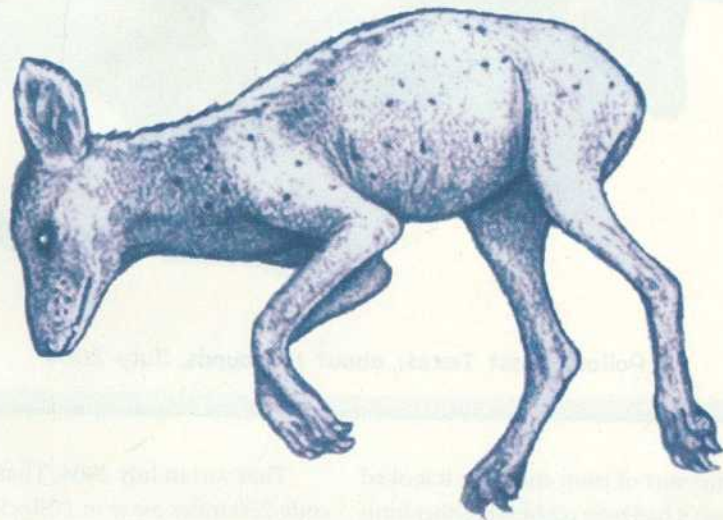


Are Chupacabras Invading Texas?



Elmendorf, South Bexar County, Texas; 20 pounds, October 2004

Two mystery animals discovered

by Valenya

Devin McNalley of Elmendorf, Texas, finally shot the critter that had been killing his chickens. He'd been losing as many as 35 in one day out of the flock he kept in his backyard and was becoming

desperate. Until now he hadn't even got a look at their killer.

It grazed leisurely on a mulberry bush, giving him plenty of time to scope. Upon inspecting the being at close range, he received quite a shock.

Are Chupacabras Invading Texas?

look disturbingly like the chupacabras of Puerto Rico, and many local Mexican-Americans assert them to be the same.

Are chupacabras migrating over the border from Mexico?

And you were worried about killer bees!

Where Chupacabras Began

Puerto Rico is the birthplace and main stomping ground of *los chupacabras*. Although they've been spotted in Mexico, Central America, Guatemala, Florida, and Texas, the great majority of reports still originate here.

The inclusive and insightful book *Chupacabras*, by Scott Corrales, describes the chupacabras' habit of feeding on livestock by completely draining them of blood. Sometimes certain internal organs are also removed—not cut out, but simply absent.

Magdalene Tolentino of Puerto Rico described one classic Puerto Rican chupacabras she discovered skulking around her mother's house, walking on its hind legs. Its eyes were an all-over black gray. It wore a ridge of what she assumed to be feathers over its spine.

Later they behaved more like spines, rising up and shaking. When she chased it, it first hopped like a kangaroo and then ran—while floating several feet above the ground. She lost sight of it when it floated



around a church. Magdalene saw the being once more (or perhaps one much like it) later that evening. Its eyes glowed orange, resembling Christmas lights. It gave off a chemical reek, which produced a numbing effect and made her sick. At the time, she wondered if the being might be a robot of some kind.

Litter Mates or Kissing Cousins?

Compare the bodies of the "Rico" and "Tex" creatures in the illustrations. Certainly there are many similarities, as well as undeniable differences. The most obvi-



Pollock, East Texas; about 15 pounds, July 2004

Some sort of mini-monster, it looked as though it had been cobbled together from three or four different animals. Although its body suggested a small dog, its back legs were much longer than its front, bringing to mind a small kangaroo. Its muzzle looked like a desert rat's. Fangs like hog tusks rose from the sides of its mouth. Its nearly naked skin was bluish-gray, and a stylish "mohawk" of stiff hair, rising to two inches long, ran the full length of its back, from the top of its head to the tip of its tail.

McNalley buried it in his backyard—but only after taking some photos of it as proof of its existence. Otherwise, who would ever believe him?

That was in July 2004. That October, only 250 miles away in Pollock, Texas, a similar being was killed. Its picture was also taken, and the woman who first spotted it revealed that she'd seen yet a third such being later that day in the same general area.

Consider that all Texas animals were shot near or next to a human's residence. Is this the behavior you would expect from a wild animal?

The *Express News* of San Antonio, Texas, displayed photos of both dead animals, side by side, on October 14. One being weighed about 20 pounds, the other only 15. An adult and a juvenile, perhaps? Or a male and female? In many ways they



If they had any super powers, they certainly didn't let them show. Instead of floating away to escape their pursuers, the El-mendorf being simply crept under a house. Nor were any glowing eyes mentioned. But then, both Texas critters were sighted and shot during the day. Magdalena Tolentino saw glowing eyes on the being she observed after dark—biological flashlights or infrared for seeing in the dark?

ET Chupacabras?

Puerto Rico seems to contain a variety of chupacabras, including forms leaning towards "Grey" or robotic. One form sounds identical to the more mundane carnivore found recently in Texas. That's an interesting and perhaps meaningful spectrum. UFO waves often accompany flurries of chupacabras attacks. There have

also been many reports of floating chupacabras suddenly shooting upward into the sky—even backward, as if pulled by an outside agency. Like a spaceship, perhaps? It seems obvious that there's a UFO connection here. If you took a Grey, merged its genes with those of the Texas being, and gave it some predatorial bells and whistles, like bat wings and numbing vapor, you'd probably end up with something very

ous are those supernatural powers displayed by the Puerto Rico 'cabra, such as the floating escapes and the glowing eyes (described as either white, orange, or red). A paralytic odor, functioning as a tranquilizer, is often observed. Batwings or "gliders" have often been observed, but no tail, either.

The Texas cousins, on the other hand, behaved much more like natural predators.

much like a chupacabras. In fact, the only way a classic chupacabras doesn't look like the Texas critter (except for wings) is in the way it resembles a Grey!

Why such variety of shapes? Does the Texas being represent the original biological critter the Greys use for hybridization? Or is it also a creation? And why would Greys experiment with a hybrid body, anyway? Can they inhabit them themselves? Are they planning to settle down on Earth permanently? Or are they instead some form of pet/servant?

Such a carnivore would have the ability to feed itself, earthside.

This might explain why so many beings are spotted wandering around human habitations rather than out in the woods, as one would reasonably expect of wild animals. They aren't wild. Chupacabras are often discovered scuttling around people's homes, as were as both of the Texas beings.

A Short History of Kangaroos in Texas

Suppose you're living in the 1930s, well before anyone has heard of chupacabras. You notice a strange critter sneaking around your woodpile for just a moment, before it disappears into the woods. It has a long tail for ballast, and a pointed nose, and is moving around on its hind legs. Might you think you were seeing a kangaroo? In fact, kangaroos have been reported for decades in the Southwest and Midwest.

Analysis Pending

DNA analysis on the Texas beings is due to take place this August, funded by a small, private San Antonio Foundation. Whitley Streiber, cofounder of the Communion Foundation, is heading the research. He is convinced that the two animals belong to the same species. Linda Howe, the animal mutilation expert, is also examining the Texas case.

Not everyone agrees that such testing is even necessary. According to a San Antonio wildlife biologist, the Elmendorf critter was simply a coyote with a bad case of mange. There are lots of coyotes in that area, most of them mangy. According to the living collections manager for the San Antonio Zoo, it might be a wild Mexican dog. One "expert" even declared that it was undoubtedly a giant lizard.

But Devin McNalley points out the fang-tusks on the beings and dismisses all theories so far. He's waiting for the results of those DNA tests. And Stacey Womack, who spotted the second critter (and third), also wants to know what it is.

"It's unreal," she maintains. "It's just such a creepy creature when you see it." ★

Valenya lives in Bigfoot country. She enjoys researching cryptozoology and creating portraits of anomalous beings, cobbling them together from eyewitness reports.



slightly, much the way a candle or a campfire would. It sways gingerly from side to side, all the while coming closer to us and growing even brighter in luminescence...and I'll be damned if it doesn't look just like a lantern. Given the light's eerie hue and shape, there is no way that it could be the result of car headlights.

Or could it? A recently proposed explanation for "spooklights" of this kind involves the phenomenon known as "atmospheric tunneling." This is a meteorological occurrence where light reflected from nearby objects (such as moving cars) follows the contours of the earth. As light is reflected and transformed in this manner, apparitions quite similar to the one on Moody Road can be formed. That explanation would work here...unless the light is spiritual energy from a ghost.

I keep arguing between the rational and the fantastic, between science and the paranormal. I try desperately to fall back to the methane gas theory, but I am uncertain how or if plants could be rotting in the freezing cold of this November night. The more I think about it, the more conflicted I become. I have been standing out here for close to half an hour and all I really know for certain is I'm cold, nervous, and that a dead guy might be coming up the road at me with a lantern.

Just as it was growing simultaneously brighter and nearer, the light disappears. Vanished. Snuffed out like a match by an unseen thumb and finger. It is gone...but why do I still feel that there is something

out there? Something moved in the grassy ditch to the left of us. It might have been a raccoon. It might have been a display of poltergeist activity. Hoping for the former but real scared of the latter I get back into the SUV and urge my friend to get us out of there.

I am perfectly willing to accept that there is a plausible explanation for all of this and that the light is something naturally occurring. After all, ghost stories are just things we tell ourselves for a fun scare at Halloween, and the people who claim to have seen them for real are liars, lunatics, or both. Right? But if you ever make your way to that lonely, isolated Jasper County road in the middle of the night, where the shadows of the trees have a tendency to twist and move according to your imagination, you may see Moody's Light appear out of nowhere in the dark...and in that moment, ghosts don't seem so far-fetched after all.—Jon Nichols, *Oswego, Ill.*

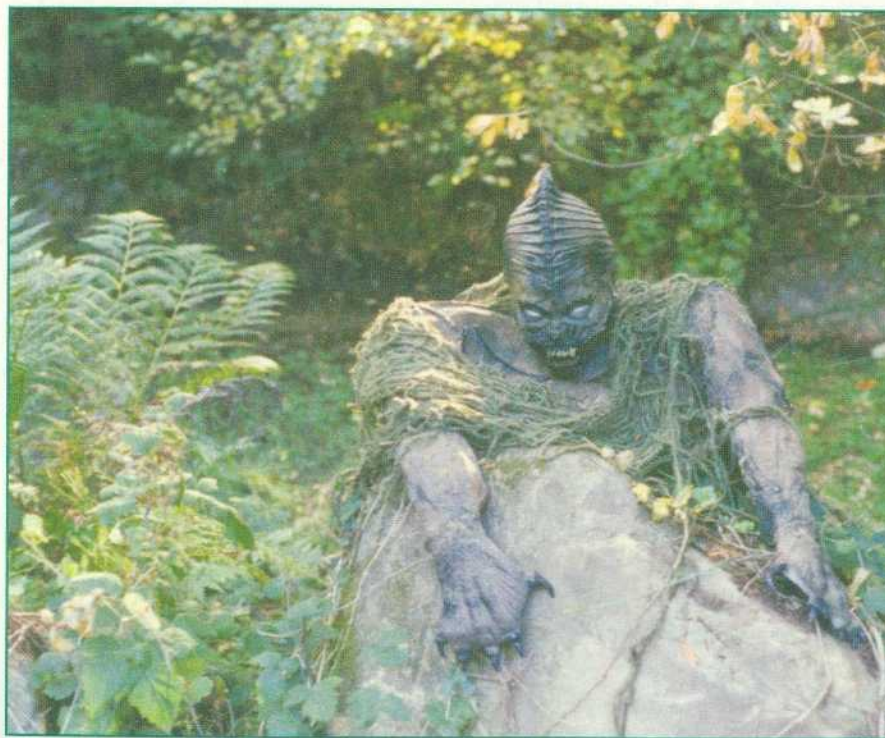
A Close Encounter with a Chupacabras

A vicious and mysterious creature called El Chupacabras has dominated headlines in Puerto Rico over the past decade. The creature is renowned for attacking farm animals and, supposedly, draining them of their blood and leaving two vampire-like puncture wounds on the necks of its victims. As years passed, sightings of the nocturnal creature began to be reported in the southern U.S. as well. I believe I had the fortuitous luck of experiencing one

HOLLYWOOD GOES CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL

A field guide to crypto-movies

by Mark Sunlin



Be careful what you fish for: The creature from the Black Lagoon may have been inspired by a real-life legend.

Photo by Mark Sunlin

of these sightings.

My husband and I were driving home late one evening after a visit with his mother in North Port, Florida, when we spotted what I later came to believe was the chupacabras. It was 1989 and my family and I had recently moved to a rural area of Sarasota, Florida. We knew little about our new surroundings and even less about the native wildlife. So when my husband and I spotted a very strange looking creature, we could only assume it was native to the area.

My children, who were little at the time, were asleep in the back seat of our car, my husband was driving, and I was sitting next to him. We turned the corner onto a street where there was a bridge that led to our house. As the headlights of the car lit the road ahead, my husband and I saw a strange, hairless creature sitting at one corner of the bridge. We both looked in awe at the creature for several seconds as we drove by. After we had passed, I turned to my husband and asked, "What the heck was that?" My husband was speechless for a moment and then shrugged and simply said, "I don't know." (Which was amazing in itself since my husband has never been one to admit to not knowing something!)

Even though the incident occurred many years ago, it wasn't the sort of thing I could easily put out of my mind. I still remember the creature in vivid detail. It sat in an upright position on very large hindquarters. Its front legs or arms were



Chupacabras sketch by Sandra V. Brown.

small, however, as if underdeveloped. It appeared to be about three to four feet tall. It was hairless and its skin was grayish-pink. It appeared to have many folds or wrinkles in its skin, especially under its arms. (Some reports I've heard have indicated the creature as having wings, but I could detect none from where I was sitting.) It sat in a kind of hunched-over position and I could see an accentuated ridge of lumpy protrusions running down its spine. It had long rabbit-like ears and also a long snout with a pair of visible fangs.

The creature snarled at our approaching car, curling one side of its lip to reveal more of one of its fangs. In spite of these many grotesque features, what impressed me most were the creature's eyes. They were bright red and appeared to be

notes that "the attention given to the series by the military is another example of the genre's tremendous cultural sway," thereby ignoring in the process the very real and militaristic agenda which no doubt lies behind the Air Force's endorsement, and which for over 40 years has had its real-world parallel in the launching of spy satellites, weapons systems, and other military hardware into outer space.

While Sutherly's vision of single-pilot "space-yachts" and a "profusion of orbiting restaurants and hotels" surrounding the Earth may indeed come true, he neglects to mention the missile-launching systems, minefields, floating military bases, spy cameras, and top-secret "No Entry" areas that will no doubt fill the environs immediately surrounding the Earth, the Moon, and Mars in the near future, due to military intervention.

Nor does he mention, in this connection, the important 2001 Defense Department document entitled "Vision for 2020," in which analysts, predicting a coming global struggle between "haves" and "have-nots," use this fact to justify a program of space-based control of resources in a way analogous to the way the seas were used to control resources in previous centuries.

Another Defense Department document, called the "Strategic Master Plan" (1997), reinforces this analogy, describing space as "the ultimate high ground of military operations."—Gavin Callaghan, *New Port Richey, Fla.*

Another Alien Chupacabras

The March 2006 article "Are Chupacabras Invading Texas?" by Valenya shows how some researchers in cryptozoology will try to use any information to put two and two together.

Yes, those critters in Texas look a little strange, but they have nothing to do with the real Chupacabras stories. The animals in Texas have the characteristics of the canine family. The classic Chupacabras description is nothing like that.

I believe some undiscovered creature is responsible for the classic Chupacabras sightings, but I think it is more down-to-earth than the alien connection.

Valenya states that it was strange behavior for the animals shot in Texas to be near human residences. This is ridiculous! With humans pushing more into rural areas and animal habitat dwindling, there are more encounters between humans and animals each year. Wild animals are creatures of opportunity when it comes to food. They will go for the easiest meal if sick or hungry.

Let's wait for more evidence, and the DNA tests, before we jump to any conclusions.—Christopher Gardner, *Cryptozoology Researcher, via email*

Flawed Critique

There was a perplexing letter by Richard Freeman in the March 2006 issue regarding R. A. Emmanuel's interpretation of 666. Emmanuel's methodology may be flawed, but so is Freeman's commentary.



Sandra V. Brown

glowing.

I was a little stunned after the sighting and didn't say much more about it after that. In the years following the incident I looked and looked, especially around the area of the bridge, hoping for another sighting of the creature, but it never happened. Then my husband and I started hearing about accounts of chupacabras sightings, and we came to the conclusion that it must have been this creature that we saw that night. The descriptions had many similarities, particularly the glowing red eyes, the fangs, and the creature's upright posture. I started researching the creature, and, the more I found out, the more convinced I became that it truly was the creature known as El Chupacabras that we saw that night.

I became so fascinated with the creature that I later wrote a book of fiction about the chupacabras entitled *Unearthly*. In an odd sort of way you could say that sighting the chupacabras that night

changed my life.—*Sandra V. Brown, Asheville, N.C.*

Tommy and the Tarot

I thought this reading was going to be about me: you know, maybe my future, my life. But as usual, when you have kids, or are about to have kids, they kind of take over.

My wife and I were in Spain, and had been invited to one of my staff's birthday celebrations. We felt honored to be included because we didn't get invited to many functions where we were the only Americans. As the celebration dwindled down, there were three couples left: the birthday girl Mai Pardo and her husband Manolo, my wife Susie and I, and Mai's cousin Pilar Andres and her husband Francisco.

Pilar brought out a deck of cards and asked who wanted their cards read. My wife immediately shook her head and Pilar turned to me. "Sure, why not?" I said. I thought it would be fun. Susie said she didn't want anything private being made public, and didn't want to know anything bad that might happen. I figured I didn't have anything to worry about, so let's go for it. (I couldn't imagine her having anything to worry about either, but that was up to her!)

Anyway, it wasn't long before Pilar got quiet and looked vaguely uncomfortable; she cleared her throat and then said, "Sometimes we see things that we are not sure we should talk about." (Mai was

Bats Out of Hell



Drawing courtesy Ing. Marco Reynoso, Fundacion Cosmos A.C.

The Chupacabras Returns

by Scott Corrales

It's very likely that no one would have paid attention to the news accounts had the witness not been such a respected member of society, no less than a district prosecutor from Santiago de Chile.

Roberto Ayar was not in the least bit interested in monsters, monster-hunting, or the paranormal. A level-headed professional and officer of the court, he had taken a week off his hectic schedule to take his wife Maribel and young daughter Daphane to the city of La Serena on a well-deserved holiday. Having spent an enjoyable week in family activities, the Ayars reluctantly made their way back to Santiago, driving along scenic back roads to avoid the high tolls on the expressways and to have a glimpse of the small towns of the Chilean back country in a nation penned between the ocean and the towering Andean cordillera.

On Wednesday, February 4, 2004, the

Ayar family was busy getting itself lost on the back roads. Husband and wife pored over maps while the daughter slept in the back seat. They eventually found themselves in the town of Romeral, well over a hundred miles north of their destination, when they realized that the road they had chosen to take divided in two opposite directions, causing them to choose one. Inevitably, it was the wrong one.

The Wrong Road

"We finally decided to take the right-hand path," Mr. Ayar told reporter Hector Cossio of the *La Cuarta* newspaper. "And no more than a kilometer along the road, we found someone in a microbus terminal of whom we asked the route to take back to Santiago. He told us take the other road, so we had to turn back."

The time was by now almost six o'clock in the morning. They successfully returned to the turnoff and took the opposite road.

out what he had seen: a creature beyond description, holding what appeared to be "a dead dog" in its muzzle, had crossed his path and leaped across the front of the microbus.

"When I saw that something crossed my path I hit the brakes. The animal was on the right side of my vehicle. Its muzzle was longer than a wolf's; it had a small hump on the back of its neck and had a creature in its maw. It looked at me, crouched into a fetal position, and jumped, vanishing instantly," said the driver.

Just when the joking would have normally started, another driver, Juan Maulén, asked him for a better description. Minutes later, Maulén would say: "Yes, it's the same one."

...a muzzle like that of a fierce wolf, several rows of teeth, and voracious red eyes.

For Berrios hadn't been alone in his experience. His colleague had seen an enigmatic biped, standing some four feet tall, with hind legs like those of a kangaroo, small, curved hands ending in talons, a sharp mane like that of a porcupine running along its back, a tail with a rattle, a muzzle like that of a fierce wolf, several rows of teeth, and voracious red eyes.

"It jumps a lot," Maulén told reporters from the *La Cuarta* newspaper. "It can easily jump five meters...I almost died of fright. I had to go out in the morning just like Berrios, when I suddenly saw that thing in the middle of the road. I slowed

down and the beast stared at me. It took some time to look me up and down and then jumped aside."

The driver had kept the story to himself out the very real fear of being thought deranged.

As Far Back As the 18th Century

But work is the best remedy for shock, and Juan Berrios decided to return to his routine as soon as possible (although he made it clear that he would never drive the early morning run again). With a water bucket and a rubber squeegee in hand, he was cleaning his vehicle's windows when he unexpectedly found physical proof of his awful experience: a large

tuft of coarse hair, with black ends and a white middle, was stuck to the windshield wipers, having become ensnared when the improbable creature brushed against the vehicle while leaping across the road. This biological evidence—disparagingly referred to as "pubic hair" in the media—was turned over to the GEO research group, led by ufologist Alberto Urquiza. This researcher believed that since 2000, when the Chilean phase of chupacabras activity commenced, over 5,500 animals had lost their lives to the paranormal predator.

Only a few days after the prosecutor's close encounter with the unknown crea-

was then that the prosecutor's carefully instructed image of reality was shattered in pieces by the appearance of an impossible "thing."

"It was horrible," he told *La Cuarta*. "I swear to you that I'd never seen anything like it. It wasn't a dog, rabbit or any other known animal. It was halfway in the middle of the road, standing on two feet. It was completely covered in hair and had red eyes. It was bent and had a hump on its back. It had the body of a kangaroo. It had two small hands that it moved quickly and deep-set eyes."

Both Roberto and Maribel Ayar's description of the hellish entity coincided down to the slightest detail, including the beast's red-eyed gaze and the two long fangs protruding out of its face. "They were like two tubes, one stuck to the other. Some seconds elapsed and it took off. It walked just like those two-legged lizards, sort of knock-kneed. I don't have a word for it, but it's supernatural." It was an act of mercy that young Daphane slept throughout the event and was spared the gruesome sight.

Its Muzzle Was Longer Than a Wolf's..."

Perhaps the Ayar family would've thought twice about driving along the back roads if they had been reading *La Cuarta's* features about the hairy monster that was terrorizing the region in the pre-dawn hours.

Juan Berrios was accustomed to driving the route between the towns of Buin

and Maipo in the early morning, providing microbus service between both communities. On January 5, 2004, while people looked forward to the Three Kings Holiday the following day, Berrios drove his microbus out of the Buin terminal and began his day's labors. One of the features of the road included transiting through a narrow alleyway known as Santa Filomena in the town of Viluco.

The time was 5:15 in the morning when Berrios' life was changed for good. Over 150 feet away, barely lit by the microbus' high beams, the driver noticed a figure standing in the middle of the road, but it vanished quickly. He rubbed a hand across his face and wondered if his eyes were playing tricks on him, something all too possible in the darkness.

But when he closed the distance down to twenty feet, a nightmarish creature ran out of the bushes at the roadside, almost causing the driver to lose control of the microbus. The creature leaped in front of the moving vehicle, brushing against the windshield as the force of its jump propelled it into the dense vegetation on the opposite side of the narrow road.

Upon reaching the Las Vertientes bus terminal in Maipo, the other microbus drivers noticed how their colleague unsteadily got out of the vehicle, legs trembling and with an expression of indescribable fear on his face. While Berrios would normally have kept such an experience to himself in order to avoid the merciless teasing of his fellows, he blurted

ture, the press reported that researcher Claudio Ojeda, described as a "computer whiz," had harnessed the power of technology to unravel the mystery of the Chilean chupacabras. With a database of over six hundred images of the supposed nightmare creature, Ojeda determined that at least a dozen different types of the same creature were rampaging through his country's wilderness. "The most common," he told journalists, "are the kangaroo-dog seen in Buin, followed by the cat-faced one and then the gargoyle-like specimen. There are also two smaller specimens."

Ojeda did not hesitate to agree with the widely held belief that the chupacabras or IEA (*intruso espontáneo agresivo*—Spanish for "spontaneous aggressive intruder," the name formally given to the entity) is a paranormal rather than physical or alien creature. "It is an entity with paranormal qualities that materializes in the corporeal dimension of an animal," he told the media. According to his theory, this supernatural entity would be able to cloak itself into invisibility by increasing its electromagnetic field. "[The creature] is invisible to our eyes. It camouflages itself very well; I would say that it adopts the qualities of its surroundings. It may even adopt a variety of colors."

...at least a dozen different types of the same creature were rampaging through his country's wilderness.

Turning to his technological arsenal for help, Ojeda stated that his over six hundred images showing the improbable entity were made possible through the advent of digital photo technology. "Cameras are able to photograph its magnetic field through CMOS and CCDS sensors."

Far from Ojeda's high-tech laden office, the old-timers who knew the Andean foothills and backcountry like the palms

of their hands recalled that one of the nearby mountains—Cerro Cullipeumo, towering over the communities of Buin and Angostura—had once been mined for gold as far back as Colonial times. The workings had been abandoned in the 1950s and could have become an ideal lair for the strange wolf-muzzled entity being reported in 2004.

Researchers from Alberto Urquiza's GEO Group managed to interview an old freelance miner named Anibal Montes, who told them that Cerro Cullipeumo had always been enshrouded in mystery, as with many other Andean peaks. Shadowy figures, he said, were reportedly seen running uphill, vanishing into the mine. But such activity was far older than the recent sightings of the "Viluco Monster," as the creature was being called. Reports of such high strangeness events go back to the 18th century, but regained intensity in the early

1970s when a military man engaged in maneuvers in Caquena in far northern Chile came across 13 dead llamas—their heads completely shaven and their eyes removed. The soldiers in his platoon looked in vain for traces of blood, but could not find any. Since neither footprints nor tire tracks were in evidence, the military man believed that the “predator must have arrived by air.”

Although the chupacabras has been linked to the UFO phenomenon by some, there appears to be a clearly marked distinction between both phenomena, as occurred in Puerto Rico in 1995 and Mexico in 1997. Chilean researcher Liliana Núñez Orellana finds a similar situation in her country: “I can also state that there exists a ‘disconnect’ between UFOs and unexplained animal deaths. This working hypothesis is sustained by more than 1,000 articles published throughout the country, as was shown in the 2000–2003 period.”

Back to the Egg

While Chile endured the ravages of the dozen different manifestations of the chupacabras described by Claudio Ojeda, the embers of the paranormal predators’ mid-’90s depredations still burned in the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, where it all started. While the entity no longer commands the media attention that turned it into a cultural icon, even the infrequent reports obtained by private researchers remain intriguing. José Martínez Echevarría, a UFO and paranormal researcher from

the southwestern corner of the island, has looked into a number of hair-raising encounters between humans and monsters in recent years.

The chupacabras attacks in the new millennium started on July 28, 2001, in the La Joya sector of Guánica, on the island’s southern shores, where a small farmer known only as “don Gustavo” lost a total of 60 pregnant sheep—a considerable financial blow—to an unseen, blood-sucking predator. The elderly farmer did not pursue the matter with the authorities or with researchers, choosing to ascribe the damage to stray dogs.

A few days later, Carmelo Sepúlveda woke up to find that his pet rabbits, kept in backyard hutches, had been attacked in the small hours of the morning by a mysterious assailant that caused watchdogs to become either unresponsive or downright craven. It was one of Sepúlveda’s neighbors who, awakened by the screeching rabbits at three o’clock in the morning, turned on his outside lights and managed to catch a glimpse of what he took to be “a child” standing beside one of the cages, but he was unable to make out the details. The intruder hid behind one of the hutches and the rabbits’ screeching soon came to an end.

The attacks began to repeat at precisely the same time in the morning throughout the entire La Joya sector. Martínez and his group found three and four-fingered claw marks on cages that contained everything from rabbits to fighting roosters, proving

marks on their necks.” Nicaraguan descriptions of the chupacabras were identical to the ones coming from Chile—a mixture of dog and kangaroo, with hind legs larger than its front ones and very bright red eyes, “very shiny eyes,” according to the newspaper.

But Tolapa wasn’t the only location in Nicaragua visited by the strange entity. Professor David Castillo told the *El Nuevo Diario* newspaper about how five cows had been attacked and bitten on their necks on a ranch in northern Nicaragua, claiming that he had actually managed to see the perpetrators of these bloody attacks—not kangaroo-legged aberrations from another world, but truly immense vampire bats measuring nearly two meters (seven feet) between the tips of their outstretched wings. So aggressive were these creatures, Castillo told journalists, that they could attack several animals at once, drawing prodigious amounts of blood from them.

Castillo’s report suggesting the possibility of vampire bats as the cause of the chupacabras attacks in his country echoes a report from Mexico in 1997 that placed the blame for at least some of the animal mutilations on a bat known as *Vampyrus spectrii*. The *El Sol Veracruzano* newspaper (May 17, 1996) stated this large blood-sucking bat was being brought to the American continent clandestinely by a satanic cult known as “Golden Lucifer.” A truck accident caused a cage carrying a pregnant female bat to break open, allow-

ing the specimen to fly off into the dense vegetation of the surrounding area.

It Never Went Away

Some thought it was all over—a phantom of the hectic mid-1990s, either a product of millennial fever or Clinton-era paranoia. The garish T-shirts depicting the bizarre entity and its antics had long since been shredded into rags destined to worthier applications, such as the washing of windows or of cars. But even those who felt that the chupacabras were well behind them were not ready for the entity’s persistent manifestations in the early years of a brand new century. Why did this chimera lack the good grace to fade away and cease troubling the minds of humans across an entire continent? In retrospect, we cannot say that the chupacabras ever went away. Like a flesh-and-blood predator, it exhausted its areas of predation and moved on to new ones, although how this gargoyle-like entity managed to appear in so many places still defies explanation: Puerto Rico in 1995, Mexico and the U.S. mainland in 1996, Spain in 1997, Brazil in 1998, and Chile in 2000. Although its manifestations in the northern hemisphere have been infrequent, it still appears south of the equator, spreading fear in its wake. ☸

Scott Corrales is a frequent contributor to FATE. He is the editor of *Inexplicata: The Journal of Hispanic Ufology*.



that the assailant was an equal opportunity predator. There was also the interesting detail that, judging by the large and small footprints around the cages, two predators were at work—a larger and a smaller one.

Positive ID of the creature came a week later, when other neighbors of the Sepúlveda family were boarding a van in the middle of the night to get to their jobs at a bakery. The female neighbor saw a strange red light in the darkness shining against the vehicle's side; when she tried to find its source, she realized to her horror that the light came from the glowing crimson eyes of a shadowy figure standing among the trees. "She got into the van and took off," says José Martínez, "without saying a word to her husband until they reached the bakery. Her husband believed that it was merely a reflection of streetlights against the van's metal, but upon investigation, it was proven that said streetlight does not reflect on the vehicle. Therefore, the area was completely dark. This leaves the possibility that the red light came from the creature having climbed up the fruit tree's branches. This case was filed with the Puerto Rican police as complaint number 01-3-029-02908."

On September 2, 2001, a teenage girl living on the second story of Carmelo Sepúlveda's house became the second witness to describe an encounter with the creature. The young woman was feeding her baby when she heard a rattling sound outside her window. Thinking someone had

come to collect beer bottles left along the low wall surrounding the dwelling's carport, she noticed a shadowy figure "waddling like a penguin." Bravely going outside to check, she described a "black shadow some three to four feet tall" making its way through the tropical darkness. She called for her mother to come and see, but to no avail. The sinister presence was gone.

The Nicaraguan Episodes

Nicaragua never occupied a prominent place in UFO/paranormal rankings until the year 2000, when excitement of the possible death by shooting of a chupacabras-like creature by Jorge Luis Talavera, a farmer from the town of Tolapa, made the pages of newspapers around the world. The creature's carcass was taken to the University of Nicaragua at León where something very strange happened—official photographs were released on a daily basis showing the alleged chupacabras carcass getting smaller, until veterinarians were able to dismiss it as "merely the remains of a common dog." The farmer claimed that the authorities had deliberately switched the remains to extinguish the story.

Two years later, the paranormal predator staged an unexpected reappearance in this Central American nation. In August 2003, peasants from the town of Tolapa once again told authorities that their flocks of sheep had fallen under attack, slain by a blood-sucking predator. One farmer, Alicia Icabalceta, reported losing 12 sheep whose remains showed "two puncture

in exchange for their silence. "Some are told that it's a loan they can use to acquire new cattle, and others are told that they can use it as they will, provided they don't report the events." (*La Estrella de Calama*; thanks to Scott Corrales)

A Very Personal Theft

A Nigerian witch caused trouble for a man and perhaps even more so for herself when she stole his member.

It is widely believed in that country that a witch can steal a man's sexual organ by incantation or handshake. Although no one actually saw the theft take place, the woman was stripped, beaten by a mob, and dragged half-naked down a busy street. The man's accusation, as he tightly gripped his crotch, was sufficient for the mob. (Thanks to Magus Books)

Nothing New

FATE's November 2000 cover by world-famous artist/cartoonist Robert Crumb drew some praise (see "Report from Readers," page 42), but also shocked some readers and led them to object to Crumb's raunchy, explicit style. But this is nothing new in the history of FATE or of magazines in general.

A letter from Walter Sobel in a 1951 issue of FATE says, "When I buy FATE I carefully rip off the covers so that my friends won't think I'm reading junk."

In the 1930s, the pulp magazine *Weird Tales* featured the work of authors such as H. P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard. They also had covers that were much more lurid than anything that has ever appeared on FATE. Reader reaction, however, was often hauntingly similar. In the June 1934 issue—almost 67 years ago—a reader complained: "I do enjoy *Weird Tales* and usually manage to acquire one each month, even though I do tear off the cover immediately and stick it in the nearest receptacle for trash. Are such covers absolutely necessary?"

Actually, they probably were, because they boosted the circulation of that struggling magazine. However, we at FATE sincerely apologize to any readers who may have been offended by Mr. Crumb's in-your-face depiction of a female bigfoot.

Shut Up About Chupacabras!

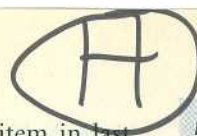
Chupacabras continue to cause unexplained phenomena and "backlashes" among the population of various rural sectors in Calama, Chile. The locals, who wished to remain anonymous, indicated that strange noises have been heard on their rooftops over the course of past evenings, and their animals were spooked.

They remarked that the lack of street lights in certain areas makes the situation all the more distressing: "Dogs whine when they hear footsteps on the rooftops, and a strong smell of decay can be perceived throughout the entire day."

Some peasants noted that they have again started to lose animals, but claim they have received orders to keep silent regarding any cattle deaths in order to avoid creating public alarm. "We must stifle ourselves."

Furthermore, some of the affected parties claim to have received visits from "unidentified agencies" willing to "pay" them a certain amount for each animal lost

HUMANOIDS



I See by the Papers

city is presently proposing extending a six-lane highway, which would cut right through the 17-mile stone ridge, destroying several of the 2,000-year-old petroglyphs.

"Our cultural areas are being sacrificed to make it easier to live here," said Steve Junico, vice chairman of the All-Indian Pueblo Council. "There is a monster out there larger than Godzilla, and we are powerless against it."

The city's mayor, Jim Baca, as well as conservation groups, National Park officials, and tribal leaders are protesting the proposed highway extension that would make the city more accessible to a new 60,000-person subdivision, but they aren't confident that they can stop it.

And still another U.S. site is being bulldozed in the name of progress. An item from the Jackson, Mississippi, *Courier Ledger* reports that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers "is preparing to bury the site [in Kennewich, Washington] where 9,200-year-old human remains were found in 1996....Scientists believe the bones may be the earliest evidence of humans with Caucasian features in North America." Nevertheless, the Corps of Engineers wants to bury the site to reduce erosion along the Columbia River.

Between El Niño (see the item in last month's "I See by the Papers" about El Niño's impact on ancient sites in South America), thieves, progress, and the normal effect of climate and use, the world is losing many important pieces of history this year.

Chupacabras in Pennsylvania?

An interesting report from Hopewell, Pennsylvania, tells of the deaths of goats, sheep, and rabbits, many of them found with the same kind of wounds that the chupacabras of Puerto Rico and other southern places left behind.

Rena A. Koontz writes in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* of animals left dead but unconsumed. Wolves kill to eat, so authorities don't think wolves had any part in the recent carnage. Mysteriously, some animals were taken right out of the flock without arousing the notice of sheepdogs. One goat had puncture wounds in its neck, and another had them in its side. No one has witnessed any of the attacks, and no villainous animals could be lured by traps.

Despite the similarities to chupacabras attacks, however, Hopewell authorities don't

Magic Number.

Among the many popular and bizarre forms of exercise the Chinese are currently indulging in (see "Don't Know Whether You're Coming or Going?" page 6) is *dong yi gong* ("intelligent medicine discipline"), reports Craig S. Smith in the *Wall Street Journal*. Adherents perform simple movements and shout or chant the number 3396815. Chanting this number "will cure gallstones, settle love spats, and help flagging businesses," says Chen Jinghua, who promotes the activity in a public park.

Suicidal States.

Nevada had the highest suicide rate in the U.S. between 1990 and 1994; Washington, D.C., had the lowest.