Opinion

Photo of the Day | Student Life



A student walks down a path near the Student Union Lawn under the autumn trees. Many students cross this area to grab a bite to eat or to reach other classes.
PHOTO BY ANDY CHERY, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HISTORICAL CRYPTID?

It's Halloween season at The Daily Campus, and people are getting into the spooky spirit. Today, the Opinion Section asks the question, what's your favorite historical cryptid and why? Legends of many storied, sinister and supernatural beings have passed down to us throughout the years, so which one are you partial to?

by Evelyn Pazan
STAFF WRITER

As a die-hard New Jerseyan, I hold the Jersey Devil, the country's only official state demon, near and dear to my heart. The Pine Barrens of New Jersey are spooky enough as is, but when you are also worried about an evil horse-bat-dog-kangaroo lurking in the marshes, it's enough to make you think twice about wandering there at night. What I like best about the Jersey Devil is the origin story behind it, and it's not-so-gentle reminder to watch what we say.

by Maddie Sparta
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

When you grow up in both California and Texas, you obviously hear about the chupacabra — the mysterious blood-sucker apparently found in Hispanic America and the Southwestern U.S. I'm a chupacabra defender mainly because of my dad, who'd put on his best vaguely Spanish accent and use it to scare my brother and I into bed under threat of it "getting us." So of course I'd defend it; it's an actual, tangible threat!

by Dria Rybczyk
CONTRIBUTOR

Although we know many cryptids today with unprovable fantastical stories, there are also some previously rumored creatures that have since been documented as real animals. The giant squid was once a legend on the high seas, a massive squid large enough to drag an entire boat below the waves. Nowadays, however, scientists have recovered multiple giant squid specimens that can be seen in museums, while we have very few sightings of them in the ocean. The largest specimen ever found has a mantle that's over seven feet long, with its feeding tentacles extending its reach by a terrifying 33 feet, all stretched out. It may be no Kraken, but that's definitely big enough to endanger a rowboat or two. So, like the sailors of a not-too-distant past, giant squids never fail to drum up some thalassophobia in my landlubbing heart.

by Xavier Hazel
CONTRIBUTOR

From the very hills that serve as our back country, my favorite cryptid for its American parallels to La Bête du Gévaudan of France, is the Glawackus, or the northern devil cat. It is a CT native first reported in Glastonbury in 1939, when local pets went missing or crawled home injured. It has been described as a massive wild cat, a dog-cat hybrid, or some mix of dog, panther, and bear with glowing bright night eyes. In the middle of the night, it screeches a blood-curdling scream, reminiscent of that of the native fisher cat, which may be its distant, diminutive cousin. So, if you're going on a walk on the edge of campus by the woods, be wary of waning eyes and needled teeth licked clean and shining.

by PJ Bekkali
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

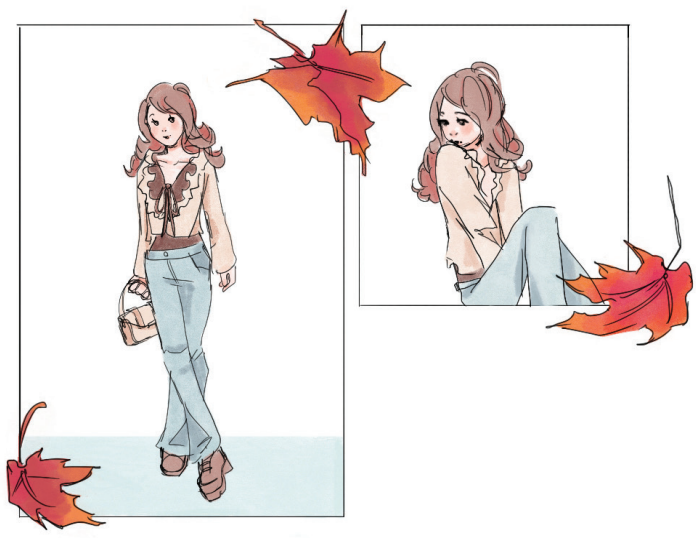
My favorite cryptid is the Lepus temperamentalus, or the jackalope. The elusive jackalope is a jackrabbit with the antlers of an antelope or a deer. It has been known to mimic human singing and boasts a vocal designation of the tenor class. I recently did an artistic study on the mechanics of rabbits and hares, during which I frequently stumbled on (possibly doctored) pictures of jackalopes in motion. Previous to my study on Leporidae, I had completed a study on deer, so the antlers of the jackalope were eye-catchingly familiar to me. Although I have stumbled across both deer and rabbits roaming the grounds of UConn during the twilight hours, I have yet to come across a jackalope. If/when I do, I hope that I have my sketchbook on me, and that the jackalope would be willing to pose for a quick life study or two. It is imperative that the visuals of this intriguing creature be shared with the greater public.

by Victoria Hancock
STAFF WRITER

I have always had the biggest heart for my dear friend Mothman. He comes to me like a long-lost friend who lurks in the night. Residing in the small town of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, he emerged in the 1960s with his 7-foot-tall frame, beading red eyes that stare right through your soul and giant bird-like wings. It's not his fault that he only comes out at night or that he's easily spooked; humans are scary, and Mothman must defend himself. I long to meet him one day and attend the Mothman festival in Point Pleasant to celebrate my dear friend because, at the end of the day, he's just a little guy with a big heart trapped in a giant winged body.

by Rose Megyola
CONTRIBUTOR

The Platypus! Unlike most cryptids, this interesting little fella was myth until recently, and its discovery is fascinating. After it was sighted by Europeans in 1798, British scientists who got their hands on a specimen thought it was an elaborate hoax. I mean, how could something possibly have traits of not only birds and mammals, but also reptiles!? They were convinced that taxidermists sewed it together piece by piece. Gasp! No stitches were to be found! It now is preserved in a British museum, scissor marks and all, demonstrating that absence of evidence is not proof of absence. This technically leaves open the possibility for other cryptids to be real, too. So, be on the lookout this weekend, and submit tips to The Daily Campus if you see anything spooky. Happy Halloween!



COMIC BY KIRA YOUNG, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS