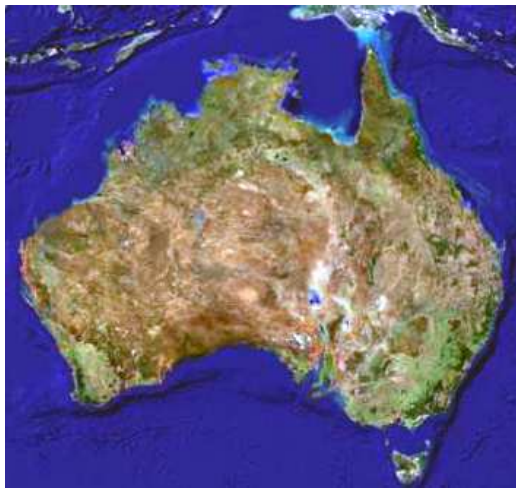




Artistic rendering of a yowie by Barry Olive. The creature's eyes reflect light like other animals, so are often seen as shown here reflecting car headlights.



This satellite image of Australia shows its extensive green belts.



Torres Strait separates Australia from New Guinea. Numerous islands dot the crossing. We

believe the yowie migrated to Australia from Asia. If yowie are like sasquatch, they are remarkable swimmers, and possibly used the islands like stepping stones to gradually reach the Australian mainland.

Satellite images from Google Earth.

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The Australian Yowie

With a landmass 82 percent that of the United States, and about 628,000 square miles of native forests, there can be no doubt that Australia could support a sasquatch-like creature. Indeed, the similarities between Australia and North American on this subject are truly astounding. I will mention here that apes of any sort are not native to Australia, and for Aborigines to describe something that has ape-like characteristics is highly unusual (an interesting parallel with North America).

At some point in recent times, the term “yowie” evolved as Australia’s common name for the creature, and its general description matches that of sasquatch or bigfoot (tall, massive, ape-like, covered in hair, bipedal). Australia’s aborigines have deeply embedded the creature in their culture, and some even give it spiritual significance like many North American Natives give the sasquatch (another parallel). The antiquity of the yowie, real or imagined, is indicated by an ancient Yalanji pictograph at Cape York that depicts what these people term “a hair-covered man who towers above the tallest trees.”

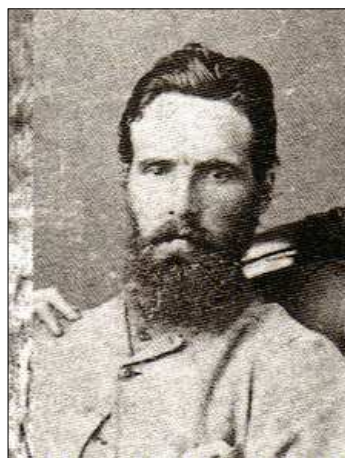
Native legends, however, were not taken seriously until settlement of the continent pushed back the frontier to the point where non-natives sighted the creature. Current research indicates that the first reported credible sighting by a European occurred in about 1848. The witness, a shepherd, persisted in asserting to the day he died that he saw a hairy man who walked upright, and his (the shepherd’s) dogs that hunted everything else ran back from the creature with their tails between their legs.

Since that time, about 300 well-documented yowie sightings are on record. While this number might seem low, we must take into account the size of Australia and its relatively low human population (about 20 million people, of whom very few venture into the outback). Like North America, Australia is so large that meaningful exploration to this time would be rated “insignificant.”

Unfortunately, hard (or reasonably hard) evidence to support the existence of the yowie is difficult to obtain and sadly lacking. The climate and soil in Australia (generally) does not provide the opportunity to find and cast good footprints. Furthermore, high interest in the subject is restricted to a small number of people (finding evidence requires someone to look for it). Certainly, this situation will dramatically change when more meaningful evidence is produced (photographs or videos). Indeed, as research in North America moves forward, we can be sure that added sasquatch credibility here will impact research in Australia and other parts of the world, or vice versa.



Yalanji pictograph showing a giant hair-covered man. Similar depictions are found in North America. (See: Chapter 1: First Nations Sasquatch References.)



(Top) In 1885, the Webb brothers (Joseph [left] and William) shot at a yowie in the Brindabella Mountain Range. (Lower) Sketch of the creature made by a witness in the Webb brothers' group.



Clyde Shepherdson points to the location between Nanango and Maidenwell, Queensland, where he had a yowie sighting in 1938 or 1939.



Alwyn Richards sighted a huge yowie on his property at Killawarra, New South Wales, in 1974. He saw the creature step over the wire fence seen here without breaking stride.

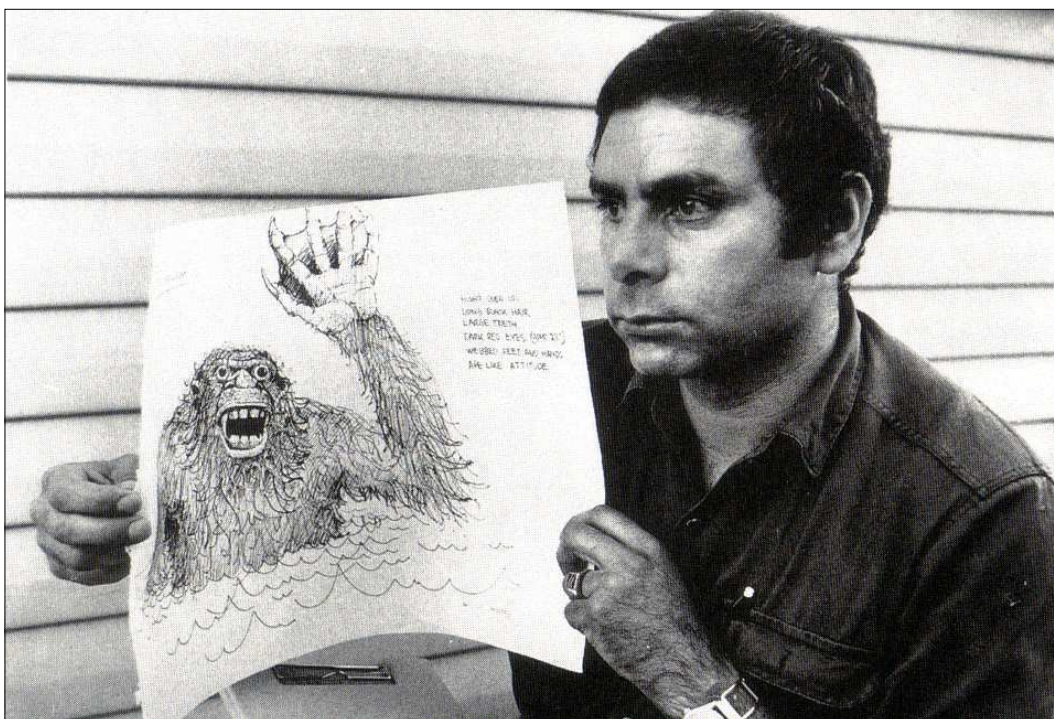


Sketch of a yowie seen by Michael Allison and his two brothers between Casino and Whiporie, New South Wales in late 1974.



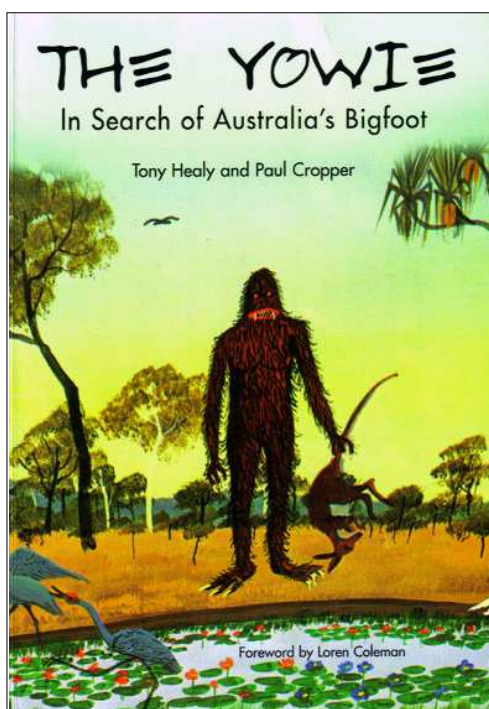
(Above) One of several possible yowie footprint, about 13 inches (33 cm) long, found at Barrington Tops, New South Wales in 1986.

(Left) Andre Clayden holds a cast he made of a giant footprint found near Springbrook, Queensland in 1998.



Brian Verco shows his impression of the mooluwonk (another name for the yowie), said by local Aboriginal people to live near Murray Bridge, South Australia. There is little doubt that the native people described an ape-like creature.

*Tony Healy (left) and Paul Cropper are the primary Australian yowie researchers. The two authored *The Yowi: In Search of Australia's Bigfoot* (Strange Nation, Australia, 2006). This book brings together three decades of intensive research on this fascinating creature which, like the sasquatch, is among the world's most intriguing phenomena.*



Tony Healy (left) and author at the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, 2007. During his visit, Tony showed me videos of yowie witness interviews he and Paul Cropper had made. Like many sasquatch witnesses, the people interviewed were very sincere and positive about what they claimed to have seen.