



Monster Hunt: Exploring Mysterious Creatures with Jim Arnosky

By Jim Arnosky

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Legendary creatures such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster hold endless fascination for people around the globe. Do these creatures really exist? Countless eyewitnesses say yes, and scientists are discovering new animal species every year, so perhaps it isn't impossible. But how would such large animals survive? Where would they live, and what would they eat?

In *Monster Hunt*, Jim Arnosky presents mythical creatures of the past and gigantic prehistoric animals that have survived to the present. He examines accounts of Kraken, Bigfoot, and Nessie, and then invites readers to join him in exploring what might be living in the deep waters of Lake Champlain. With its combination of folklore, natural history, and field research, this beautifully illustrated book is ideal for anyone who is curious and enjoys a little mystery.

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Monster Hunt: Exploring Mysterious Creatures with Jim Arnosky By Jim Arnosky Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

Arnosky investigates whether legendary beasts like Bigfoot might exist, in this introduction to cryptozoology and nature's as-yet-undiscovered secrets. Pointing to the vastness of the ocean, he uses the giant squid as an example of an animal once believed to be mythical, but whose existence has been verified ("the sailors were even right about their glowing eyes"). Arnosky thoughtfully speculates where an animal like Bigfoot might live, "in a cave like a bear, or in the open like a moose?" and searches for the Lake Champlain Monster, which he depicts with its neck gracefully rising above the sunset-lit water. This inveterate naturalist's curiosity should inspire the same in readers. PW"

In this picture-book title for middle-graders, Arnosky invites readers to join him on a cryptozoology adventure, speaking directly and personally about his own fascination with "reports of unknown animals." Along the way, he compares legends to fact and asks if, for example, sharks could be the documented carcharodon from 13 millennia ago, or if the Loch Ness Monster might be a plesiosaur, thought extinct for 100 million years. The expansive format is appealing. A third of each full-page spread features accessible text, while two-thirds are given over to a painting of the subject, such as Bigfoot or the Lake Champlain Monster, separated by a totem pole depicting various elements of the tale being told. The lack of a bibliography is disappointing, though, not only for its missing sources, but also because kids will be so fascinated by these creatures and their stories that they will want to know where to find out more. Still, this offers many opportunities for readers to speculate about these intriguing mysteries. Booklist"

Stating that "[t]oday's mystery could be tomorrow's science," a veteran wildlife observer ponders the existence of such legendary creatures as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness monster. Arnosky's introduction provides a scientific name for the search for animals whose existence is unproven-cryptozoology. In brief chapters, he discusses giant sharks called charcharodon, thought to be extinct; giant squids or kraken, only recently discovered in the ocean depths; Bigfoot and similar creatures that might lurk in North American forests; and the Loch Ness monster, a possible plesiosaur still surviving in Scotland. But the meat of this latest title is his description of an expedition with his wife and three grandsons to search the depths of Lake Champlain for "Champ," a plesiosaurlike reptile possibly living in the waters between New York and Vermont. Realistic paintings spread across the gutters, bounded with a totemlike border made up of further relevant images in natural colors. For example, alongside an illustration of a silverback gorilla (thought to be imaginary until the 19th century), the border depicts a coelacanth and a Komodo dragon. Double-page spreads indicate changing sections. Straddling the line between acceptance and disbelief, the naturalist leaves the question of Champ's existence open for readers, reminding them that when science solves one mystery, another may appear. This personal look at a popular subject is sure to please. Kirkus"

Arnosky invites readers to tag along with him as he goes on a monster hunt. He starts off with ever-popular giant sharks and giant squids, and then returns to land for Bigfoot and other mysterious apelike beasts. Lake creatures (Nessie and the Lake Champlain Monster) are mentioned. Typical Arnosky-style illustrations are compelling, even a bit scary at times. But there's nothing here that's too terrifying. The text is information rich and engaging. This is sure to be a hit with young cryptozoology enthusiasts. SLJ"

About the Author

Jim Arnosky (www.jimarnosky.com) is the author-illustrator of more than one hundred books, and has been honored for his overall contribution to children's literature. Jim travels throughout the United States to

observe, film and draw nature, often taking his grandchildren along. He lives with his wife, Deanna, in South Ryegate, Vermont.

Users Review

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