



Research Article

FIFTY YEARS OF TRACKING THE CHINESE WILDMAN

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ABSTRACT. Upright walking, two meters in height, hands hanging down straight to knees, huge feet, bulging eyeballs, human face and black-red long hair – all of these are the macroscopic features shared in common by the Shennongjia Wildman, the Man Bear in both Jiulong and Yuanbao Mountains, the Himalayan Yeti (the Snowman), the American sasquatch (Bigfoot) and other legendary wildmen across the world. But do they really exist? As an anthropologist, the author has been watching this matter since the late 1950's. He has collected information of relevance for analysis and study, and conducted field research. Having covered almost all the main areas where the Wildman has been encountered in China, he has collected a great amount of first-hand information and materials, including the supposed specimens. Furthermore, as a member of the executive board of the International Society of Cryptozoology, the author has maintained exchanges with other prominent Wildman researchers around the world, and has traveled to North America and the former Soviet Union to make direct contacts with the local Wildman trackers. He has gone through an interesting evolution in his search for the Wildman – from acceptance with reservation, to vacillation with doubt, to basically denial. Now he is trying to conclude what he has experienced in the last 50 years in the form of an academic work, *Tracking the Wildman for Fifty Years*. Here is a summary of the several instances that largely dissuade the author on the matter of the existence of the so-called Chinese Wildman.

KEY WORDS: Yeren, Man Bear, Snowman, sasquatch, Shennongjia, China, cryptozoology

INTRODUCTION

Scientific interest in the Wildman of modern China began in the 1950's. This intensified in the 1970's when the author led a large-scale expedition sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Sciences to the provinces of Hubei and Shanxi, in 1977, and again in 1979-80. In spite of the scope of the investigation, no direct proof of the existence of the Wildman was found. Only footprints, hair and feces presumed to be from the Wildman were recovered. Opinions within the scientific community were divided concerning the Wildman's existence, with the majority rejecting the possibility. A smaller number of scholars concluded that research should

continue, acknowledging that there might be a living species yet to be identified by science. A summary report of the inferred morphological and ecological characteristics and the possible phylogenetic position of the supposed Chinese Wildman was published in 1982.¹ Now thirty years later, the author reviews the subsequent developments and reassesses his position.

All sorts of Wildman hair – each with its own story.

Hair can be used as the physical evidence to prove the existence of a particular living

¹ ZHOU Guoxing (1982) Status of Wildman research in China. *Cryptozoology* 1:13-23.

species. Over the decades I have collected dozens of hair specimens of various shape, length, coarseness and color from the so-called Wildman. Comparative specimens from the order Primates and other animals are among the collection as well. My identifications have clearly shown that to my knowledge not a single real Wildman hair has been collected to date. All specimens were identified as originating from known animals, or from humans.

The Wildman hair collected by YIN Hongfa actually belongs to a serow.

It is said that YIN Hongfa, resident of Qingxi Brook Production Brigade, Qiaoshang Commune, County of Fang, claimed that he encountered a Wildman and yanked out a bunch of hair from it. "I was on holiday that day on May 1, 1974, when I went up Qinglong Village after breakfast to cut kudzu vine and heard footsteps down the hill," he said. "I was then facing uphill while standing on a tree trunk with some cut-off kudzu vines. I didn't spare a look, but simply asked who it was, thinking that it might be somebody else coming for kudzu vines, yet received no response. I was just appalled as I turned back and looked down at the sight of a non-human animal with white hair all over its body. It was walking like a human with its head lowered, so fast that it got to me shortly from 6 m away and reached out for me. I backed up to make way only to find its hand almost on me. Never before had I seen such a thing that I had no idea what capability it had, and since I was alone, I decided to take a bet by chopping at its left arm with my sickle used for cutting the kudzu vines. I grabbed its hair with my left hand and chopped again at its left arm, and it shook its head abruptly and broke a bunch of its hair. 'Wow! Wow!', as it cried and ran uphill, I rushed downhill back home. All I saw when it shook its head and revealed its face was a round red mouth, yet not that of

a monkey, and a head of human size. It was about 1.2 to 1.5 m in height with robust physique and arms of almost human length. The dogbane hemp-like white hair on its head, a bit black at the root, is about 12.7 to 15.2 cm long, covering the upper half of the face. Later, I met an old man, ZHA Chengxian, and asked what the hair was. 'Wildman's' he replied."

The hair provided by YIN Hongfa has been identified by the Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, as from the nape of a serow (*Capricornis milneedwardsii* DAVID, 1869) (Fig. 1). Later, according to FENG Zuojian, researcher of the Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, who interviewed YIN in 1974, "We then considered it a mystery. Why did he say it was Wildman's hair, when obviously it should be serow's? Years later when we visited him again, YIN Hongfa told the truth – that he fabricated the story of fighting the Wildman only to scare the little children away and discourage them from running around at night, hoping that they would come home earlier rather than wander around. And that is it." By the witness's own admission, the said encounter was fictitious.

The Wildman red hair found in Shennongjia region was actually dyed human hair.

The Wildman in the Shennongjia region is known for its bright red hair. The so-called Red-haired Wildman, has hair that resembles the red national flag or the red scarf of the Young Pioneers. This seemed improbable and prompted the zoologists to wonder how such a bright-red animal could remain hidden in the forest. A great amount of red hair samples have been collected by the mountain residents and from extensive locations. Judging from those that I have collected, they vary considerably in shape, being straight or curled (Fig. 2, 3). When observed under a

magnifying glass, they are apparently decayed from black hair since the rest of the hair shaft retains melanin, while some parts remain white, yet to be dyed red. Twice we have sent the red hair samples to academic institutions in the United States for identification, which concluded that they are all dyed human hair. As we know, dyed hair contains completely different elements from the non-dyed, and we just cannot attribute it to the Wildman based on this difference. So can we still say there is red-haired Wildman in Shennongjia region after demonstrating the samples are actually dyed human hair?

One sample of curled red hair delivered for identification was identified as belonging to the Caucasian-like race, i.e. the white race. This seems inexplicable and it remains to be seen whether the result was based on the sample's oval cross-section and whether the cross-section could be deformed under pressure, or by some other means.

**The Wildman hair collected by
JIANG Yong, cameraman, Institute of
Scientific Research, Shennongjia Natural
Reservation Area, belongs to a goral.**

I made acquaintance with JIANG Yong, a cameraman, in the year of 2007 when I visited Shennongjia. I was told that when he was following a family unit of golden monkeys, recording their lives in the winter of 2003, he was accommodated by a peasant named LIU Xunwen, who had picked up several pieces of unknown hair on a hunting journey. LIU suspected them to be the Wildman's hair with the longest 20+ cm. He gave all seven strands to JIANG. Further examination of the hair revealed that it is reddish brown, a color quite close to that of human beings. The hair was thereafter sent to the School of Wildlife Resources, Northeast Forestry University in Harbin, for expert identification. It was determined that the hair actually belonged to a goral (*Naemorhedus*), a kind of bovine, with

long hair on its hind legs and tail.

**The Wildman hair found in
Leigong Mountain, Guizhou Province,
actually belongs to a wild boar.**

Douzhai Village is a fairly remote Miao ethnic village located near the Town of Fangxiang, Leigong Mountain area, Guizhou Province. Here a hunter named LI Ping, who lived in the west of the village, claimed to have seen the Wildman. He heard about it in childhood when his grandfather told Wildman stories, in which two Wildmen, one male and the other female, inhabited the Leigong Mountain. Sometimes the Wildmen would come down to the village to steal food and even babies from the villagers. When LI was about 36 or 37 years old, his father, who was a fan of hunting, usually took him up to the mountain and never came back empty-handed. One day the father and son went hunting again in the mountain, and they separated to a distance of around 200 m hoping for more success. As LI got to a col a gunshot suddenly rang out from his father's direction, and he followed the report. He found his father standing there stunned with an animal lying in front of him. It was human-sized and covered with grey brown hair, resembling a human or a monkey, but yet neither. The father then was somehow scared. Had he shot a Wildman? They discussed the situation for quite a while, and neither wanted to eat it. So they peeled off the animal's hide and carried it back, leaving the flesh to the beasts on the mountain.

Out of fear they didn't mention this experience to anyone. As time passed, the hide decomposed and was eventually disposed of. At the sorry sight of the disposed of hide, LI conveniently pulled off some hair for preservation. Later part of the hair was handed over to my student WANG Ying, who visited LI and found the hair quite strong and the shaft 7 to 10 times thicker than that of an

ordinary human hair. WANG suspected it to be wild boar's hair, but this was objected to by LI maintaining that it didn't belong to a boar according to the identification by the local expert. According to the local hunters who often caught boars the hair is quite different from that of a boar.

The hair sample finally found its way to me after 5 days of travelling. It is around 15 cm in length and brown in color. Compared to the other hair I have collected, it is nothing but straight and rough as mane, indeed far thicker than human hair. Thus it is extremely different from the soft, thin and long human hair. The difference is even greater when it is compared with hair of orangutan, golden monkey and macaque. As written in her blog dated 0950, April 26, 2007, WANG Ying pointed out that the identification by Professor ZHOU Guoxing and the zoologists with Beijing Museum of Natural History revealed that the mysterious hair found in Leigong Mountain turned out to be from the mane of a wild boar (Fig. 4). Recalling the descriptions of the witnesses in Leigong Mountain that this animal, looking like human and monkey but neither, with grey brown hair on entire body and of human size, I truly accepted their words and would never expect it to have been a wild boar. I was disappointed at the result of the local professional identification.

“Tree Hair” was taken for Wildman hair.

According to CCTV's *Fascinating Science* program, WANG Benxue, villager of Xiaodangyang Village, Shennongjia, Hubei Province, picked up a bunch of very long hair on his way to gather herbs in the mountain. It is black and silk-like, slightly curved, without gloss on surface. The longest strands measured 1.4 m. The local people believed it to be the hair of the Wildman. However, experts' preliminary identification indicated that this bunch of hair was actually “Tree Hair”, a rare local fungus (*Pterula umbrinella* BRES), a kind of Clavariaceae umbrinella plant

(Fig. 5). The fibers were not even animal hair.

The Wildmen killed and eaten were bears.

In a large-scale investigation in Shennongjia, in 1966, many supposed Wildman caves, as named by Wildman enthusiasts, were explored. These turned out to contain bear hair and were actually bear denning caves. The confusion was simply due to the lack of knowledge of bear's living habits. According to the villagers' descriptions, the living habits of the Wildman were almost identical with those of bear's. The most impressive fact is that most of the leading characters in the stories about killing and eating the Wildman, could be found still living, and they all confirmed the reported Wildmen in reality to be bears. I was part of the 1977 Shennongjia investigation, and recently revisited Shennongjia and inquired of the timber jacks, who live and work in the woods all year long. Their response was that no Wildman had ever been seen, but bears turned up quite often.

The Wildman killed by Old ZHAO, a geological engineer in Xinjiang, turned out to be a brown bear.

When I was on an investigative mission in the Pamirs region, in Xinjiang, my friend and geological engineer ZHAO Ziyun told me that he had tracked and killed three Wildmen that were subsequently found to be brown bears.

The Wildman foot collected from a village doctor in Henan Province was actually a bear paw.

In July 1882, ZHANG Weihua, from the Archaeological Institute of Henan Province, obtained from a village doctor a so-called Wildman foot that was said to have been passed down for generations. He brought it to Beijing for my identification. By comparing it to the animal specimens kept in my museum, I

found its morphological character identical with the right rear paw of a black bear (Fig. 6). Thereafter, I issued an identification letter, in the name of Beijing Museum of Natural History, to ZHANG Weihua to that effect.

Big footprints are mostly left by bears.

Among the trace evidence indicating the existence of the Wildman, the footprints prevail. There are two approaches to study: 1) field study on the original sample, and/or 2) the study of the castings. When examining footprints in the field, one can ascertain the freshness and alteration with time (Fig. 7). In the case of multiple footprints one can get more information, e.g. the walking pattern, pace, foot size and morphological variation of the footprint maker. These are the detailed information available to us. Attempts at casting footprints usually did not turn out well due to the inferior quality of the materials and the lack of expertise. At the time of the 1977 large-scale investigation in Shennongjia, some investigators made castings that turned out markedly different from the original footprints that had been examined on site. That is to say the footprint casts were unreliable, having apparently been artificially altered during the process of production.

Many large footprints found in the forests are actually bear tracks. The overlapping fore and hind prints can make a single huge one. It could even result in an extraordinarily huge one if enlarged through efflorescence. In 2008, we conducted a simulation experiment using the brown bear in the Liuzhou Zoo. Results demonstrated that the bear's overlapping footprints would be much larger in size than my size-44 (US/Canada size 9) shoes (Fig. 8). Hence it was no wonder that a Wildman's footprint, deep in the mud and effloresced for long, would well exceed 40 cm after being cast in plaster and processed.

The Manbear found in Jiulong Mountain,

Suichang County, Zhejiang Province, turned out to be a macaque.

There is an age-old saying about the Wildman in Suichang County, located in Lishui Region, Zhejiang Province. It has another name among the local people – Man Bear. *The Compendium of Materia Medica*, authored by LI Shishen, has a record of the Wildman or Man Bear in the Chuzhou or Lishui Region of today. On the afternoon of May 23, 1957, a human-like animal with black hair turned up by the stream near the then Zhuantang Village, Shuinan Town, Songyang County. A twelve-year-old girl cowherd, WANG Congmei, followed it for a closer look but was stunned by its sudden turn-back and offensive behavior and cried for help. By that time her mother, XU Fudi, who was working one hundred steps away, came to her rescue. The monster was scared and stuck in the muddy farmland, and was killed by XU Fudi and others. The local villagers had never seen this kind of animal before, considering it the legendary Man Bear. They ate the dead animal's flesh and sent the remaining paws to the county government for reward. The killing of the monster overwhelmed the whole county and was reported on the pages of the county's newspaper.

ZHOU Shousong, then biology teacher of the Songyang Middle School, made the monster's paws into preserved specimens. These were discovered by the Science and Technology Commission of Lishui Region in October 1980, 24 years later. The discovery caused another sensation and received special coverage in some newspapers and magazines. Since these front and rear paws of the Man Bear were potentially the very first material proof of China's legendary Wildman, the discovery even created a sensation all across the world when newspapers and magazines in many countries carried the report of the discovery widely. It had also drawn the attention of the world scientific community,

and even brought the letters from foreign Wildman experts enquiring whether the myth of the Chinese Wildman had been unveiled.

At hearing the news, I conducted a field investigation and visited the witnesses with the assistance of the Science and Technology Commission of Lishui Region and the concerned departments. Then I compared the specimens (Fig. 9) with those appendages of monkeys and orangutans. Morphological characteristics and measurements were assessed; radiographic analysis was done on the bones; the specimen's fingerprints, palm prints and hair were examined. These showed that the "monster" was neither Wildman nor ape, but a large terrestrial macaque. This macaque was 1.2 m in height, 25 to 30 kg in weight, being quite similar to the macaque found in China's Huangshan (*Macaca speciosa subsp.*). It may be the monkey recorded in the Annals of Suichang County as Yuan, resembling it in size and black color, but is not to be seen in the region any longer. Detailed morphological studies and identifications of these specimens were published by the author in the journal *Cryptozoology*.²

The farce of the Society of Wildman investigation of *Maogong*, or Hairy Man.

In 1985, the former Society of Wildman investigation purchased a *Maogong* at a high price in Xinning, Hunan Province. The Society highly valued their purchase and made a flourish of trumpets over it, claiming that it had captured a Wildman alive. Yet the whole thing turned out to be a farce. The *Maogong* was actually an ordinary macaque (Fig. 10).

The *Ku* or the Wildman in the local ethnic language, found in Cangyuan, was neither Wildman nor siamang, but a macaque.

When I was working in Yuannan Province in the spring of 1981, I heard that the Wildman was found in Ximeng and Cangyuan regions. Even the *Spring City Evening*, a local newspaper, at the time reported the tale of the Wildman in Bijiang region. Therefore, I contacted, through concerned parties, the propaganda departments of the Prefecture Committees of Communist Party of China Ximeng and Cangyuan Branches, and tried to investigate the killing of the Wildman there. As I learned the local Wa ethnic group called the Wildman by name *Ku*. I asked them if the *Ku* had a tail, and the answer was a flat "Yes". I asked again if the tail was there or not, and the answer remained the same. Then I told them that with a tail it could not be a Wildman or an ape, but rather a monkey and therefore the field visit was cancelled.

In April 1983, Old WANG, researcher with the Institute of History, Yunan Provincial Academy of Social Science, came to Beijing with a paw specimen of a *Ku* for my identification (Fig. 11). It was a boiled specimen. I was quite familiar with this sort of specimen since I had studied the paw specimens of supposed Man Bear (Wildman) found in Jiulong Mountain, Zhejiang Province in 1980, which actually belonged to a macaque. When WANG showed me his specimen, I knew at first sight that its basic morphology resembled the one I had studied in Jiulong Mountain. It was actually a monkey's paw, which was partially adhesive after being boiled. He told me however that some experts concluded that it did belong to a Wildman, or belonged to a siamang, a relative of the gibbon found only in Indonesia. I totally disagreed, thinking it could not possibly be a gibbon. The fact that the captured *Ku* had a tail was not only proved by the local Wa ethnic people, but the reporting by the newspapers. *The China Youth Daily* reported on May 15, 1983, that LI Yingchang, the Wa ethnic preliminary teacher of Wenghei production team, Manlai production brigade,

² ZHOU Guoxing (1984) Morphological analysis of the Jiulong Mountain "Manbear" (Wildman) hand and foot specimens. *Cryptozoology* 3:58-70.

Menglai Commune of the county, captured an animal, a *Ku* as the Wa ethnic people called it, while hunting. According to the reports, it weighed about 40 kg, stood 1.2 to 1.3 m in height, and had a tail of 2 cm in length.

In 2010 I visited Cangyuan region with among others ZHOU Qing, who was with the CCTV program *Approaching Science*, to investigate the Wildman. As part of the investigative mission we visited Old WANG in Kunming, and were shown the specimen of the Wildman's left paw. It had been more than 20 years and the specimen was completely dried up, its pads were already gone, and not a single trace of webs could be seen between the second and third or the third and the fourth toes.

The *Ku*'s skull specimen, collected and preserved by the Yunan Provincial Archaeological Institute, has quite typical morphological characteristics of a macaque, particularly the tooth crowns on the molar chewing surface (Fig. 12). I later visited the Wa ethnic people who lived in the village and also were part of the hunting then. They all talked of the animal, *Ku*, having a short tail and a red face. I showed them the video of roaring siamangs (Fig. 13) that I recorded in the Hong Kong Zoo and asked if they had ever seen the animal or heard that roar. And the answer was "No" for both. It seems apparent that the so-called *Ku* is actually the short-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*).

The Wildman stone tablet in Yuanbao Mountain, Rongshui County, depicts a monkey rather than the Wildman.

Yuanbao Mountain, highest peak in Rongshui County, Guanxi Province, is located to the east of Jiuwan Mountains. In its high mountains and dense forests the Man Bears can be seen often, according to the local peasants, and the killings of the Wildman were not rare. In May 1995, I led the International Expedition for Wildman in

Yuanbao Mountain, with Professor Krantz, a well-known American Wildman researcher in the United States, as deputy and staffed by both Chinese and foreign experts, searching for clues of the Wildman. Guided by the seventh generation offspring of the hunter who killed the Wildman, we visited the Wildman Waterfall in Baihu Ridge (White Tiger Ridge) where the Wildman was reportedly killed. It is said that a couple of Wildman were there washing their heads by the pool formed up at the waterfall source. When the male was shot and dropped into the waterfall, the female wept for days here at the loss of her spouse. Moved by the scene, the local Miao ethnic people began to sing a Wildman's song to tell this pitiful story. In addition, right at the source of the Wildman Spring in Peixiu Village, at the foot of Yuanbao Mountain, a Double Dragon Spring stone tablet can be found that was erected in 1814, the 19th year of Emperor Jiaqing, Qing Dynasty. The spring was sponsored by MENG Laoshang, a moneybag then in Peixiu Village. One thing peculiar about the stone tablet is the relief carving on its lower right corner, which depicts the Wildman playing with a horse (Fig. 14). In the carving the Wildman is as tall as the horse's head and bending over. It was said to be the Wildman captured and tamed by MENG Laoshang rather than simply an imagined one. Judging from the carving, however, it is more suitable to claim it as a monkey, e.g. a macaque, than a Wildman. It seems the Wildman killed by the villagers was actually a monkey.

The Monkey Boy and hybrid Wildman found in Shennongjia region were simply patients with spinocerebellar ataxia.

The Shennongjia region used to be cut off from the outside world. Thus it increased the likelihood of intrafamily marriages, leading to the genetic diseases suffered by many mentally handicapped. Among these patients,

some suffered from spinocerebellar ataxia (SCA), who were called barons due to their hypophrenia. A SCA patient shows syndromes of small cerebral cranium, light brain weight, low forehead, well developed geisoma, or superciliary ridge of the frontal bone that forms huge brows, narrower and deeper maxilla than normal, and overgrowing occipital ridge at the back of the skull. The sufferers of SCA syndrome therefore have a skull that quite resembles those of primitive hominids. However they were used in hypes about the Monkey Boy and the Hybrid Wildman. Actually similar examples of SCA skull specimens can be found in the laboratory of the University of California, Berkeley when I was studying human fossils there.

The so-called Wildman witnesses were indicted by their own words and behaviors.

By way of illustration, let me cite two of the most revealing cases as follows:

Case I: A teacher in Xishuangbanna claimed that he encountered the Hairy Man, mother and son, but later reversed his words, admitting he had encountered bears.

As it is stated in the preliminary report on the discovery of the Wildman in 1961 by the People's Congress of Mengla County:

The county borders Laos and Myanmar. Due to historical reasons and its terrain, it holds high mountains with few flatlands, and a vast land yet scarcely populated. It is blocked from the outside world, and the local ethnic groups inhabit their own lands. Therefore rare fowls and strange animals dominate the forests where the Wildman has been discovered last year, 1960 and this year, 1961, respectively.

A.(Omitted)

B. Some Mr. XIE, a preliminary school teacher in Mengla, was hunting in the primitive forest between Mengla and Mengbang Counties in March 1961, and encountered two Wildmen, a mother and a son. See Appendix II.

a. We interviewed consecutively LIAO Zhongchao, XIE, TANG Shengyu, Mr. DAO, the

Regional Chief who killed Wildman before, and some military officials from Troop 3764, and made field investigations, plus checking into the documents and written materials. According to the characteristics that we collected we suspected they might be Wildmen.

Appendix II: Testaments by XIE, a middle school teacher in Mengla County:

I love hunting. In late March this year, on a Saturday night, I was carrying a hunting rifle, dry batteries and a mining lamp, heading for the old forest between Mengla and Mengbang. Walking in the miles wide forest in a stockade village of the Bujiao ethnic group, I was lost in the darkness and just could not find the animal's traces even I tried best to look and listen. And it was nearly past midnight that I heard a baby's crying far away that became louder and louder as I was almost done smoking on a tree trunk. A little bit scared, I thought to myself how come a baby's crying since nobody was passing through the forest and the local ethnic groups even warned against entering it. Out of curiosity I decided to go for a look since I had a hunting rifle in hand anyway. Following the sound of crying I moved forward, as I almost reached where the crying was coming from, it stopped. I heard an adult coaxing the baby and humming. It was not easy to spot them due to the pitch-darkness and dense forest. And I was hiding silently, pushing apart the tree branches in front of me, pointing my miner's cap-lamp to where the crying was coming from and holding the gun right. All of a sudden, I turned on the light to find a hairy man crossing its legs on a tree trunk, nearly 7 m away from me. It held up the hands to shade the lamp light, staring at me and shaking its head. All I could see on it was full-body black but slightly red hair and a thin layer of villus on its face. Its upper body was less hairy while the lower from the waist hairy. And it was about 1 m tall, a bit fat and slow-moving. With the hair on its head hanging behind the shoulders, which were wide and flat, it had strong muscular arms and rough human-like hands with long fingers. Furthermore, it had drooping breasts which were growing in a lower position than that of human's and a bit hairy. Looking down, I found its soles clear of hair and toes a bit bent. Back to its face, it had a flat short forehead, thick dark eyebrows and ears covered with hair. Additionally, it had a protruding mouth with yellow teeth and lips embracing the teeth. And it had a saddle nose. At its breast was a baby suckling milk and crying that had brown yellow bodily hair and was bigger in size than a cat. I was getting more and more frightened, yet I didn't back up. With the light on it all along I could get a clear sight of it. I had been thinking of killing it, but I did not since it had a baby to feed and the fear of its fighting back if it were not killed came to mind. So I fired a shot into the

air, but it ignored it; then another shot before it grabbed the baby's hands around its neck, placed the baby's feet on its waist, dropped its own feet onto the ground and ran to hide in the grass. When it was running away it had the right hand on the ground sometimes, and was swaying its body and creeping forward. Then I hastened out of the forest.

And let's look into another article written by the same Mr. XIE titled, How I encountered the Wildman, published in the third volume of the *New Observation*, 1981. Following is the excerpt of it:

It is the mysterious and precipitous dense forests in Xishuangbanna that has trained me, a lone amateur hunting enthusiast, and made me a witness to the indescribable Wildman. And how did I encounter the Wildman?

The story goes back to an early winter night 20 years ago. I was wearing the cap-lamp, shouldering the hunting rifle, and entering the quiet and secluded forest for my beloved night hunting. Around 12 o'clock at night I was following the fresh footprints of a Bengal tiger and heard a sound resonating in a valley of the tropical rain forest at the hot night. I loaded the rifle and followed the sound cautiously, and soon I had reached giant arbor woods where I spotted a giant shadow nearly 20 m away on a slope when my lamp light was shedding on a fallen tree. In the shadow could be seen a pair of shining stripes down in the rain forest's valley. The early winter's mist appearing in the dense woods, tree leaves dripping water drops, and the wet mud leaving tiger's footprints deep inside, suddenly after an ear-piercing owl's laughing, I heard an extremely weird and miserable sound that seemed reflecting lights from an animal's deep eyeholes. It turned out to be a giant black bear sitting on a fallen tree trunk. Its fierce eyesight even caught me, a well-accepted hunter, in a panic. I looked further and found two new-born baby bears in front of its chest, squeezing their mother's breasts mischievously. Thus the miserable sound I heard, according to my judgment, might be from the baby bear that was lost with its mother, hungry and scared, or it might have something to do with the arrival of a tiger. It is said that the female bear feeding her babies could be quite cruel. And the mother bear was then on top of the slope while I was downslope, a very unfavorable position. Therefore I had to call off the idea of hunting the mother bear and her son, and left immediately. But I was still unwilling to part by looking back time and again.

By drawing a comparison between the foregoing two testaments, I believed that the

latter could be true. It should be clear that it is a black bear rather than a hairy man.

Case II: The story that Mr. JIA, resident of Rongshui County, Guangxi Province, was caught by the Wildman and had been running in the mountain for one day and one night was actually a fabrication.

MA Xian, a government officer with the Dong Ethnic Autonomous County, Sanjiang City, Guangxi Province, used to be searching for the Wildman's traces from south to north in Yuanbao Mountain, Rongshui County, Guangxi Province on October 8, 1993, and was told by the local people that JIA Zhixian, a Miao ethnic villager, had been caught by the Wildman and running about wildly in the mountain. At this story, MA Xian immediately found JIA Zhixian, inquired and recorded in details his kidnapping story as follows:

One day in later October, 1992, JIA Zhixian went to Yuanbao Mountain alone to cut grass for his cows. When he was bundling up the grass and ready to return at around 11:00 am, two human-like animals, big and small, were found approaching him unexpectedly. JIA Zhixian felt quite nervous and ran for his life. The big human-like animal that was quite strong was striding and caught up with JIA within only several paces. It caught JIA under its arm, leaving him no chance to free himself. Then the animal held JIA's left hand in its right and dragged him to join its quick paces while being closely followed by the small one. They ran and rested in this way for a whole day and night, and climbed over uncountable hilltops. In the end on a slope the big animal released JIA and went for its own food. For a while JIA was watched by the small animal, yet perhaps due to unbearable hunger, it left him alone. And JIA Zhixian, who was quite weary, took his chance to seek his way back home. During the interview MA Xian showed JIA the colored pictures of the orangutans, and asked: "Do the animals look like those in these pictures?" "No," he took a look at the pictures, "Not at all. This one has short hair with arms and legs on the ground, while that one has long hair and stands upright." Then MA Xian showed him another colored picture of the imagined Wildman. "Just like this", confirmed JIA Zhixian. MA Xian announced to JIA Zhixian and other Miao people present: "The two human-like animals that dragged JIA Zhixian in a run

are just the Wildman we are looking for.”

In 2008 I, together with ZHOU Qing, who was working with Approaching Sciences, Science and Education Channel, CCTV, interviewed JIA Zhixian. With respect to JIA's experience, we raised doubts like, among others, “how the animal could run fast in the well-vegetated mountain” and “how to deal with the hunger after one day and one night's running.” Out of our expectation he fabricated his answers as if he was then in a fairy tale. And the tale goes as follows:

In the lunar August, 1992 when I was cutting grass in the mountain, I suddenly heard something indistinctly. Then I found my hands held by a human-like animal, accompanied by another one, and I was forced to go with them. I could seemingly hear their talking but could not understand at all. And failed as I tried to free myself and cry out for help. The animal holding me under arm pointed forward and a road appeared. We followed this road along, and as I turned my head, I found the road behind us just disappeared. Our first leg was in Liang Village where it bought me a hat, and after put it on, I became invisible. We took some pork from a street vendor for food, and grabbed a handful of rice in one restaurant. Being no more hungry, we continued our journey and made it to Dongtou, a place close to Guizhou Province. There we found a blacksmith's shop where I wanted to buy several sickles. But the shop owner offered only one since, according to him, the trading customs there allowed only one to be sold and more trade would not do any good. Thus I bought one, but stealthily took another one and hid it in my back. Departing Dongtou, we climbed over several cliffs, crossed the boundary river running through the bordering area of Guizhou Province, and reached a place on the edge of Jiuwan Mountain. I cannot remember clearly that place. But anyway there were fairly high mountains, forests and many human-like animals crying, big or small, in the Miao ethnic language. Someone approached and talked to me that the place was very good, and invited me to live with them. He even promised me a government position so that I could work with their Lord. However I refused, saying that I did not want to be a government officer and I would like to go home. Then it was under the pine trees that I found much fungus that looked like mushroom. I said that I had got so much fungus here and should wrap it up with wild grass and took it back home. Yet he tried again to persuade me into staying with them. And an affirmed “No” was all that I cried out in response. Then we argued for a while and finally

he left us alone. I turned around and found that the animals were gone as well. I don't know where they have gone, and they simply went out of my sight. Even more the invisible hat I was wearing was also gone. Tired, I climbed down the mountain slowly. Later Mr. MA Xian approached me, but I didn't want to tell him about this. However I did say something as he persisted. I was then told that it was the Wildman that caught me away.

We even interviewed JIA's wife in private, and have come to know, through the Miao language translator, that JIA actually didn't go out for one day and one night, but ten. She thought he had gone to visit the relatives. According to her, JIA left home at night with a flashlight rather than went to cut pigweed in the daylight. He was lying.

The next day we invited JIA's wife to be present at the interview with JIA, and got her to confirm the number of JIA's days-off. When she mentioned ten JIA got mad at her right away. “How can you talk about ten days”, he said, “I told you about one day.” Then they started to quarrel with each other.

MA Xian was present at the two interviews. Seeing this, he said to the journalist: “I just could not believe what he says. Many doubts are yet to be removed. He has been so messed-up in his story that it would be impossible for me to believe it did exist. Everything is different today. Quite different from when I interviewed him. He was then giving honest accounts. But now it is changed, and it is no more a Wildman case. What he said to me must be fraud. I should forget about everything. It is no more there. Just like this.”

Similar stories are to be counted in my collection. As a result, the accounts of the witnesses are mostly fabricated tales. According to my years of investigation, these witness stories could only provide the information regarding the person who might have seen something and is invited to tell about it. However, their accounts are usually quite brief and unclear. The witness stories we are seeing now are mostly narrated with

the guidance of and processed by the investigators. Hence the more detailed the story is, the more elements of it are likely to be fabricated or embellished.

CONCLUSION

As of now, after 50 years of investigation, the immediate materials of the Wildman among my collection only include hair, specimens of hands and feet, or paws, and skulls, none of which can be attributed to the Chinese Wildman. It is said that a scientific conclusion can only be drawn on the basis of objective entities. From a strictly scientific point of view, i.e., viewed from evolution, anthropology, primatology, and paleoanthropology, the Wildman issue has basically been clarified, which means a Chinese Wildman of biological significance still has not been shown to exist, and simply may not exist.

However, if we expand the concept of “Wildman” to encompass some human-like animals, then we have monkeys, bears, perhaps orangutans or siamangs that quite closely resemble humans when they are standing upright and seen from afar.

On the basis of my personal engagement with the instances enumerated above, I must conclude that the existence of the Chinese Wildman, in the sense of a form of relict hominoid, to be improbable. I should give it a 5% chance. The Wildman might have existed in the past, but today it seems only to exist in people’s minds – in the folklore and cultural memories of ancient times, and in the imagination, ignorance, misidentifications and occasional deceits of the present. Humans possess enormous curiosity and desire to search for explanations. At times I wish the Wildman to remain a mystery of nature forever. As human beings we need mysteries, curiosities, and passions to encourage us to explore nature. Examples of this facet of human psychology are well represented in the search for the true Wildman. Nature is too complicated and too dynamic to be comprehended in a single experience or thought. Therefore, the only appropriate attitude is to deal with the enigmatic honestly, and to explore, reveal, understand, and perhaps eventually solve the greatest mystery ever, seriously and cautiously.



Figure 1. Serow (*Capricornis milneedwardsii* DAVID, 1869).

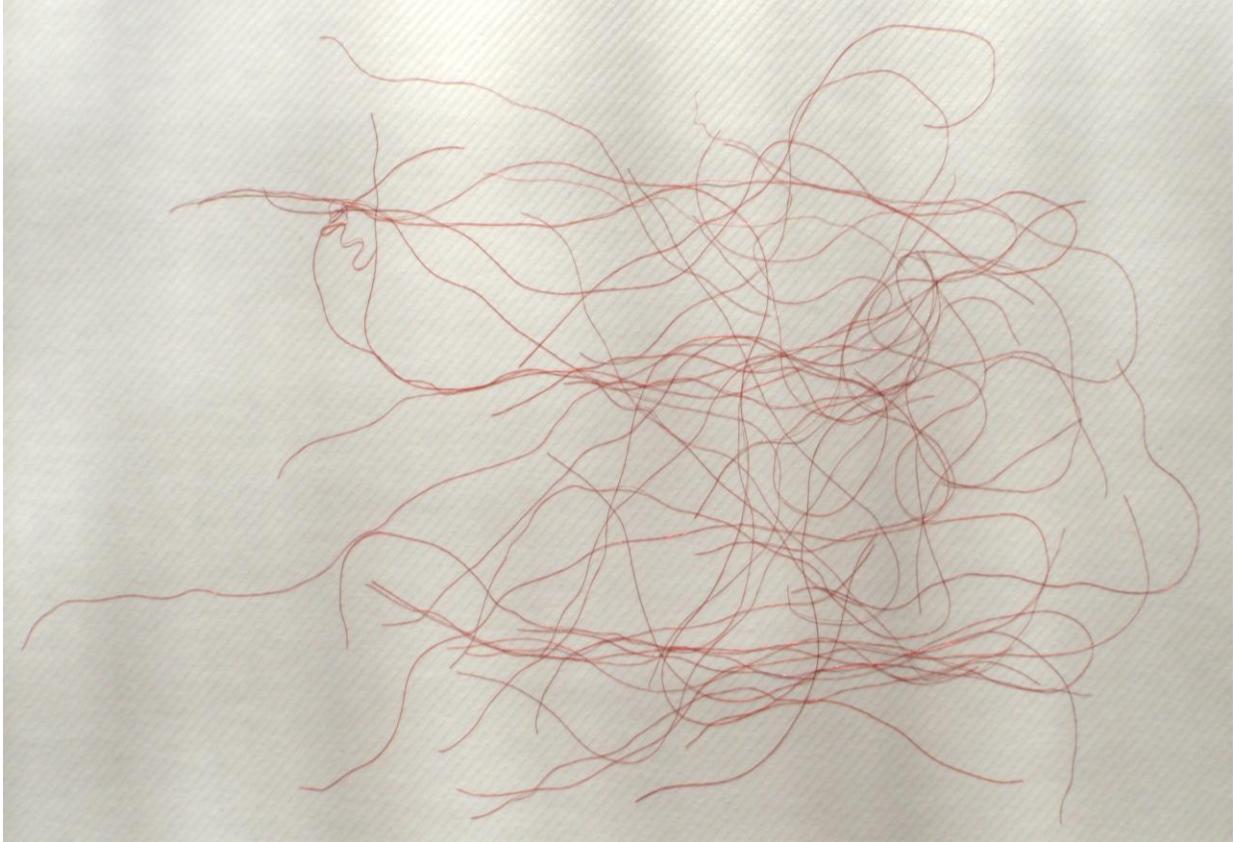


Figure 2a. A sample of curved hair found in Xingshan County, inherited from ancestors.

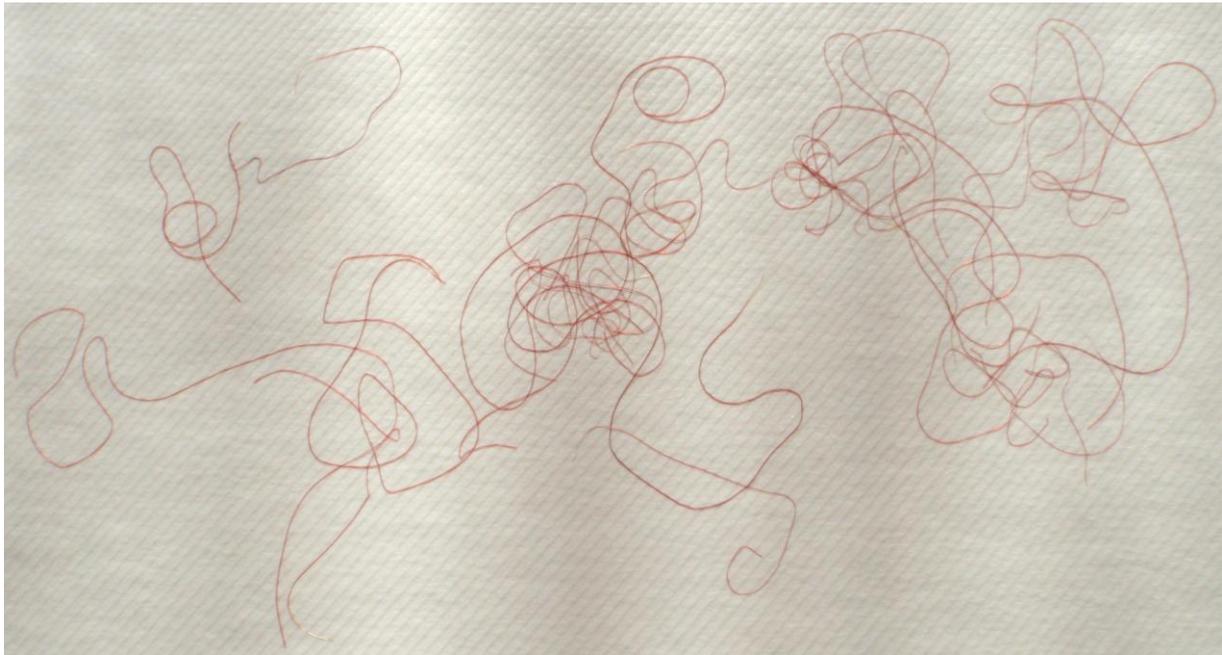


Figure 2b. A sample of curved hair found in Zhushan County by the mountain residents on tress in Hongping and Mochi.

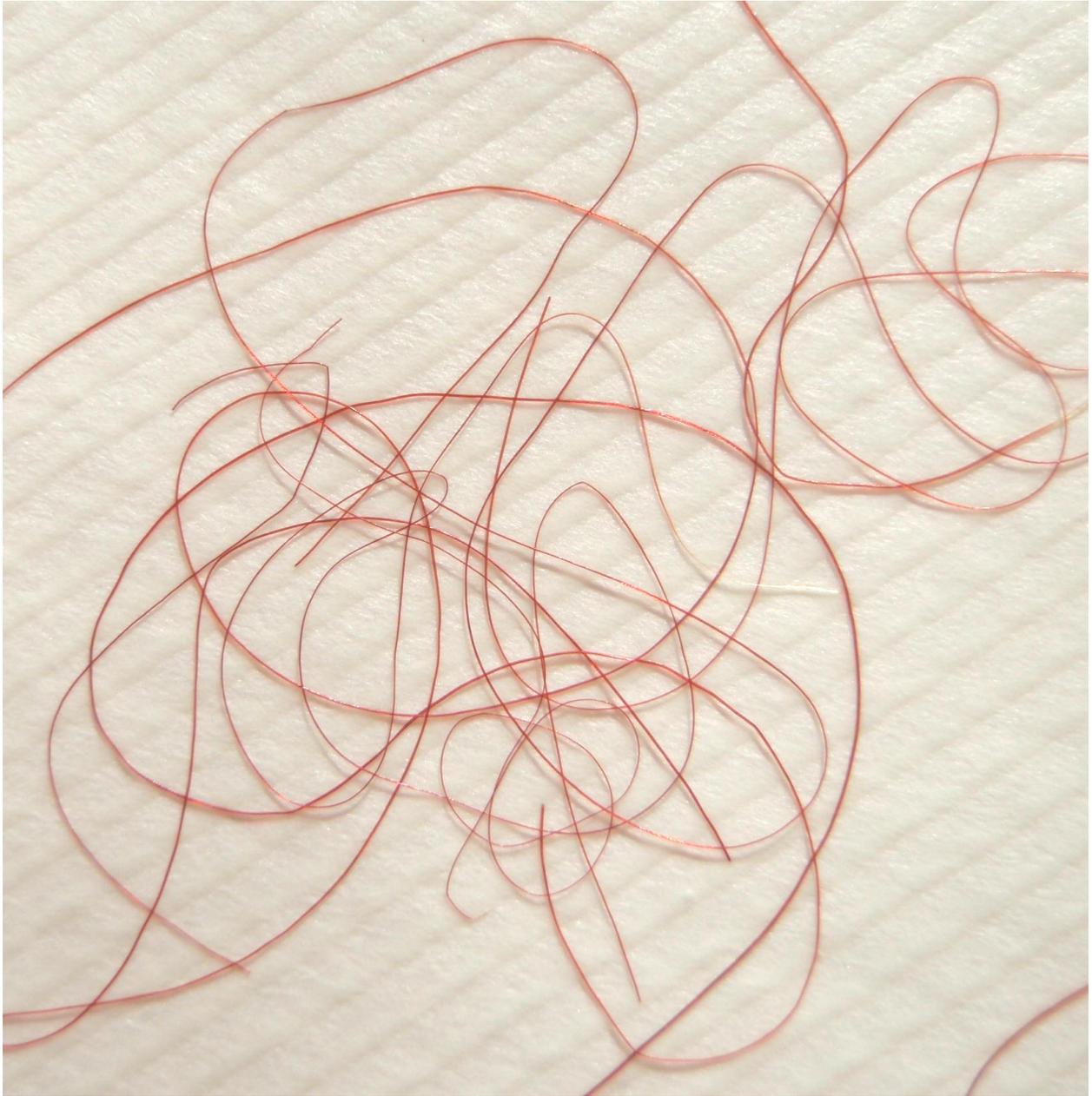


Figure 2c. Partial enlarged view from 1b.



Figure 3a. Sample of straight hair found in the town of Jiudao, Fang County, inherited from ancestors. Partial enlarged view at right.

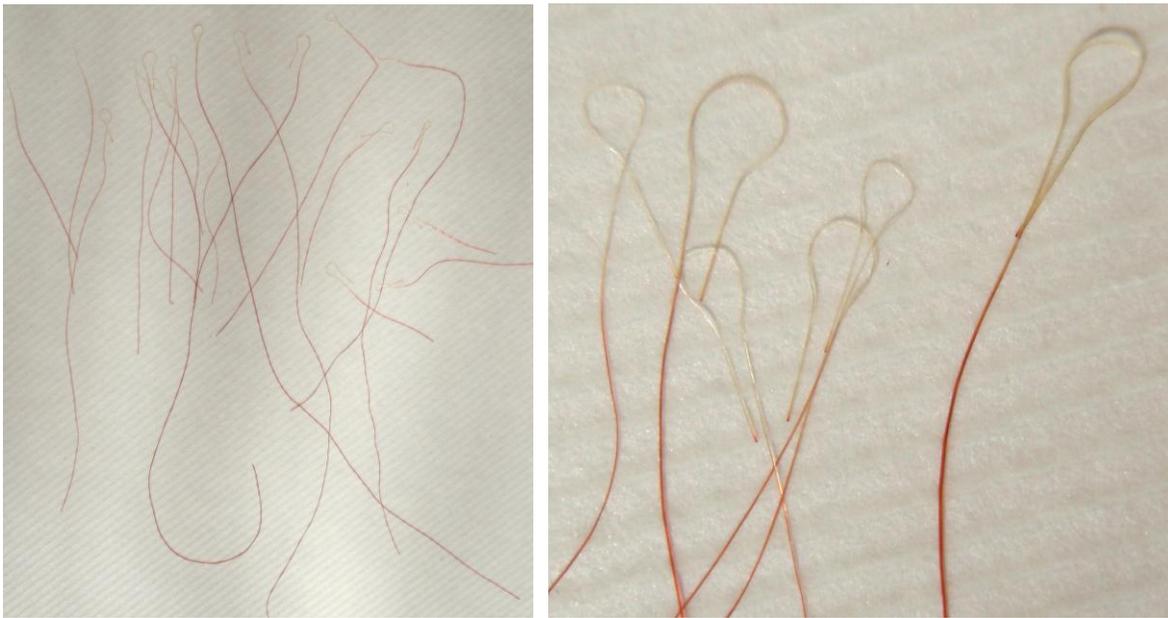


Figure 3b. Sample of straight hair found in the town of Longjiang, Zhu County. Partial enlarged view at right.



Figure 4. Wild boar's hair (*Sus scrofa*).

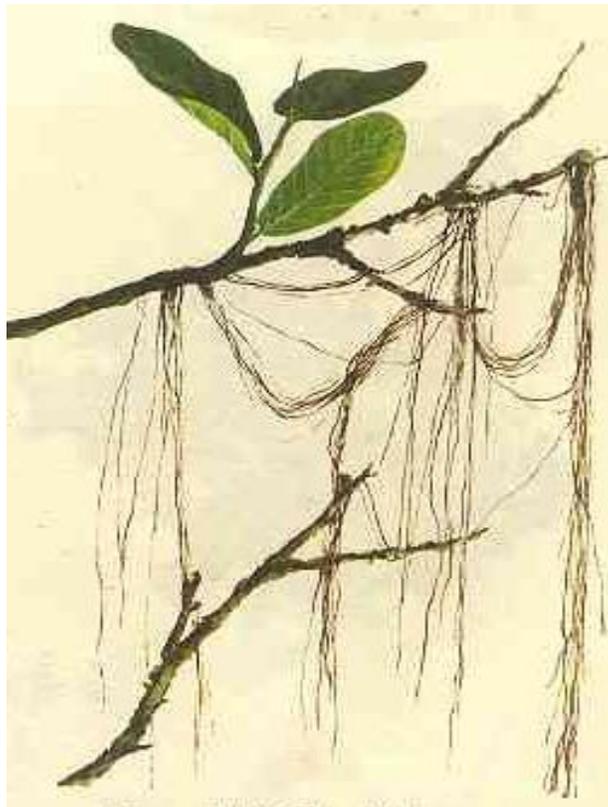


Figure 5. Tree Hair (*Pterula umbrinella*).



Figure 6. The bear's paw mistaken as the Wildman's foot (superior, lateral, and inferior views).



Figure 8. The author examining and photographing footprints in Shennongjia.



Figure 8. A bear's muddy footprints on cement. Note the nearly overlapping fore and hind paws to the left of the shoe, giving the impression of an elongated footprint.



Figure 9. The specimens of right paws (dorsal and ventral views), previously deemed as those of the Wildman killed in Suichang, Zhejiang Province, were identified by the author as belonging to the macaque.



Figure 10. Maogong, or Hairy Man.



Figure 11. Left paws of “Ku” (left) and macaque (right). Note the lack of webs between “Ku’s” toes.



Figure 12. Skulls of macaque (left) and “Ku” (right).

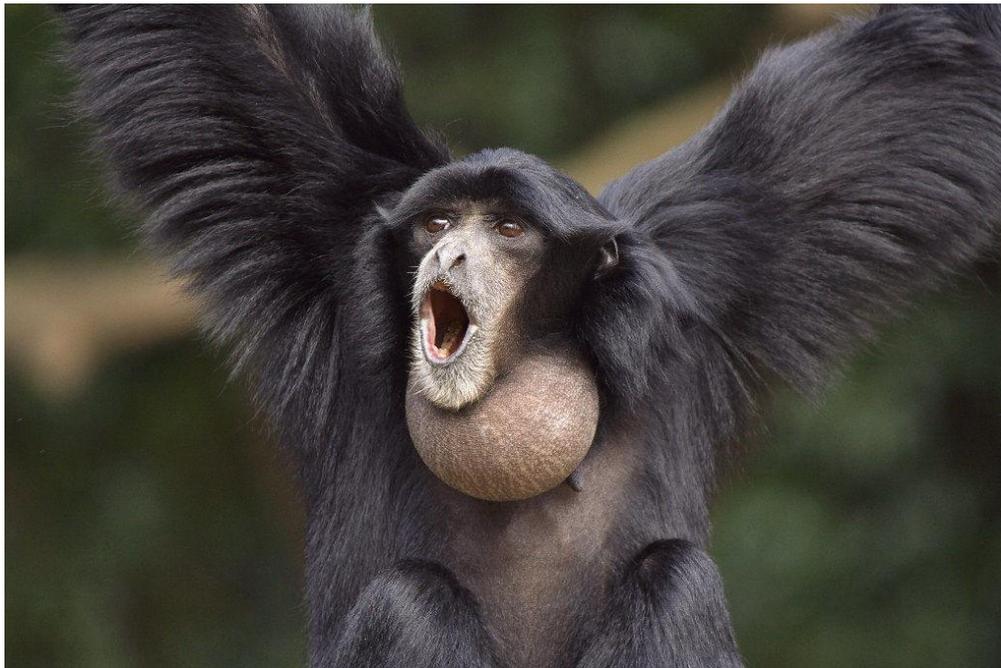


Figure 13. Roaring Siamang.



Figure 14. The Double Dragon Spring stone tablet. An enlarged view of the lower right corner.