

Tall creature steals food out of coolers

Sighting Details:

Date: 10/1996

Time of Day: Night time

Season: Autumn

State: Florida

County: Marion

Nearest town: Astor

Nearest road/Highway: SR 40 and SR 19

Weather Conditions: Very dark, but there was some lighting in the campground, it was a warm clear night.

Approximately 3am.

Terrain of location: Typical Florida terrain, pines, oaks and palm-meadows and the natural spring there. Many lakes, deep forest Ocala Nat. Forest and springs. Much wildlife. The forest is very dense and has a large area along SR.40 that is desolate.

Anything else odd: All animals stopped making any sounds and I smelt a skunk smell. Also there was breaking of branches, movement. A lot of chaotic noise that sounded like a large animal ransacking our campsite.

Other Witnesses: Just me, my girlfriend was sleeping.

Local Stories: I read on this site about sightings in the Ocala National Forest.

Location Details: West on St. Road 40, just past Astor, turn off to the left on St. Road 19 (south) it is in the East side of the Ocala Nat. Forest. This is Alexander Springs campground.

Submitted by witness on: Friday January 26, 2001

Original report:

It was a weekend in October on a Friday night. My girlfriend and I decided to go to Alexander Springs camping for the weekend. We were living in Ormond Beach FL approximately one hour from Alexander Springs. This was a spur of the moment idea that Friday afternoon. We rushed around to pack our 4-man tent, lawn chairs, coolers, and get groceries for the weekend and a case of oysters. We headed for the springs and we in a hurry to get there in plenty of time of daylight so we could set up our tent.

By the time we got our tent set up it was turning to dusk. We realized we had forgotten to buy firewood so we went into town to purchase a load of wood that would fill the trunk of the car. By the time we got back it was dark. The campground had some lighting for safety purposes I guess in case one had to walk to the bathroom, shower facilities. We started a fire and we also began cooking steaks on the grill and eating oysters and other snacks. We had plenty of food to last the weekend packed in our cooler. We ate and cooked our food then played cards till about 3am.

We decided to quit and go to sleep so we could get up early to check out the sights. My girlfriend fell asleep right away and I laid there for about a half hour with a headache and couldn't go to sleep. I was listening to what sounded for sure like raccoons chattering around our site, figured they may be looking for crumbs. Suddenly, the noise of raccoons stopped and everything was silent. I thought it was strange such a sudden silence and I smelled what seemed to be the scent of a skunk. I thought that was strange because I had been living in Florida 20 years and never smelled a skunk. I thought there were no skunks in Florida. I sat up thinking I would go outside the tent and see what was going on, when I looked to my right I saw a shadow cast on the tent from the lighting in the campground what looked to be a man and my first thought was, "surely no other campers would take our food in the night."

It made a noise that I questioned was a bear, but didn't sound like any bear noise I had ever heard and I'm originally from upper Michigan near the Great Lakes. Very remote area with lots of bears and I had seen and heard many in my life. Then I got to thinking, this figure was standing up and not on all fours and was so tall I thought it couldn't have been a man stealing our food. There were not many campers on the grounds that night either.

At first, I was approaching the door of the tent to go out and investigate, when I heard the strange noise again. It sounded like a grunt noise. I did not feel this was a bear but I couldn't imagine what it was. I was somewhat frozen in fear for a minute. Then I started talking to my girlfriend trying to wake her up and she was scared. We only had one small flashlight and no weapons as we sat there stating we wish we had a gun, so I didn't get outside of the tent and could not go to sleep that night.

The next morning at early daylight, we came out of the tent to find a mess. Our coolers had been ransacked, most of the food was gone. I attributed this to the raccoons but realized they were not there long enough to make such a mess. So we laugh about it most of the day and joke about Bigfoot but never did we actually think that was what may have been outside our tent and eating our food. We had to go into town for more groceries that day. Late that night things felt strange and it had been lightly raining all day, to a heavier rain by nighttime. We sat in the tent playing cards, talking about this thing I saw outside the tent.

At work a couple of days later I asked a friend at work, who had been there the week before camping, if she had ever seen any bears there and she said yes. But when I told her what I saw, she said it sounded too weird. It took a few days before I unpacked the car and then realized we had left the tent behind. I called the Ranger at Alexander Springs campground and told them we had left our tent. They stated they wondered what had happened to us. We told them to keep the tent or dispose of it. They said they could store it for us till we came back again. We told them we didn't think we would be back anytime soon, and to go ahead and do whatever they wanted to do with it. We did not tell them our experience and I never told anyone because I thought they would think I was crazy. When I came across this site I was hesitant to report it but my girlfriend has encouraged me too. I know what I saw was not a bear and way too talk to be man or even a talk man.

Other Stories: I read in this site about sightings in the Ocala National Forest. I also had an experience in a remote area of Chiefland Florida, in Levy County. In the summer of 89 I was on a ten-acre parcel way out on a county road in a desolate area with only two other homes on the road. I was living in a bus that had been turned into an RV. I was staying out there putting up a mobile home. I was purchasing the land from a friend and we were building a septic system and we had no power to the property at this time. The mobile home was set up at the back of the property near the woods and the bus was behind the mobile home closer to the woods. I was using a small generator for power at the time.

I had awakened before dawn, about 4am and was trying to make a pot of coffee with my generator. I sat there looking out into the woods and saw several pairs of red eyes. Some far away and some very close to the bus. At first I thought critters in the night. Then I began to wonder how I could see their red eyes as dark as it was and they were high enough up, that they were as high the windows on the bus. I thought critters in the trees, but then I questioned how I could be seeing these red eyes, when I've only seen the red eye in an animal due to a light reflection. These eyes also seemed bigger than an eyes which make me very curious.

I just sat there amazed, while everyone else was sleeping. I had two small children with me also and did not want to wake them and scare them. I don't know what kind of eyes these were but I had always thought them to be very questionable. When the sun rose that morning I rushed down to my friends stand at the flea market whom was helping me with this property. I told him he could have EVERYTHING! Just get me a 32 foot U-Haul to get my family and furniture out of here, I'm going back to Daytona Beach, the city life. I don't know what I saw that early morning before daylight, but to this very day I have always wondered how I could see the red eyes on those animals without any light reflection, and how they could be so high up as high as the windows of the bus.

Follow up Investigation by: Dave S

I have talked with the witness on many occasions, and has given me great details on what he witnessed on both occasions. I believe his reports to true and heart felt. I've been to the Alexander Springs area in Ocala and believe that there possible could be a Bigfoot in this area. The area is dense forest land and the creature must have known this area to have scraps of food, since it was a great place for food with the campers in the area.

The other area in the Levy Co area, is also where many sightings have been reported in the past few years. Although I haven't been out to this area yet, I plan on making a trip out that way in the near future.