

## Big Foot in Bullitt Co.?

### Louisville man on hunt to track down sightings throughout state



Charles Raymond's sketch (actually a witness' sketch)

**MOUNT WASHINGTON** - Mount Washington residents Jim and Darlene Howard recently noticed something unusual when they walked along their property off Bardstown Road.

Roughly half an acre of land beside their home had been ravaged by someone or something and neither could say what.

The earth beneath the ground was exposed in hundreds of spots, indicating that the turf had been pulled back, but there were no clear signs of animal presence.

"We've lived here 40 years and I've never seen anything like it," Darlene

Howard said.

Curious about the mysterious phenomenon, the Howards asked folks around town what could have lifted the sod.

Some speculated it was deer foraging for salt or raccoons rummaging for bugs. Darlene Howard said someone joked that it might have been a Kentucky Yeti or Sasquatch, more commonly known as Bigfoot.

While the Howards scoffed the notion that Bigfoot had tore up their yard, Louisville Bigfoot investigator Charlie Raymond said it's not impossible to think the legendary creature could be lurking around Bullitt County.

Raymond, who works

[www.pioneernews.net](http://www.pioneernews.net)

as a fulltime teacher in Louisville, is the lead investigator and founder of the Louisville-based, non-profit Kentucky Bigfoot Research Group and [kentuckybigfoot.com](http://kentuckybigfoot.com).

For the past 20 years, Raymond has tracked Sasquatch sightings around the state.

Raymond said it's unlikely Bigfoot uprooted the Howards' grass because it's not typical behavior, but he did say he's received at least 15 reports of sightings in Bullitt and Jefferson Counties in recent years.

Raymond said most of the Bigfoot sightings occurred around the Jefferson Memorial Forest in northwestern Bullitt County and Bernheim

Arboretum and Research Forest in the southeastern part of the county.

All in all, Raymond said nearly 200 sightings were reported to the Kentucky Bigfoot Research Group from around the state, though most of them aren't posted on the organization's website for confidentiality purposes.

"People say they see them cross the road late at night...A few hunters have reported sightings and some people will see them in their back yards," Raymond said.

He said people are often in disbelief when they describe their encounters, adding that

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Darlene Howard with some of the unexplained ruts in her yard

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Nevertheless, he said many of the eyewitness accounts he's heard fit the same description.

Raymond said Bigfoot are bipedal and typically have reddish brown hair. He said they stand erect, towering seven-feet tall or higher and they inhabit heavily wooded areas.

Bigfoot are thought to be shy, timid creatures that feed on fruit, nuts and deer, Raymond said.

Hair samples thought to belong to Sasquatch have been collected around the world, and while Raymond said it's difficult to sequence Bigfoot DNA, he said there are scientists close to legitimizing their existence using DNA research.

What are some tell tale signs of Bigfoot?: Raymond said their vocalizations are unmistakable.

"People who have heard them say it's like nothing they ever heard before...wild unrecognizable screams," he said, adding Bigfoot have also been reported knocking sticks against trees and making "whoop" sounds to communicate.

Smells described by witnesses have ranged from rotten garbage and methane to wet dog.

"Some people report tracks; (Bigfoot) are opportunistic, so they will go through trash. If you have fruit trees, they'll eat the fruit off of them," he said.

Raymond said people in nearly every state report sightings on a regular basis. The quest for Sasquatch has become so widespread; the Animal Planet channel even has a



program called "Finding Bigfoot."

As a matter of fact, Raymond recently visited Renfro Valley in southeast Kentucky, where he participated in a Bigfoot forum with the cast of "Finding Bigfoot."

For anyone who would like to report a Bigfoot

sighting, Raymond asked that they contact him through his website, [kentuckybigfoot.com](http://kentuckybigfoot.com).

As for the Howards, they're still not sure what's been tearing up their yard, but Jim Howard said he's inclined to believe raccoons might be the culprit.