



MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

CRYPTIDS

OF MARYLAND



WHAT ARE CRYPTIDS?

A cryptid is a creature mentioned in folklore and stories that scientists have not found to be real....yet.

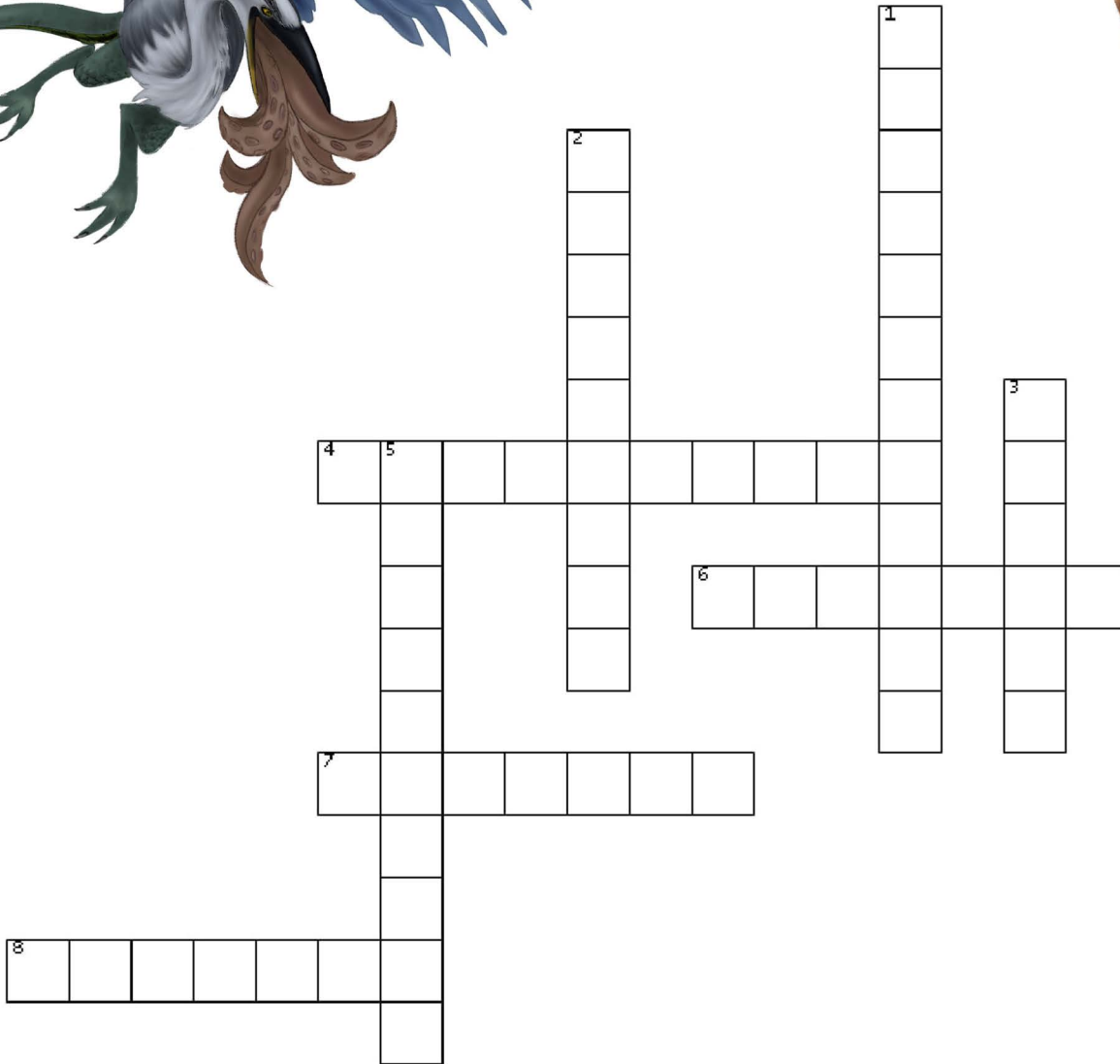


ARE CRYPTIDS REAL?

There is evidence to suggest that cryptids are based on sightings of real animals that are either sick, injured, or just observed exhibiting weird behavior.



CRYPTIDS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT!



ACROSS

4. Maybe just a mangy fox
6. Local Prince George's County resident, wearing stylish hairy pants and horns
7. An antlered beastly from Algonquian folklore
8. The best swimmer in the Chesapeake Bay and champion of Bay health

DOWN

1. Part dragon, part bird, found near Frederick MD
2. Found in the Pacific Northwest, this tall fellow is a cousin to the Yeti
3. A wolf who stands very tall
5. OK this large aquatic salamander is real

FIND THE CRYPTID

N A E T S P M Y L F Z H S N Q
J G O A T M A N I O W Q C O J
L T N N O T V A B L A P Z V K
X D X H E N K Q F K P D M V S
P C M U C K R V D L A Q F N R
H N H F B R Y L P O Q X M Z E
L H D E O M Y F J R E W G T J
D F I I S G X P T E M E Q M Y
W O I G F S L M T K F A K M D
E T N W N N I F B I D C Z M E
N Y S R V A F E D P D T J B W
D P S N A L L Y G A S T E R A
I E B J V R M A R Y L A N D Y
G O L N A I G C L X Q A M T O
O C H U P A C A B R A W Z R J

snallygaster

chessie

cryptid



chupacabra

folklore

dewayo

Maryland

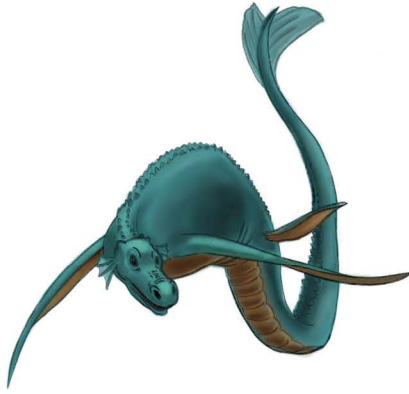
goatman

wendigo



CRYPTID PROFILES

Chessie



- Reported as a massive, snake-like creature, often seen arching its back or reaching out a flipper from the Chesapeake Bay waters.
- Most likely a very large fish like a sturgeon, a wandering manatee, or another marine mammal.
- Legend originated in 1936 from a helicopter fly over- Chessie is also now an environmental icon!

Chupacabra



- Known for lack of fur, large canine teeth, and a habit of killing small livestock.
- Most likely a canine species infected with mange, a mammalian skin disease caused by a mite. Rabies, another common disease in canines, could be responsible for explaining reports of odd behavior.
- Legend originated in Puerto Rico in the 1990s and has spread nation-wide.

Wendigo



- Walks on two legs with large antlers and long claws.
- Most likely a devious human wearing shed antlers, but this could be a sickly elk or deer on its hind legs.
- Legend dates back to the folklore of Indigenous peoples, living in Maryland at a time when elk were still present (before the late 1800s). Elk and deer will often stand on their hind legs and use their front legs to push higher on a tree, reaching more tasty leaves.

CRYPTID PROFILES

Goatman



- Half-man, half-animal known for walking on two feet and blamed for murdering dogs.
 - Most likely just a shaggy human who behaves badly, but could be an injured deer with piebaldism or a skin disease (mange, lice, or a bacterial infection).
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Dewayo



- 6-foot-tall, wolf-like mammal with a bushy tail that walks on two legs.
 - Most likely a coyote exhibiting defensive behavior. This can include “raised hackles” with hair standing up on the back and along the tail, or rearing up on their hind legs to appear larger. Coyotes also rear up to get a better view of surroundings when hunting, and will leap high in the air.
 - Legend originated in 1940s in Frederick County
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Snallygaster



- Dragon-like, half-reptile, half-bird with sharp teeth and claws, large wings, and sometimes one eye or tentacles.
- Most likely a great blue heron, stork, crane, or other large bird, perhaps with prey in its beak and enhanced by the effects of alcohol in the reporters (they were often found near stills and distilleries). Herons are known to produce a variety of very loud, alarming sounds when disturbed.
- Legend originated in 18th century Frederick Co.

CRYPTID FILL-IN

You and a friend or parent can fill in the blanks below to finish this amazing story!

_____ (friend name) and _____ (your name) venture into the forest to look for _____ (noun). Walking near a stream you see _____ (cryptid name). You and your friend _____ (verb) and scream at the cryptid's _____ (body part).

You decide to leave the forest using a _____ (magical item) and elect to tell your _____ (family member) so they can help you return and take a photo for evidence. When you return you find that the cryptid has _____ (verb, past tense). At least you survived your spooky adventure so you both celebrate by eating _____ (food).



Color me Goatman!



Give the Dewayo some color!



**The Chupacabra would love
to look more vibrant!**



**The Snallygaster could look
snallygantastic!**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Maryland's Wild
Acres



Maryland's Wildlife
Species



Wildlife Education
Trunks



Wildlife Education
Resources



Cryptid Art by: James Point Du Jour