

Mothman: The Hidden Truth

“Truth is stranger than fiction” - Mark Twain

Cryptids, creatures and monsters that plague our folktales and infest our oldest towns and settlements. Over the years they have become nothing more than myths, tourist gimmicks, and movie monsters. But what if there is more truth to the existence of these creatures than we think, what if these creatures are be actively suppressed, hidden and/or exterminated by the government. While it may not seem plausible at first, there is actually a lot of evidence that supports this theory and much of it is in plain view for the public to see. That brings to mind one very well-known cryptid that may have or currently exists that the government has gone to great lengths to cover up.

One of the first Cryptids in the U.S. to garner national attention was the elusive “Mothman.” The original tale of the Mothman goes something like this: a pair of couples were driving down a road in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. When one of the girls noticed an enormous pair of blood red eyes staring at them from the darkness as they drove past the old North Power Plant. As the got closer to the power plant, they soon realized that these eyes belonged to something that looked quite human and roughly about 7 feet tall with wings folded against its back. When the creature unfolded it’s massive wings and the couples realized that it was definitely not a large bird they drove away as fast as possible clocking in at around 100mph with the creature nearly matching their speed. However, as they approached the city limits the creature veered off and disappeared into the forest. Confused and afraid, once the reached the town they decided to go back to see if the creature was still there or if it was a figment of their imaginations. Needless to say, it wasn’t as they approached the forest again It wasn’t long before they saw the creature again, apparently waiting on them beside the road. The couples now truly realized that their stalker was no bird, but in the instant that the car’s headlights landed on the creature it lifted vertically into the air with tremendous speed and disappeared above the tree line.

(NOTE: This was canonically not the first sighting of the MothMan however, it is the most popular. The First sighting took place several weeks prior when several fisher men reported seeing a large avian creature flying above what is called the TNT Zone.)

Soon enough, after it’s first couple of sightings, large scale accidents began occurring near locations where the creature was seen, with the most prevalent being the collapse of the Silver Bridge on December 15th, 1967*. This lead to military intervention by way quarantining off certain sections of the nearby forest for “pending investigations.”

Now these ‘investigations’ lead to primary theories about the Mothman: A. There must be some truth to the creature’s existence if the military actually had to get involved. B. The centralized area that was quarantined off was an abandon WWII munitions base known as the TNT Area, which had been polluting the local flora and fauna for years. Leading many to believe that the MothMan is a mutated creature from that area. The most interesting fact about all of this is that while military officials stated that nothing was found in any of the areas that they searched.

Within a year of the initial search, the TNT Area was converted into a large-scale wildlife conservation, that was (for the most part) inaccessible to the public until the early 1990's.

The most widely accepted theory explaining the Mothman came from the skeptic Joe Nickell, (A man who seems to enjoy separating fact from fiction in almost every cryptid case file). He suggests that the Mothman was actually a large owl on a tree stump, and the large eyes of the owl were simply reflecting the light of the moon. Which made them appear to be large blood red eyes. This would be a very solid explanation if it weren't for two very important details that are glanced over in this theory. The first is that, the couples stated that the creature was at least 7 feet tall and had an enormous wing span. The largest owl in recorded history is the *Bubo blakistoni* or Blakiston's Fish Owl, with a wing span of two meters and a height of about 1.5 - 2 feet. While this could be a good culprit, it is only native to Europe and is extremely rare. The second flaw in this theory is that they stated that the creature was keeping pace with them as they were driving near 100mph. The fastest avian creature in the United States is the Golden Eagle which can fly around 150 – 200 mph, with a wingspan of 7.1 feet. While this sounds like a good contender, the Golden Eagle is not a night hunter nor is it an overly territorial bird.

Now this brings us to what I believe is the truth about the Mothman based on the facts and evidence that is currently available to us. But first let's go over the evidence so far.

1. The Mothman is around 7 feet tall with a wingspan almost three times that size, (making it larger than any bird in the US).
2. It is capable of instantaneous takeoff (which many of the most powerful birds cannot do) and can maintain a flight speed of 100mph if not more.
3. Has two large red eyes and no visible head.
4. Has been seen by multiple individuals and was typically seen during or not long before a large scale accident occurred.
5. It's first official sighting was near the previously mentioned TNT Zone, which was known as a heavily polluted and dangerous area.
6. Lastly, sightings only stopped after military researchers searched and quarantined the TNT Zone.

All of this information forms a very compelling theory that I believe is the truth behind the Mothman. The only reason that the residents of Point Pleasant know about the TNT Zone and it's purpose is because Military officials told them about it. However, the TNT Zone being an underground ammo depot doesn't make sense because if the only thing down there was ammo the surrounding environment would not be anywhere near as polluted, as ammo expires very slowly. Now, if the TNT Zone were a hidden genetics research lab that would make far more sense as genetic and chemical waste are known to cause pollution very quickly. This leads me to theorize that the Mothman is some form of genetic super creature that was created during WWII but never disposed of. A creature that may have been a disturbing combination of the best traits of various animals all merged into one horrifying apex predator. Much to your surprise this actually is not that wild of a theory, because genetic manipulation and animal splicing were common during WW2. The Nazis, Soviets, and even the US have records of these experiments with most being completely unsuccessful but some having very disturbing and monstrous

results. *(Note: While the U.S. did not venture as far into genetic manipulation as the Nazis did there are plenty of declassified files that detail experiments done on animals to improve their senses, or apply their enhanced senses to our troops in the field.)* This would also explain the odd measurements and abilities of the Mothman. An enormous height, massive and powerful wings, the ability to fly near 100mph, and extremely impressive stealth skills. I mean, what government wouldn't pay millions upon millions of dollars to have this creature as a weapon in their arsenal.

At this point you may be asking yourself this one pressing question: "If World War 2 ended in 1945, why was the first sighting of the Mothman not until 1966, more than a decade later?" Well, there is a sensible explanation for that as well. If the Mothman is indeed more animalistic and nocturnal than a human is it would have found an area to feed in and stayed there especially considering that it would have been without a doubt the apex predator of the area. In addition to this most people did not drive that late at night during that era. Even the Couples who saw the creature stated that they were out much later than usually i.e. 2:00am.

Now, how would the Government be able to cover up a creature that has been terrorizing an entire town for almost a year and a half? Simple, make it media savvy. Next to Bigfoot and the Chupacabra, the Mothman has been all over the media since it's first sighting. From Dungeons & Dragons and TV Shows like Supernatural and Grimm, to video games like Darksiders and comic book Villains, (i.e. Killer Moth from Teen Titans.) The Mothman is everywhere, and as a wise man once said, "The Best Place to hide something is in plain sight," or in this case normalize it until it becomes common knowledge to everyone.

The first major piece of media that began to 'normalize' the Mothman was the book "The Mothman Prophecies" Written by (John Keel). It was a compelling story that compiled all of the facts about the Mothman and formed them into a very interesting tale about a small town and their possibly real monster problem. Now the book never quite states whether the Mothman is real or not and there is quite a bit of embellishing on some of the facts. Nevertheless, whether intentional or not, this was the first real cover up of the Mothman by (as I said before) normalizing it. Following this there was a movie made based off of the book and it even further embellished the facts about the Mothman (that being said it is still quite an entertaining film). Combine those two with the now growing popularity of the Mothman and the rapidly growing toy industry of the time and by the time the 1980's roll around, everyone has at least heard of the creature. Therefore, no one would believe that it is real.

In summary, to give a final wrap up of this theory, here is my timeline of events. In 1945, World War 2 and the researchers at the TNT Zone leave the Mothman as an unfinished creation locked in the bowels of one of the silos. The Mothman eventually breaks out and begins feeding on the local wildlife in the dead of Night for the next several years. In 1966, fishermen begin to fish near the TNT Zone and get small glances of the Mothman but never a clear visual. Later that same year The Mothman is spotted and purses a couple traveling past the TNT Zone late at night. For that point on the creature is seen in closer proximity to the town of Point Pleasant

but never directly interferes with the locals. In 1967, the Silver Bridge collapses not long after the Mothman was seen perched on top of it. Military researchers come into the town and quarantine off the TNT Zone. From that point on the Mothman is never heard from again, until the book and movie are released. Creating an air of falsehood around the existence of the creature. Jumping ahead to modern time, almost everyone has heard of the Mothman and considers it a myth. Effectively covering up any trace of the creature actually existing. That is my theory of how the existence of the Mothman was covered up by the government.

Works Cited:

Keel, John A. *The Mothman Prophecies*. Tor, 1975.

"Mothman." *Cryptid Wiki*. N.p., 2018. Web. 12 Mar. 2018.

Platt, John, and John Platt. "World's Largest Owl Needs Equally Large Trees And Forests (But It's More Complex Than That)." *Scientific American Blog Network*. N.p., 2018. Web. 18 Apr. 2018.

"Blakiston's Fish-Owl | Birdnote." *Birdnote.org*. N.p., 2018. Web. 5 Apr. 2018.

Ho, Iris. "Golden Eagle Facts: Animals Of North America." *WorldAtlas*. N.p., 2018. Web. 27 Apr. 2018.

"Silver Bridge (Point Pleasant/Kanuga, 1928) | Structurae." *Structurae*. N.p., 2018. Web. 5 Apr. 2018.

"Nazi Medical Experiments." *Ushmm.org*. N.p., 2018. Web. 5 Apr. 2018.

"The Ethics Of Using Medical Data From Nazi Experiments." *Jewishvirtuallibrary.org*. N.p., 2018. Web. 8 Apr. 2018.

"Do Lead Bullets Continue To Be A Hazard After They Land?." *ScienceDaily*. N.p., 2018. Web. 18 Apr. 2018.

"Outdoor Gun Ranges Produce 80,000 Tons Of Toxic Pollution A Year." *The Trace*. N.p., 2018. Web. 18 Apr. 2018.