

Yowie

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Australia’s hairy forest figure has changed with the people telling its stories. Accounts around the Border Ranges sit beside older, distinct traditions that the familiar label often obscures.

STATUS	Recorded recollections and evolving folklore
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Eastern Australia
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Cryptids
STORY HISTORY	Local traditions and colonial reports; modern sightings reported in the 1970s

THE ACCOUNT

Around Woodenbong and the Border Ranges, accounts describe hairy, humanlike beings disappearing into the bush. ABC’s reporting records a Palen Creek story attributed to Bob Mitchell in 1928 and later claims from the 1970s. One resident, Thelma Crewe, said she saw two figures near her home in 1976. These are reported recollections, carried through interviews and local newspapers, rather than scenes with an independently established animal at their center.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The accounts reviewed by ABC did not supply physical evidence establishing a new species. Historian David Waldron also cautions that “yowie” has changed meaning through colonial retellings and popular culture. Specific Indigenous stories about spirits or hairy beings cannot simply be combined into one Australian version of Bigfoot. The modern ape-like image is one layer of a more complicated history.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The same familiar bush can hold several different stories at once. Following their names, locations, and tellers is more revealing than forcing every outline into the same shape. The Yowie file becomes stranger when those differences are allowed to remain visible.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

Woodenbong in Yowie Country

ABC News

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-22/woodenbong-and-history-of-yowie-country-curious-north-coast/10505204>

The real story behind Australia's urban legends

ABC News

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-08-01/the-real-story-behind-australias-urban-legends/100332654>

RETURN TO THE STORY

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