

Religion and Belief in Ropens

Among many of the investigators of reports of modern pterosaurs, over the past two decades, religious belief is important, even critical, in searching for ropens. Yet the eyewitnesses come to us with different religions, almost as if religion had nothing to do with encountering a live “pterodactyl.” That eyewitness perspective dominates in a press release that I had published earlier this week.

Flying dinosaurs – Who believes they’re alive?

When I wrote that press release, I had no intention of putting down the importance of religious belief in those who have searched for living pterosaurs and for the eyewitnesses who have encountered them. Press releases need to be brief, and this one I intended as an introduction to this narrow field of cryptozoology. There was just not room enough to explain the religious side of the investigations.

A person who sees an apparent pterosaur is just as likely to be an atheist as a Bible believing Southern Baptist. A Christian may perhaps be more likely to report their sighting to me, compared with an atheist reporting to me, but I have seen little evidence, over the past eleven years, to suggest this is a major issue. Most eyewitnesses show no sign of holding any extreme position on science and religion.

The press release quotes from the title page of my book *Searching for Ropens and Finding God* (fourth edition): “Persons of various faiths, with various levels of education, from various countries and cultures, have seen a living pterosaur. . . .” But the beginning of that release makes it clear that belief or disbelief in those “primitive” flying creatures is the subject of that brief introductory posting, not belief or disbelief in God:

Your belief [in huge featherless flying creatures in Papua

New Guinea] depends a great deal on where you lived your childhood: in a village like Gomlongon on Umboi Island or in a western country like the United States.

Non-Eyewitnesses of Pterosaurs

This environment differs from the perspectives of eyewitnesses. Somebody hearing about or reading about a sighting of a pterosaur-like flying creature—that person mostly believes or disbelieves based upon culture. If you were raised in a society in which such an animal is always assumed to be impossible living in the present, you reject the report; otherwise you consider it possible.

In my late teens, decades before I became actively involved in cryptozoology, my younger sister was surprised at what her high school friend told her. The other girl declared that she had seen a giant pterodactyl fly up into the mountains, just north of her house in Altadena, California. In my older years, after I had started writing nonfiction books about modern pterosaurs, my sister remembered her friend and told me about the sighting.

I phoned the lady, who still remembered me and my sister. She added a detail about size: The creature was as big as a school bus. The point? If I had overheard that eyewitness reporting the encounter to my sister, in the late 1960's, I would have dismissed the whole thing, perhaps ascribing it to some mental defect or poor judgment on the part of that girl. I'm just as human as anyone else, relying upon deeply entrenched cultural assumptions. I have changed since my teenaged years, in several ways, including allowing myself to learn by exposure to beliefs in other cultures. Yet we need to understand and remember how strongly cultural beliefs can pull us, either towards truth or towards error.

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Religion and living pterosaurs

Whitcomb advocates open discussions about various axioms of origin philosophies in Western societies, as well as open discussions about interpreting scientific evidences. His purposes include encouraging average persons to think for themselves.

Nonfiction – Bible of Modern Pterosaurs

As riveting as some fictional tales of dragons, Searching for Ropens and Finding God is a nonfiction about pterosaurs with long tails, apparently real animals that live in our modern world.