

# Well preserved mammoth from Siberia shows signs of early man stealing from lions

April 5 2012, by Bob Yirka

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(PhysOrg.com) -- An exceedingly well preserved juvenile mammoth carcass has been found in Siberia near the Arctic Ocean and it shows signs of having been attacked by a cave lion and then partially butchered by humans. Dubbed Yuka by the Mammuthus organization, which is studying the remains, the six foot long creature was believed to have been a year and a half to perhaps three or four years old at the time of its death.

The [mammoth](#) was found by tusk hunters in Northern [Siberia](#), who then turned it over to scientists with the Mammuthus organization. The BBC and [Discovery](#) have been filming the team as it studies the find and have produced a [documentary](#) about it called “Woolly Mammoth: Secrets from the Ice”.

The find is interesting for several reasons. One is its coat, described as strawberry blonde. Mammoths were thought to have dark coats until recent DNA evidence indicated some might have lighter coats, this find is proof of that. Perhaps more interesting is the state of the carcass, almost wholly intact, with evidence of the injuries that felled it clearly visible on the body. The researchers say the find was so well preserved that some portions of the meat were still pink. They also point out that the hide had evidence of an incident that left scars that had healed over time, and others, that had occurred more recently, that did not and likely contributed to the animals demise; deep cuts that look similar to wounds inflicted on young elephants by modern lions in Africa. The mammoth also had a broken hind leg, which likely occurred as it was trying to escape and fell.

But the researchers don't think the wounds necessarily caused the animal to die, because it also had jagged type cuts and a long thin straight cut from the head to the spine that almost certainly were made by a human being. Also, the skull, ribs backbone and parts of leg bones were cut out and removed, further evidence that men living in the area either assisted in killing the mammoth or took over after it died. The researchers postulate that perhaps the animal was stolen from lions, partially butchered then buried in the ice for retrieval at a later date.

Though lab testing will pinpoint the time of death more precisely, the team believes the mammoth died some ten thousand years ago, and also will serve as evidence of the first interaction between mammoths and humans in the area.

The mammoth was found on its back, legs in the air, and was described by those at the scene as appearing as if it had just died the day before, rather than thousands of years ago.

**More information:** via [BBC](#)

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