

Teenage woolly rhino could have been hunted by predators into water, where it drowned

By Anna Liesowska, Valeria Sukhova

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Studies begin on a massive and very well-fed Pleistocene era rhino found in Yakutia with its horn and one tooth.



The sensational discovery was delivered to Yakutsk once the ice roads formed in winter, and was presented to the media today. Picture: The Siberian Times

The uniquely preserved teenage woolly rhino with even its brain intact, found in the north-east of Yakutia last summer has been defrosted for the first time since it died at least 20,000 years ago.

The juvenile rhino with thick hazel-coloured hair, a horn and one upper premolar was found in the middle of August in permafrost deposits by river Tirekhtyakh in the Abyisky ulus (district) of Arctic Yakutia.

The sensational discovery was delivered to Yakutsk once ice roads formed in late Autumn, and today was presented to the media.

'The adolescent woolly rhino's body is approximately 236 centimetres long, which is around one metre less than an adult animal.

'The height at the withers is around 130 centimetres, which is from 20 to 25 centimetres lower than an adult rhino', Dr Gennady Boeskorov from Yakutia Academy of Sciences told The Siberian Times.











The sensational discovery was delivered to Yakutsk once the ice roads formed in winter, and was presented to the media today. Picture: The Siberian Times

The level of the rhino's preservation is unique with all of its right side kept intact by permafrost, and even under-skin fat found in the form of powder.

Eighty per cent of the rhino's carcass is intact which makes the find the best-preserved woolly rhino ; its gender is yet to be defined.

It could have died from drowning in either a river or a bog after being chased by predators, said researchers of Yakutia Academy of Scientists, as there is a hint of teeth marks on its skin, but the exact cause of death is yet to be established.

There was no adolescent woolly rhino ever discovered in the world.













Pictured above are the woolly rhino's horn, its tooth, the site where it was found, and the map. Pictures: The Siberian Times

The rhino, currently nicknamed Abyisky after the name of the area where it was found was discovered by local resident Alexei Savvin close to the site where **the world's only baby woolly rhino called Sasha** was dug out in 2014.

Sasha's aged has been since confirmed as 34,000 years.

Two extinct cave lion cubs later called Boris and Sparta were also found in the Abyisky district of Yakutia last year close to the Tirekhtyakh River.

'Re-dating of when the woolly rhino lived, I would even narrow the period to between 40,000 and 25,000 thousand years, as most of the frozen animals we found recently were of that era.

'It was Karginsky Interglacial Period when the temperatures were warmer, the soil defrosted and the animals more often drowned in swamps of got into the ice cracks and thus preserved this way. Naturally we will wait for the results of the radiocarbon, this is a very preliminary dating', said Gennady Boeskorov.