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# Cavemen of the sea, part two

Science speaks best about what is proven. As a function of design, it is often unable to move beyond this minimally known quantity.

And the culture of science tends to speak as if what's proven is the whole story. That's how scientists fail to anticipate things that are perfectly obvious. Not yet proven, they are invisible to the scientist.

Things like the extinct caveman *Homo erectus* having the ability to conceive of a raft. Recently proven ["Cavemen of the Sea," March 16, 2010], it was a great surprise to experts in the field and the scientific press.

But none of them should have been surprised. It has been perfectly accepted by everyone that a byproduct of *Homo erectus* society was the manufacture of sophisticated stone tools in great quantity.

If they were working with stone like this, they must have also had impressive wooden tools and other manufactured materials that simply did not survive the ages.

These facts alone plainly illustrate that *Homo erectus* had plenty going on upstairs and millions of years to do something with it. It would not have escaped their notice that wood floats.

The safe assumption would seem to be that *Homo erectus* did whatever they wanted to.

We are always struck by how human the reconstructions look, to the point of thinking, *Well, why would these so-called cavemen not think of a boat?* They were undoubtedly tough as nails and much stronger than us *Homo sapiens*.

Nonetheless, when *National Geographic's Explorer* documented the reconstruction of this stone-age raft migration, pasty modern scientists filled in for *Homo erectus* and crossed the open water on a crude raft ["Tiny Humans: The Hobbits of Flores," March 19, 2010].

It's a pretty laughable comparison when you consider that even the ancient Greeks—our fellow *Homo sapiens*—were ten times tougher than modern people, as demonstrated by the failed modern recreation of a known ancient rowing feat.

At any rate, *erectus* was obviously a fully functioning human being, albeit "primitive" and without the benefit of a few million years of cultural development.

The only "reason" *Homo sapiens* scientists assumed it was impossible for *Homo erectus* to even conceive of a boat was because we didn't have any physical evidence, which led to the rock-hard belief it was impossible.

In fact, the possibility of *erectus* in boats should have fallen under the umbrella of the sophistication they were already known for. By the time *erectus* tools were found on the island of Crete in 2010, *erectus* had been discussed in the scientific literature since 1998, as seafarers in relation to their remains on the island of Flores.

So it was perfectly plausible and it had already been mentioned in the literature. Yet the scientists finding *erectus* on Crete in 2010 were flabbergasted.

We, however, were not. When *erectus* was identified as a seafarer in 1998, it did not resonate with the professional scientists, but it did to those with feelers out for the next big anomaly.

It was like the shot heard 'round the world: *Homo erectus* was around for millions of years. So, if there's one example of seafaring discovered, then it's highly likely seafaring must have happened all over.

It becomes totally defensible and almost perfectly ordinary to suppose that rafts full of these cavemen could have accidentally made it to the New World and back, navigating by the stars.

A dangerous passage to be sure, certainly fatal for most who attempted it, but over thousands of generations of these crazy badasses, it may have become a trade route.

It is time to revisit all the dismissed "way too old" archaeological dig sites in the Americas. WTF was going on in this prehistory anyway? Time for a second look.

In light of the discovery of the Hobbit, we might also cheekily suggest a review of any prehistoric "child" skulls in the museum drawers of the world, on the off chance that Hobbit bones may have been found before, but filed away as children's skulls or microcephalics or what-have-you.

Lord knows, it happens. See "Excavate the Museums" at [GonzoScience.com](http://GonzoScience.com) for more information.

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