

Mammoth tooth found near river

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Imagine finding a tooth as big as her husband's boot.

That's what Gothenburg resident Jo Atkinson discovered Saturday when she and husband, Dee Atkinson, went to the Platte River to see how it had changed since flooding in September.

Jo said they weren't sure what they found half buried in sand but local biologist Mark Peyton confirmed it was a mammoth tooth.

Mammoths began roaming the Midwest about 1.7 million years ago. They ranged in size from 13-feet tall at the shoulder to the size of a modern Asian elephant.

A website recommended by Peyton said mammoths had six sets of teeth—the last at about 43 years of age. The average life expectancy of this giant creature was 60 to 80 years.

According to the website

mammothsite.com, mammoths chewed about 500 pounds of vegetation daily.