Fossil Pygmy People?

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Who (or what) were the fossil pygmy people? as experts such as Dr Chris Stringer tell the world we have an amazing evolutionary find showing human evolution, and the press goes wild with headings such a "Fossil Hobbits Found". The publishing of 'A new small-bodied hominin from the Late Pleistocene of Flores, Indonesia' by P. Brown, T. Sutikna, M. J. Morwood, R. P. Soejono, Jatmiko, E. Wayhu Saptomo & Rokus Awe due in *Nature* 431, 1055 - 1061 (28 October 2004) is the cause of all the excitement. They reported 'the discovery, from the Late Pleistocene of Flores, Indonesia, of an adult hominin with stature and endocranial volume approximating 1 m and 380 cc, respectively - equal to the smallest - known australopithecines. The combination of primitive and derived features assigns this hominin to a new species, *Homo floresiensis*

Nature news wrote 'The skeleton found at Liang Bua, a cave on Flores, is of an adult who was only about one metre tall with a brain size of only 380 cubic centimetres. That is less than one-third of the average brain size for a modern human and much smaller even than those of the primitive H. erectus skulls from Dmanisi ... The Flores skull shows a unique mixture of primitive and advanced characteristics. The brain is the same size as a chimpanzee's, the brain-case is low with a prominent brow ridge at the front, and the lower jaw completely lacks a chin. However, as in modern humans, the face is small and delicate. It is tucked under the brain rather than thrust out in front and the teeth are similar in size to our own. The skeleton shows a similarly strange mixture of features. The hip-bone resembles those of the pre-human African species known as australopithecines (meaning 'southern apes'). But the legs are slight, and enough detail has been preserved to show that this creature definitely walked on two legs, as we do. Although it is clear that this person was definitely not a modern human.' 'The small brain

Editorial Comment: If you have a brain the size of a chimpanzee and a hip like a chimpanzee, then you're probably not a duck (or a Human either). Australopithecine is Latin for Southern Ape! (Ref. man, Australopithecus, Indonesia)

size and the hip-bone shape might favour classification as an Australopithecine'.