

# Human remains found in Orange County in 1998 identified as missing Bellflower man



Donald Raymond Loar, 54, who had been reported missing to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department in February 1998, was identified as a John Doe victim found in a remote area of southeastern Orange County. (Courtesy of the Orange County Sheriff's Department)



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PUBLISHED: February 6, 2024 at 2:34 p.m. | UPDATED: February 6, 2024 at 5:28 p.m.

Human remains found in a remote area of southeastern Orange County in 1998 have been identified as those of a 54-year-old Bellflower man, the Orange County Sheriff's Department announced Tuesday, Feb. 6.

On Aug. 29, 1998, human remains were discovered by a research biologist at the Rancho Mission Viejo nature reserve, according to the sheriff's department. At the time, investigators believed he may have been a white or Latino man in his 40's but could not find any indication that the person was the victim of a homicide.

Another search of the area a month later yielded a shallow grave, additional human remains and additional clothing.

In the months following the discovery of the remains, authorities' attempts to identify the victim were unsuccessful.

More than two decades later, in early January 2023, investigators submitted forensic samples from the John Doe victim to Othram Laboratories, a private forensic

biotechnology company based in Texas, to create a DNA profile of the victim, authorities said. Using genetic databases, investigators were able to begin working on genealogical research in hopes of identifying the man.

In November, the victim was tentatively identified as Donald Raymond Loar, a 54-year-old man who had been reported missing from Bellflower in February 1998.

Loar was wearing clothing similar to the clothing recovered near the remains of the John Doe victim, authorities said.

Investigators then met with Loar's family and obtained a sample of their DNA for comparison purposes, and, on Jan. 24, the California Department of Justice confirmed the remains belong to Loar, though the circumstances surrounding his death are still under investigation.

Anyone with information on the victim should contact Orange County Crime Stoppers at 1-855-TIP-OCCS or [crimestoppers.org](http://crimestoppers.org).

<https://www.ocregister.com/2024/02/06/human-remains-found-in-remote-area-of-orange-county-in-1998-identified-as-those-of-missing-bellflower-man/>