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# Mermaid Sighting Craze Makes a Splash in Israel

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Israel is in the grips of mermaid fever after numerous sightings of the mythical sea creature off its coast.

One town council is taking the reports so seriously it is offering a \$1 million reward to anyone who can prove the existence of a mermaid in its waters.

Kiryat Yam municipality, near Haifa, says it has been told of dozens of sightings in the past few months.

"Many people are telling us they are sure they've seen a mermaid and they are all independent of each other," council spokesman Natti Zilberman told Sky News.

The nautical nymph is only seen in the evening at sunset, according to media reports, drawing crowds of people with cameras hoping for a glimpse.

"People say it is half girl, half fish, jumping like a dolphin. It does all kinds of tricks then disappears," Zilberman said.

Asked whether a dolphin or large fish could be a more rational explanation, he insisted: "They say it is a female figure, it looks like a young girl."

The council denied its offer of a reward was a publicity stunt, but said it hoped to nurture the mermaid as something which could bring in more tourists.

Capturing a mermaid is not necessary, a verifiable photograph will do, Zilberman said.

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