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RESERVA

Amateur archaeologist spots potential pyramids using Google Earth

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by [LIAT CLARK](#) (/WEB/20150909234903/HTTP://WWW.WIRED.CO.UK/SEARCH/AUTHOR/LIAT+CLARK).



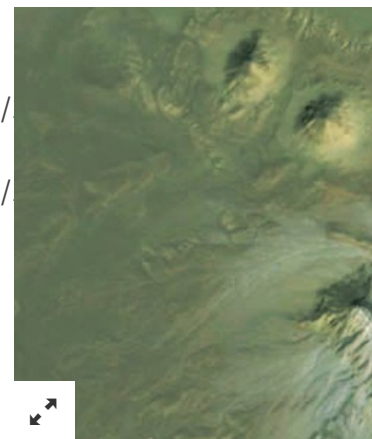
An amateur satellite archaeologist has located what she believes to be two Egyptian pyramid

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/01/31/land-art-pyramids) complexes using Google Earth (/web/20150909234903/http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/07/31/google-earth-timelapse), though some experts remain skeptical.

Angela Micol of North Carolina has spent the past decade acting as amateur sleuth, locating what she believes to be a possible ancient underwater road network off the Yucatan peninsula and a series of ancient circular stone formations off the coast of North Carolina, Florida and Belize along the way. Micol documents her findings on her website Google Earth Anomalies

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.googleearthanomalies.com/).

The first possible site is located a few kilometres from the ancient settlement of Dimai. It consists of one large 42.6-metre-wide four-sided structure that appears to have a flat top, and a series of three smaller sites arranged in a line leading away -- a similar arrangement to that of the complex



in Giza. Micol suggests the large structure's flat top could be due to erosion, another answer would be that it is just a geological formation and never had a pointed pyramid-like top. "It has a distinct square centre which is very unusual for a mound of this size and it almost seems pyramidal when seen from above," says Micol.

"The colour of the mounds is dark and similar to the material composition of Dimai's walls which are made of mudbrick and stone". Micol's hypothesis here could be interesting, however an aerial satellite image does not provide nearly enough information for this conclusion to be drawn so early in the investigation.

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The second site, located 19km from Abu Sidhum city, is made up of four mounds and what looks like a 183m-wide triangular plateau. Circular structures, perhaps wells, are visible at the centre of the plateau. Egyptologist Nabil Selim, who Micol passed the photos on to, says that the smaller mounds are similar in size to 13th Dynasty ([/web/20150909234903/http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt](http://web/20150909234903/http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt)) Egyptian pyramids.

"The images speak for themselves," Micol boldly says on her website. "It's very obvious what the sites may contain but field research is needed to verify they are, in fact, pyramids and evidence should be gathered to determine their origins. It is my hunch there is much more to these sites and with the use of Infrared imagery, we can see the extent of the proposed complexes in greater detail."

Despite her conclusive statement, Micol has already passed the details on to researchers, though she does not disclose who these experts are. The amateur sleuth is raising money to make a documentary about her discoveries and states that

her dream is to "work with archaeologists to release sites that I have identified over the past ten years of research". The fact that Micol has been working on this collection of "discoveries" for the past decade, but is yet to find a team that will head out to investigate her findings suggests many experts in the field feel they can happily dispute them from a cursory glance at the images.

Despite the skepticism surrounding amateur finds, satellite archaeology is a burgeoning field, with Egyptologist and TED

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFC5CwZVCEw) speaker Sarah Parcak

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.sarahparcak.com/index2.php) discovering 17 pyramids and 3,1000 settlements using infrared satellite imagery in 2011

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-13522957). Parcak believes "space archaeology", as she calls it, will open up the field and could lead to the discovery of lost civilisations.

Nevertheless, in a statement

(/web/20150909234903/http://www.technolog.msnbc.msn.com/technology/technolog/google-earth-pyramid-claims-stir-controversy-939721) to msn.com, Parcak could hardly conceal her disregard for the findings of an amateur archaeologist tooled with only a laptop and a good dose of enthusiasm: "These Google Earth reports are coming from someone who is neither an Egyptologist, an archaeologist, or a remote sensing specialist, and from an area where there is no earthly reason to have a pyramid -- 12.8km to the west of the Nile Valley edge in upper Egypt... I get emails constantly from people who have claimed to find features."

If Micol's discoveries do turn out to be more than a few windswept random geological formations, get ready for the "Google Earth spots Atlantis" stories...



Edited by OLIVIA SOLON

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