

Wanted: owner of Greek isle's mystery croc

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A crocodile swims on January 16, 2014 at the zoo in Dresden

As reptile experts scale up plans to capture a two-metre crocodile that mysteriously appeared on the tourist island of Crete, appeals have gone out for its owner to come forward.

Herpetologist Petros Liberakis said the authorities have fenced off a one-kilometre stretch of land around an artificial dam where the animal was spotted basking in the sun on the Greek island.

"Dozens of people have already gone to the area to see the reptile, and this is very dangerous," Liberakis, who works at the island's [natural](#)

[history museum](#), told AFP.

Liberakis said he would return to Crete from a mission to northern Greece by the end of the week to identify and capture the crocodile.

Authorities are also trying to track down the owner of the animal amid rumours a second crocodile had been seen in the area.

"We want the person who owned the crocodile to call us—even anonymously—and say whether there are more of them, whether it is male or female, and when it was left here," local official Vangelis Mamagakis told Skai TV.

The reptile—which is about two metres or 6.5 feet long—was sighted over the weekend by a team of local fire officers who were on patrol near Rethymnon, in the north of the island.

The Crete crocodile is not the first to make an unexpected appearance in European waters. In 2001, fire officers in Austria were called to rescue a South American crocodile from the river Danube, which was later taken to Vienna's Schoenbrunn zoo.

"We've had several cases of the sort before, mainly people dumping their iguanas," Liberakis said.

"Someone even brought us a crocodile 10 years ago," he said.

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