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Editor's Note: This two-hour special is science fiction based on some real events and scientific theory.

**ANIMAL PLANET'S MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND PAINTS A WILDLY CONVINCING PICTURE
OF THE EXISTENCE OF MERMAIDS, WHAT THEY MAY LOOK LIKE
AND WHY THEY'VE STAYED HIDDEN...UNTIL NOW**

Two-hour CGI Special Unravels Mysterious Underwater Sound Recordings, Dives Deep into the Aquatic Ape Theory and Questions if Mermaids are Related to People –

*-- **MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND** is the Culmination of Animal Planet's First-Ever **MONSTER WEEK**, Airing **May 21-28** --*

Once upon a time, there lived a little mermaid in an underwater kingdom. She ventured to surface, longing to communicate with people on land....

This is a fairytale told and retold to children everywhere; it's a beloved story about a legendary creature that's described in the mythologies of nearly every human culture in history. People across all continents who've had no communications with other societies have described the same half-man, half-fish anomaly – they've spoken about the *same* mythic animal.

What if there's a kernel of truth that lives beneath the legend of the mythic mermaid? Now, in **MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND**, premiering **Sunday, May 27, from 9-11 PM ET/PT**, Animal Planet brings viewers into the world where the legend is real. The film blends real-life events and phenomena with the story of two scientists who testify they found the remains of a never-before-identified sea creature. Spectacular CGI animates a world where mermaids really do swim below the water's surface, cooperatively hunt with dolphins and may continue to survive in an intricate society where they stay hidden in fear of their Earth-bound relatives.

As the crescendo to **MONSTER WEEK**, a weeklong network programming stunt airing from **May 21 to May 28**, **MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND** is a story about evolutionary possibility grounded in a radical scientific theory – the Aquatic Ape Theory, which claims that humans had an aquatic stage in our evolutionary past. While coastal flooding millions of years ago turned some of our ancestors inland, is it possible that one group of our ancestors didn't retreat from water but rather went in deeper? Could they have ventured farther into sea out of necessity and to find food? The Aquatic Ape Theory makes it possible to believe that while we evolved into terrestrial humans, our aquatic relatives turned into something strangely similar to the fabled mermaid. As evidence that humans once evolved into aquatic creatures, the Aquatic Ape Theory cites some of the striking differences between man and other primates and the many features we share with marine mammals, including the following:

- Webbing between fingers (Other primates don't have this.)
- Subcutaneous fat (insulating from cold water)

- Control over breath (Humans can hold breath up to 20 minutes, longer than any other terrestrial animal.)
- Loss of body hair (Hair creates drag in water.)
- Instinctive ability to swim (Human babies are able to do this.)
- A highly developed brain, which depends on nutrients provided by seafood

MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND makes a strong case for the existence of the mermaid, a creature with a surprisingly human evolutionary history, whose ancestral branch splits off from a shared human root. The film is science fiction, using science as a springboard into imagination and centering the story on the following real-world events:

- In the early 1990s, the US Navy began a series of covert sonar tests, which were linked to mass die-offs of whales, which washed up on beaches throughout the world. For years, the Navy denied they were responsible for these beachings.
- In 1997, scientists at the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recorded a mysterious sound (called “The Bloop”) in the deep Pacific, which was thought to be organic in nature. It has never been identified.

These are facts.

MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND is a story that imagines how these real-world phenomena may be related. In this story, startling amateur video and photographic evidence, as well as additional audio recordings, suggests whales weren’t the only creatures affected by the Navy’s sonar. The film follows the two scientists who tracked the whale beachings for years and delivers first-hand, on-camera accounts of what they claim to have discovered in the aftermath of one particular beaching. Their story is nothing less than fantastical: they claim to have found the remains of a mermaid.

With compiled amateur footage, including photos and video shot by deep-sea fishermen that never have been shown in the US, as well as cinema-quality CGI, **MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND** argues how a mythical creature – one of humankind’s most enduring legends – may be real. It depicts how mermaids may have evolved from the early human family tree and persisted into the present day.

MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND is so compelling with evidence and so credible, audiences can see it a second time when it repeats **Monday, May 28, from 7-9 PM ET/PT** as **MONSTER WEEK** comes to a close.

MERMAIDS: THE BODY FOUND is produced for Animal Planet by Darlow Smithson. Tom Brisley is executive producer for Darlow Smithson. For Animal Planet, Charlie Foley is executive producer, creator and writer. For Animal Planet, Vaibhav Bhatt is co-writer and supervising producer, and Jamie Duggar is producer. Steve Gomez, of Bandito Films, is director of animation.

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service; mobile content; and merchandising extensions.