

Snorkeling U.S. Airman Discovers WWII-era Grenade

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Tokyo, Japan Residents of an Air Force base in northeastern Japan were asked to shelter in place after an airman reported finding what turned out to be a WWII Japanese grenade while snorkeling.

The base issued the following statement on its social media page, "Out of an abundance of caution the acting Misawa Air Base installation commander issued a shelter in place warning notification for north base housing after a community member discovered an unexploded ordnance 23 Sept."

The post also stated, "Misawa's Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel immediately responded to the scene and determined the object was not a threat."

Senior Airman Layne Ring found the suspect munition while he and his wife were snorkeling at Mutsu Bay, located 45 minutes north of the base. In a statement Ring said, "My wife and I love to look for sea glass, glass float, sea marbles. While we were there, I pulled out my snorkel gear and started snorkeling near the shore and found a ton of glass, and then I stumbled upon what I thought was a ceramic pot at first but to my knowledge assumed it was a ceramic fishing weight or something."

A few days later, while looking through the objects he collected, Ring noticed what appeared to be a fuse. "I realized I found a Japanese imperial navy Type 4 ceramic grenade ... created from 1944-1945 as a 'last ditch' effort to defend Japan's citizens from the Americans if they invaded," Ring said.





Ring notified EOD who responded to remove the grenade from his home. He said, "The grenade to my knowledge still had the fuse and rubber seal intact despite being underwater for 75+ years."

A Misawa spokesman, Tech. Sgt. Chris Jacobs, confirmed that the object was indeed a WWII grenade. He said, "After the object was deemed a non-threat, residents were released from the shelter in place order."