

Dawn ufo sightings alarm early risers

Visions of little green men — rather than sugar plums or pink elephants — are disturbing the early morning hours of the night owls, it seems.

Police are receiving numerous calls from people convinced that a bright light seen in the eastern sky in the early mornings is a foreign object that should not be there.

Not so, according to past president of the Royal Astronomical Society Norman Rumsey, of Lower Hutt. It is merely the planet Venus, now very close to the Earth and situated between the Earth and the sun.

He was woken at 5.30am today by a policeman who had seen an observatory in his garden and

came to ask him to check out the ufo following a number of calls to police during the night.

Bright planet

Mr Rumsey explained there was nothing to worry about and set up a telescope on the front lawn to demonstrate just how bright the planet, now appearing crescent shaped, is at the moment.

When Venus rises about 3.15am just south of east and is close to the horizon it is viewed through a very thick atmosphere which makes it look as though it is moving around in an erratic manner, with changing brightness and colour, Mr Rumsey said.

PH

Air captain tells of ufo sighting

TOKYO, Dec 29. — The captain of a Japanese airliner said he saw three spaceship-like objects, including a huge "mothership," flying near his cargo plane for about 50 minutes over Alaska, Japan's Kyodo News Agency reported today.

Kyodo quoted captain Kanetoshi Terauchi as saying he saw a huge, globe-shaped unidentified flying object (ufo) with two small, spaceship-like craft on the evening of November 17.

Interviewed in London, Mr Terauchi said the big craft looked like a "mother ship" and gave the appearance of two huge aircraft carriers put back to back.

He told Kyodo they accompanied his Japan Air Lines (JAL) special cargo flight 1628 from Paris to Tokyo for about 50 minutes or a distance of 760km.

In Tokyo, a JAL spokesman quoted Mr Terauchi's flight engineer, Yoshio Tsukuda, as saying he saw unusual lights during the flight, including "two lines of lights which looked like airplane cabin windows."

The spokesman said Mr Terauchi was unavailable for comment. — NZPA-Reuter

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