

Surf's up for orcas as temperatures soar for us on land

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A visiting orca makes the most of the good waves at Sandy Bay, and was joined by surfers and even a whale calf. Photo / Michael Cunningham

Surfers at a Northland beach had to compete for waves this week with a pod of orcas.

And if the temperatures keep going up like they did yesterday, even more people could be scrambling for the water.

Northern Advocate photographer Michael Cunningham was one of those in the water at Sandy Bay, 40 minutes north of Whangarei, on Friday when the orcas appeared.

He headed to shore to get his camera before rejoining the orcas.

"It felt a bit freaky," said Cunningham.

Other surfers stayed at sea unfazed by the orcas.

Cunningham said three or four orcas rode waves, accompanied by a calf.

"They knew what they were doing and pulled out before getting into trouble. They looked like they'd done it before."

Northland's marine mammal expert Ingrid Visser said surfers were safe around orcas as the mammals were there for the same thing - to surf and have a good time.

Orcas were called killer whales because they killed whales, not people.

Meanwhile, temperatures soared around the country yesterday, with Blenheim and Alexandra hitting 30C. And it wasn't only the South Island that felt the heat - Napier reached 29C and nearby Hastings 28C.

The high temperatures came as WeatherWatch.co.nz predicted the second half of November would remain dry for many regions.





