

# **Observed an aerial phenomenon that you can't explain? The UAP Observations Reporting Scheme as a tool for demystifying UFOs and stimulating interest in Science**

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(\*) Disclaimer: Work undertaken as personal work; not endorsed as research activity by ESA.

## **Abstract**

Since the beginning of time, gazing up at the night sky has been a source of wonder, a subtle mix of fear and an unstoppable need to question our origin and destiny. The night sky can also be mysterious as it offers an opportunity of seeing something entirely unknown. In fact, even nowadays it continues to awe many novice observers observing an unfamiliar phenomena for the first time (e.g. bolids, transient luminous events, satellites re-entries, The International Space Station, Iridium flares).

For a number of reasons, the general public and many young people are fascinated by the idea of UFOs and extraterrestrial life. Astronomers, scientists and teachers should acknowledge this keen interest and use it as starting block for presenting and teaching related subjects such as astronomy, physics, technology, biology and chemistry, allowing at the same time cross fertilisation among various disciplines. Mysteries motivate to enquire, leading to gain insight and knowledge. The mystery creates astonishment that enables the human process of wondering, and this again generates motivation for learning and exploring beyond the boundaries of what is known or believed today.

The UAP Observations Reporting Scheme's (\*) provides an extensive resource for inquiry-based learning and for UAP witnesses to critically evaluate the potential cause of their sightings. One of the main project's goals is to serve as a forum for educating the public about atmospheric, astrophysical and human phenomena, that are frequently misidentified and at the origin of many alleged UFOs sightings.

We present the website's extensive and well illustrated list of misidentifications and describe how

people can further check details and develop their knowledge (e.g. satellite paths, stars/planets charts, characteristics of meteors, pictures of sprites, clouds classification). A short illustrated list of cases will be featured, both explained and inexplicable; and outreach activities and partnerships with relevant astronomical projects (e.g. Astronomers without Borders, The World at Night) will be described.

We will underline that the project definitely fulfills a need in relation to demystifying UFO events, providing education on pseudo-scientific information, while keeping an attitude of scientific open-mindedness.

For these reasons, we will encourage the planetary scientists community to further advertise the project's existence and the amateur astronomers and societies who receive questions about UFOs to redirect those queries to the website,

(\*) <http://www.uapreporting.org/>