

Dark Sky Happenings

Identifying UFOs

by NASA Night Sky Network

Do you think you have spotted a UFO? We have some tips to help you identify that unidentified light in the sky below. Many folks have spotted something in the sky that may not be able to easily explain at first, but careful consideration and investigation will often help you to both identify that mystery light and help you become a better stargazer.

Venus is one of the most confused objects in the sky, especially when it is low to the horizon. Sirius and Jupiter are also often reported as UFOs, as well as Mercury. When bright planets are in alignment near the horizon they can appear to be a formation of "strange lights"!



Venus shining bright and low has been reported many times as a UFO.

military jets, weather balloons, sounding rockets, satellites, meteors and fireballs, experimental craft (if you are lucky) and odd clouds (such as lenticular clouds) and be confused, as well as artifacts from photographs that are actually lens flare or aberration. Remote control aircraft can also be confused for a UFO; in fact some models explicitly look like "flying saucers" just to make things tricky! If you have a good description of the object, as well as the date and time, you may want to try using a planetarium software such as Stellarium to plot the sky at the indicated time and date.

If you're an amateur astronomer, you are probably asked about aliens and UFOs quite a bit. Use this opportunity to turn their curiosity into a new hobby. So, how do you identify UFOs when asked? Be polite and patient. If the "UFO" is visible and the person inquiring is there in person, you can turn your telescope on the object to reveal the truth, This often does not happen, of course. Be aware of recent meteor showers, as well as common phenomena in your area.

With these tips, you are now well-armed to help turn a report of an UFO into an IFO (Identified Flying Object!) Your visitor may be disappointed that you didn't see any alien space ships, but their knowledge of the wonders of the night sky will be magnificently increased!



Image of a classic saucer-shaped lenticular cloud from Damascus, Syria.



Moab Dark Skies mission is to promote the appreciation and conservation of Moab's valuable and rare dark skies. Moab Dark Skies was established by the Friends of Arches and Canyonlands Parks in conjunction with the National Park Service and Utah State Parks Division of Natural Resources

SCIENCE MOAB ON TAP

BEER-FUELED SCIENCE IS BACK
SPITFIRE SMOKEHOUSE

DEC 14 | JOEL BERGER
Bighorn Sheep in Moab's Playground: Casualty, Bio-cultural Resource, or Something Else?

JAN 11 | R.E. BURRILLO
Farming High & Dry: Agriculture in Ancient Bears Ears

FEB 8 | MICHELE REHBEIN
Who runs the world? Gifs Mosquitoes: Keeping up with the world's deadliest animal

FREE Doors open 5:30 PM
TALKS START AT 6 & END AT 7

Indoor/Outdoor event (bring a jacket)

GRAB A BEER AND LISTEN TO SCIENTISTS TALK ABOUT THEIR RESEARCH

SUNRISE & SUNSET TIMES

(The time of sunrise and sunset assumes a flat horizon. Actual time may vary depending upon the landscape.)

MOON HAPPENINGS

- Jan 9 - First Quarter at 11:13 am
- Jan 17 - Full Moon at 4:51 pm
- Jan 25 - Last Quarter at 6:42 am
- Jan 31 - New Moon at 10:49 am

DATE	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Sat, Jan 1	7:51 am	5:11 pm
Sun, Jan 2	7:51 am	5:12 pm
Mon, Jan 3	7:51 am	5:13 pm
Tue, Jan 4	7:51 am	5:14 pm
Wed, Jan 5	7:51 am	5:15 pm
Thu, Jan 6	7:51 am	5:16 pm
Fri, Jan 7	7:51 am	5:17 pm
Sat, Jan 8	7:51 am	5:18 pm
Sun, Jan 9	7:51 am	5:19 pm
Mon, Jan 10	7:51 am	5:20 pm
Tue, Jan 11	7:50 am	5:21 pm
Wed, Jan 12	7:50 am	5:22 pm
Thu, Jan 13	7:50 am	5:23 pm
Fri, Jan 14	7:49 am	5:24 pm
Sat, Jan 15	7:49 am	5:25 pm
Sun, Jan 16	7:48 am	5:26 pm
Mon, Jan 17	7:48 am	5:28 pm
Tue, Jan 18	7:47 am	5:29 pm
Wed, Jan 19	7:47 am	5:30 pm
Thu, Jan 20	7:46 am	5:31 pm
Fri, Jan 21	7:46 am	5:32 pm
Sat, Jan 22	7:45 am	5:34 pm
Sun, Jan 23	7:44 am	5:35 pm
Mon, Jan 24	7:44 am	5:36 pm
Tue, Jan 25	7:43 am	5:37 pm
Wed, Jan 26	7:42 am	5:38 pm
Thu, Jan 27	7:41 am	5:40 pm
Fri, Jan 28	7:40 am	5:41 pm
Sat, Jan 29	7:39 am	5:42 pm
Sun, Jan 30	7:39 am	5:43 pm
Mon, Jan 31	7:38 am	5:45 pm

