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UFO spotters jam BBC switchboard

A UFO spotted over Leicestershire by radio star David Jacobs caused a furore after the Radio Two presenter mentioned it on his show.

Callers jammed the BBC switchboard after Mr. Jacobs described seeing a mysterious ball of light hurtle across the sky while he was travelling along the motorway.

The sighting happened while Mr. Jacobs was between junctions 21 and 22 on the M1, returning to London from an Any Questions programme recorded in Mansfield.

His driver also saw the mystery object, but politician Mrs. Shirley Williams and fellow panellist Mr. Jonathan Porritt, who were also in the car, could not see the phenomenon from their seats in the back of the car.

Radar

Mr. Jacobs said: "It was extraordinary. Suddenly, a brilliant white light with a tail shot from left to right in front of us at a height of about 250 to 300 feet, then disappeared."

Listeners telephoned the BBC from all over the country with similar tales of sightings.

But nearby East Midlands Airport recorded nothing on their radar.

Mr. Graham Hall, a leading Midlands UFO researcher, said: "We have had several reports over the past month of unusual objects and it seems there is definitely something going on at the moment."

Asteroid

A spokesman for Leicester University's astronomy department said that in principle the sighting could have been anything.

"There is no use in jumping to conclusions and assuming that this was a UFO. It could have been a meteorite, an asteroid or any object falling back to earth and burning up," he said.

"But while there is no concrete evidence to show that this was an extra terrestrial visitation, nobody can say with certainty that it was not added.