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Sightings still unexplained

By Dean Rhodes
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Still unexplained from Bangor to Brunswick are last weekend's sightings of "an oval-shaped object, 50 to 100 feet long, with blue and white lights, traveling easterly across the sky."

That seemed to be the consensus of witnesses in towns along a 100-mile-course in Maine's latest encounter with flying objects of an unidentified kind.

The question remains, what was it?

Authorities confirmed that 20 people reported seeing a UFO. Military heads say it wasn't a plane. An astronomer doubts it was a shooting star.

"They obviously saw something, but the question is what," said Neil Comins, an assistant professor of astronomy at the University of Maine at Orono.

Larry Fawcett of Coventry, Conn., co-author of a forthcoming book on national UFO sightings,

said Sunday he had no idea what had flashed across the Maine skies.

Residents between Bangor and Brunswick, roughly 100 miles apart, kept telephone lines busy to the Brunswick Naval Air Station. Calls came in from Bangor, Augusta, Litchfield and Bath-Brunswick.

Apparently there were no important meteor showers that night. Comet Encke was 31 million miles distant. Viewing it without a telescope would have been difficult.

Comins reported he wanted to know more about the UFO's speed, whether it changed altitudes and whether it appeared to have a solid or a fuzzy shape.

"Sometimes ball lightning can do that," Comins said.

The National Weather Service in Portland said it launches weather balloons twice a day from Portland International Jetport, but they aren't lit