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**Mystery light probably a meteor**

BALTIMORE — A bright streak of light that briefly illuminated midnight skies along the East Coast from New York to Virginia was probably a large meteor, according to astronomers.

Weather conditions likely enhanced the meteor's light as it whizzed at 50-60 miles per minute down the coast and then exploded somewhere over Maryland or Virginia, scientists said.

"We're pretty sure it was a large, extremely bright meteor, about 12:35 or 12:40 a.m. Tuesday morning," said James O'Leary, director of the Maryland Science Center's Davis Planetarium. "Most meteors are no bigger than grains of sand or pebbles, but this was maybe baseball size."

Numerous sightings were made in the mid-Atlantic area, with some reported as far north as New York. Sightings were variously described as a white fireball, a blue light and a yellow light.

The high clouds prevalent in the area may have had "a prism effect," on the meteor's light show, said astronomer Kenneth Seidemann said.

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