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## ?Odds are there's intelligent life outside of Earth?

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Adam Dolge | Portsmouth Herald

EXETER — There's been a flurry of responses to the Exeter man who witnessed what he described as a silver-cigar shaped object in the day's sky on July 20.

For those who don't believe the 20-plus year Navy veteran, who wished to be identified as "David," his response during an interview on Thursday was, "I'm a pragmatic individual. If you were there with me in the yard, you would have seen it."

It was a hot and humid afternoon when David saw the object in the sky. He was preparing his lawnmower, and after tilting his head back to take a sip from a glass of water, he saw the object in the sky that he could only describe as a UFO - an unidentified flying object.

But David is alone with his account, and so far, no one else has come forward saying they saw the same object in the sky. He lives on the west side of Exeter in Louisburg Circle, a wooded development with about 20 houses surrounding a cul de sac. The incident occurred at about 3:15 p.m., and David said after the object disappeared, he looked to see if any other neighbors were outside and witnessed what he saw, but no one was around.

The Exeter Police Department has not received any calls regarding the incident. Also, the Federal Aviation Administration did not see anything out of the ordinary on radar that day.

But David still has no doubt what he saw. An artist's rendition depicts what he saw that day in the sky.

David said the object was as large as two aircraft carriers. It was long and silver, with windows equally spaced around its center. After what felt like several minutes, he said the object started changing colors to an orange-ish red and similar-colored flames billowed from underneath. But there was no smoke or noise. The object eventually stretched to double its size and disappeared.

After the incident, he realized a neighbor's dog had been barking and the glass of water he was drinking was on the ground. At one point, he thought to run in the house to grab a camera, but hesitated because he was stunned to see something like that in the sky.

He reported what he saw to Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle. Davenport took his account very seriously because of David's military history and the details of his account.

Davenport said he was a little disappointed no others have come forward with similar accounts since the object was so large. He was also concerned because David could not be contacted for days afterward. He, and other UFO experts, began to wonder if this was a hoax.

Rye resident Peter Geremia, state director for the Mutual UFO Network, said when he first heard of David's account, he was worried it was someone trying to get media attention.

"It could have been phony, and I haven't heard anything yet that has changed my mind," he said.

Besides the report David filed with the National UFO Reporting Center, Geremia said he would have liked to interview him as well and file a formal report with his organization's headquarters in Morrison, Colo.

Geremia said he takes several accounts of sightings each year. Once he gets in touch with the witness, he interviews him or her and reviews a topographical map of where the witness saw the reported UFO. He then takes a Polaroid picture of where the witness saw the object and has the witness draw what the object looked like on the photo. Then the witness fills out a two-page UFO sighting form. Geremia then files the report to Colorado.

Some of Davenport's and Geremia's initial skepticism regarded David's military background. David said he has about 10,000 hours of flight experience. He joined the Navy at the age of 18 in 1975. As a former flight engineer, the retired Navy chief petty officer said he's seen just about everything that can fly.

At the interview Thursday at his home, he showed his numerous medals and awards, his old flight suit, his user manual for one of the spy planes he flew in, and a photo of that plane signed by his colleagues when he retired in March 1997. His computer is full of photographs of different jets, and he can easily be described as a flight enthusiast.

David said he doesn't care if people don't believe him. He knows what he saw that afternoon.

"I'm pragmatic, so odds are in favor that there is intelligent life outside of Earth."

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