

# UFO POTPOURRI

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## No intelligent life on Earth, Galileo reports to experts Data reliability is questioned

By JOHN NOBLE WILFORD  
New York Times

On Dec. 8, a spacecraft traveling the solar system swung within 600 miles of an unusual planet. From the fleeting photographic glimpses and remote-sensing data the craft transmitted, scientists began to compose an image of what that strange new world must be like.

From its strong gravitational pull, they inferred that the planet must be composed mainly of rock and iron. It is clasped by intense belts of trapped radiation. Bursts of lightning flare across its face.

Dazzling auroras veil its southern pole. The planet's surface is mostly water, but the spacecraft's cameras caught sight of a continent of rock and ice at its south pole.

Its atmosphere consists mostly of nitrogen. The spacecraft's sensors also detected significant quantities of oxygen, nitrous oxide and methane, all byproducts of biological processes. The planet apparently abounds in life.

But intelligent life? "We don't see anything in the pictures that would indicate intelligent life," said Dr. Torrence V. Johnson, the chief project scientist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.

The planet is, of course, Earth.

When the Galileo spacecraft passed by Earth this month on its roundabout voyage to Jupiter, the scientists decided to exercise the analytical skills of first-look reconnaissance they have practiced at Mars, Saturn and most of the other planets.

Why not see how reliable these techniques of observation, analysis and inference are by testing them on the planet they know best?

The experience has left the planetary scientists bemused. In failing to reveal evidence for intelligent life on Earth, the spacecraft left them wondering if they were not sometimes like the blind men who one by one try to describe an elephant.

"This is an excellent example of why, if you have been to a planet once, you want to go back again for another, longer look," Johnson said.

Scientists were reminded in particular of how in the 1960s they were misled by the first three spacecraft visits to Mars. As it happened, all three Mariners got distant views only of the planet's southern hemisphere, a bleak, cratered landscape, not unlike the moon.

Not until Mariner 9 orbited Mars in 1971 and mapped the entire planet did scientists learn of its towering volcanic peaks, yawning canyons and many dried channels telling of water that once flowed across Mars in abundance.

Chance likewise accounted for Galileo's incomplete picture of Earth. The spacecraft happened to come closest to Earth over the Atlantic Ocean and obtained its best images in data over the South Pacific, Central Australia and Antarctica, some of the planet's most unprepossessing regions.

If Galileo had explored the Northern Hemisphere, Johnson said, it would more likely have made out clues of intelligent life, like the Great Wall of China or geometric patterns cut through Canadian forests for power lines.

The spacecraft's cameras were incapable of detecting features any smaller than half a mile across. But they might have resolved the lights of cities, if the craft had flown over them at night.

In one photograph transmitted by Galileo, analysts think they can pick out a human-built structure that stands out against the white background of the South Pole.

It may be part of the scientific research station there. But would scientists from an alien world have been able to draw such a conclusion?

"That is possibly the only direct evidence of the people who occupy this planet," said Dr. Michael J.B. Belton of the National Optical Astronomy Observatories, leader of the photo-interpretation team.

ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH  
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### NIGHT FLASH

#### Astronomer Identifies It As Fireball

A dazzling blue-green flash that lighted up the pre-dawn sky across much of the Midwest on Friday was a fireball burning as it entered the Earth's atmosphere, an astronomer says.

"That blue-green flash was a fireball and anyone who saw it, well, that was great, because as long as I've been here I've never seen one. They're fairly rare," said April Whitt, an astronomer at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

A fireball is similar to a meteor, Whitt said.

Dozens of people in Illinois, southern Michigan, Kentucky and Ohio called police departments, radio stations and the planetarium after seeing the flash at 5 a.m.

AP

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# Anonymous Man Reports a Strange Unidentified Object

By CHAL GREEN  
(Enterprise-Record Staff Writer)

ORLAND — An Orland man, who refused to be identified, reported today he watched an unidentified flying object through binoculars for more than an hour Wednesday night.

"It was joined finally by another object, although the two did not actually come together," he said.

Several other Orland residents also reported they had sighted the first object, which hovered northwest of the city.

The man said he spotted the first object at about 10 p.m. and had watched it for about 1½ hours, when the other one appeared, coming from the south.

"Both objects did some maneuvers for a while before vanishing," he said.

His description of the mysterious object partially matched that of James Davis of 1638 Salem St., Chico, who reported he also had sighted a UFO Wednesday night.

Davis and the Orland man said the object "glowed." A more detailed description was given by the Orland resident.

He said the first object was shaped like a quarter moon with a red light at one end and a and a green one at the other. He said it sometimes flew "side-ways," one tip up, the other down.

Projecting from the slightly rounded surface of the object was a kind of lighted turret. On the edge of the rounded portion were several lights which glowed from white to yellow as the object banked in flight.

"Both of these flying things moved silently," he said. "They went fast and I couldn't tell how high they were."

"It was an eerie sight, let me tell you. Enough to give you the willies. I told my wife about it and a few friends, but nobody else. I was afraid they would think I was crazy."

## Chico Woman Reports Sighting of Strange Object in the Sky

Sightings of strange objects in the Chico skies continue to be reported to law enforcement agencies.

The latest incident has been reported by Judy Mason of 1804 Citrus Ave.

She said she was on the phone talking with her mother about 5:40 p.m. yesterday when a strange cylindrical object seemed to rise out of the ground behind her house and ascend straight up into the sky.

She described it as "about two or three feet long, glassy-looking, oblong and rounded on both ends." She watched it for nearly a minute before it disappeared behind some trees.

Strange objects in the skies were reported last week from Orland, Oroville and Chico.

# Strange Flying Object Is Spotted by Two Chicoans

It seemed flat but had a rounded top. On the bottom center was a glowing light as if a reflection off aluminum. Blue, white and green lights blinked and revolved around the rim of the hovering, noiseless object.

At times it bobbed up and down like a celestial yo-yo.

Two Chico women provided this description of an unidentified flying object that they watched in the skies over the city Monday evening.

"I didn't call at first," Mrs. Ione Dahl said today. "I was afraid people would think we were just seeing things." Mrs. Carl Furtado also saw the object.

When the two women read of

another Monday night sighting in Chico, they decided to tell what they saw.

Mrs. Dahl and Mrs. Furtado had returned for dinner and were talking in a car parked in front of Mrs. Dahl's 917 Warner St. address, when they saw the object, high and soundless, move from the south, seemingly above the Chico State College campus.

Mrs. Dahl first saw it, and she called the other woman's attention to it. Mrs. Furtado initially thought it was a plane.

"I didn't think so," Mrs. Dahl said. "It seemed too high for the northern route, which plane take on the west of us.

"It seemingly got above us and then disappeared. It was there one moment and just gone the next.

"We looked to the east and saw the object coming back, toward the west side of town. It would stop, come a little way and stop again. As it stopped it seemed to circle, and we noticed an up and down motion like a yo-yo.

"To us it looked like a round object, or a cup on a saucer."

Mrs. Dahl said she had never witnessed any aerial phenomena before. "I hadn't even seen a satellite."

The sighting occurred about two hours earlier than one by Kenneth Sigler of Chico. He told police of an object "shaped like an upside down teacup" that had red lights, was noiseless and seemed about to land near the Safeway store on Mangrove Avenue before it rose and shot away north.

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## Two Girls Report Sighting of Another Flying Object

Two young Chico girls are the latest to report sightings of unidentified flying objects.

Chris Hill of 590 E. Fifth St. and Kathy Riley, no address available, both 14 years old, said they spotted a moving object in the southern Chico skies as they walked toward Miss Hill's house about 5:10 p.m. Monday.

Chris said it seemed to be moving slowly toward the south, was oblong shaped and gave off a pinkish-orange glow.

"It looked like it was on fire," she said.

Chris said it looked small but she didn't know if that was because the object was far away.

The girls watched the object for a minute before it disappeared.

## Mysterious Object Seen Over Chico

An unidentified flying object, one that glowed, changed directions and once seemed to hesitate in mid-air, was sighted last night over Chico.

James Davis of 1638 Salem St., said a woman came knocking on his door about 11 p.m. and told him about the mysterious object in the sky.

Davis said he didn't know who she was, but she had stopped her pickup in the middle of the street and came running up to his door. She had a baby in her arms.

Davis saw the object, which was traveling "fast" and at a high altitude, heading south toward Durham.

"As it got over Durham," Davis said, "it started turning toward the west. Sparks started flying from it. Then it disappeared."

Davis reported the incident to city police.

Sgt. Lee Baxter, traveling north on the Chico Freeway, saw the object, or light, traveling north-northwest. He said it gave off a reddish glow.

It may have been a satellite, Baxter said, except that at one point in its flight the object hesitated in mid-air for 50 seconds, and a bright glow appeared.

It then continued on its way and disappeared over the north-west horizon.

Q) What is **disinformation**? Is it the same as **misinformation**?

A) No, the two words are not exact synonyms. **misinformation** involves giving out wrong information, perhaps by accident. The newer term is **disinformation**, from the Russian **dezinformatsiya**; it is a technique of propaganda that refers to giving out false or misleading information deliberately. Don't use **disinformation** when you mean the more innocent **misinformation**.