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Aliens Exist - Just Ask The Man On The Moon

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Lending credence: former astronaut Edgar Mitchell supports claims that the truth about UFOs has been covered up

Photograph: Nasa

Aliens exist - just ask the man on the moon

by Tom Rhodes
New York

THERE are no little green men on the moon. Edgar Mitchell knows this because in 1971 he became the sixth man to walk on it. He is positive, however, that aliens have landed on Earth.

Sharing the podium at a conference in Connecticut yesterday with "alien abductees" and others who claim to have had contact with unidentified flying objects (UFOs), the former Nasa astronaut intensified his campaign to persuade Washington to acknowledge life beyond our skies.

Mitchell argues that life is almost certain to exist on any other planet with a supportive environment. Some physicists, he points out, now believe it is possible to travel faster than light, even if humble earthlings have yet to achieve it.

He is 90% certain that many of the thousands of UFOs recorded since the 1940s belonged to visitors from another planet. Although some have been delusions and others natural phenomena, too many remain unexplained, he said. "This suggests there are humanoids manning craft which have characteristics not in the arsenal of any nation on earth that we know of. That is very alarming," he said.

It was a startling departure for a scientist who, up to now, has been wary of appearing with ufologists widely regarded as cranks.

"Until recently I was very cautious about such conferences," Mitchell, 68, admitted before the opening of an annual convention entitled the

UFO Experience. "But now I believe there is sufficient circumstantial evidence to warrant a scientific understanding in this area."

Mitchell, who holds a doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, does not fit easily into the ranks of the UFO fanatics. Although he acts as a consultant to The X Files, the cult television series, he is scornful of "disinformation" about aliens and flying saucers that emanates from the Internet and marginal UFO organisations in America.

"The notion that there are structures on Mars or the moon is bonkers," Mitchell said. "I can certainly attest to the latter - I've been there. We saw no structures at the landing site and none was reflected in my helmet, as has been alleged."

Mitchell bases his credo on established cosmology - in which he became closely involved after gazing at his tiny, distant planet from the command module of Apollo 14. He felt "an overwhelming sense of universal connectedness and perceived the universe as in some way conscious".

In the early 1970s, after leaving Nasa, he founded the Institute of Noetic Sciences in California. Dedicated to the study of psychic and spiritual phenomena, it subjected luminaries such as Uri Geller, the Israeli spoon bender, to scientific scrutiny.

Mitchell says his research - including conversations with people who have worked in intelligence agencies and military groups - has convinced him that the American government has covered up the truth about UFOs for 50 years. He is trying to persuade Congress to grant his sources immunity to tell "the real story" of events such as the so-called Roswell incident - the alleged crash of a flying saucer in New Mexico in 1947.

"Many of these folks were under high-security clearances, they took oaths and they feel they cannot talk without some form of immunity," Mitchell said. "It takes a brave person to come out on something like this."

A poll by Time magazine last year suggested that 22% of the population share Mitchell's conviction that other planets have been in contact with humans; 17% said intelligent life had abducted humans to experiment on them.

The high level of interest has encouraged other speakers at this weekend's conference. They include Robert Wood, a retired aerospace engineer from California, who claims to have new evidence of the existence of MJ12, a clandestine military unit trained in recovery and disposal of aliens and their craft.

The true believers could hardly conceal their delight at the former astronaut's endorsement. Walter Andrus, international director of the Mutual UFO Network, the largest organisation of its kind in America, said: "There's no doubt in my mind that Ed Mitchell gives us all credibility."

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