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Meteor lights up an East Coast Friday night; cat parodies ensue

By Paloma Esquivel

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A large meteor lit up the night sky across the East Coast, leading hundreds of dazzled spectators to report sightings in more than a dozen states.

The event was not unusual but was widely reported because it happened across a populated area on a Friday night, said Bill Cooke of NASA's Meteoroid Environments Office.

“There was a lot of people out and it got everyone's attention,” Cooke told the Los Angeles Times.

The meteor was reported at about 8 p.m. EDT. It was probably the size of a boulder, about one yard across, and was bright enough to be classified as a fireball, Cooke said. It broke up in the atmosphere and went out across the Atlantic Ocean.

The light show it created was not as spectacular as the one set off when a [tiny asteroid exploded](#) over Russia in February. Still, it was quite a sight.

Excited stargazers sent more than 600 reports of sightings from 16 states, Quebec and Ontario to the American Meteor Society, which published a [map](#) of sightings on its website. The map plots where sightings occurred and even indicates if the viewers saw the meteor travel right to left, left to right or vertically.

While meteors like the one spotted Friday night are common, “it is rare...for an individual to see more than one or two per lifetime as they also occur during the day, on a cloudy night, or over a remote area where no one sees it,” said Robert Lunsford of the American Meteor Society, in a [statement](#) on its website.

Within minutes social media sites exploded with news of the meteor – at least one fake photo was widely circulated within hours.

The website Mashable managed to put together a hilarious [list](#) of the top 10 artistic renditions of the fireball on Twitter. Two of them involve cats.

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