SEPTEMBER 1976

# NEWS BULLETIN

CENTER FOR UFO STUDIES

## UFOCAT: A UNIQUE TOOL FOR UFO RESEARCH

UFOCAT is a computer file of some 79,500 reports of unidentified flying objects. Dr. David R. Saunders began building UFOCAT in 1967, and donated it to the Center for UFO Studies in 1975.

UFOCAT is being used to make statistical studies of UFO reports, such as David Saunders' "Extrinsic Factors in UFO - Reporting" (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Paper 75-43) and "A Spatio-Temporal Invariant for Major UFO Waves" (Proceedings of the Center for UFO Studies Conference 1975, in publication). UFOCAT is also being used to provide catalogs of reports of particular interest to specialists at nominal cost. Such catalogs selectively list reports by such factors as geographical location (e.g., State of Wisconsin or Pacific Ocean), type of report (e.g., occupants or abductions), date of report (e.g., year 1973 or October 1954 in France), special report feature (e.g., imprints or electromagnetic effects) and even such factors as sightings from airplanes or reports from military personnel. The possible combinations are as broad as the user's request and the extent to which each factor is coded in the file.

A print out of a major section of UFOCAT has been in use at the Center for some time. Each entry in UFOCAT is a record of the salient features of a report of an individual UFO event, citing the source. Multiple reports of a single event are blocked together, headed by the primary entry, generally the earliest chronological report. Subsequent investigations or witness statements are flagged. The 79,500 report entries contain about 50,000 primary entries, and therefore around 29,500 duplicate reports from multiple sources.

A system of footnotes is being built into the file in order to direct the user to pertinent analytical studies and background material.

UFOCAT routinely keeps certain information confidential, such as witness names in unpublished reports. A small part of the file is, at the request of the contributors, confidential. These reports are tallied in statistical summaries only.

A 1973 survey of UFOCAT content showed this profile:

FILE CONTENT* BY

| SOURCE | | AREA | | YEAR | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Investigative files | 35.0% | U. S. | 61.3% | 1945 & prior | 0.1% |
| Report catalogs | 27.0% | Europe | 21.8% | 1946 - 50 | 9.3% |
| Journals, periodicals | 22.1% | S. & Cent. America | 4.4% | 1951 - 55 | 20.7% |
| Books | 15.9% | Canada | 3.7% | 1956 - 60 | 19.3% |
| | 100.0% | Oceana | 2.9% | 1961 - 65 | 15.6% |
| | | Asia | 2.3% | 1966 - 70 | 30.2% |
| | | Oceans, Antarctica | 2.3% | 1971 - 73 | 4.8% |
| | | Africa | 1.3% | | 100.0% |
| | | | 100.0% | | |

* Figures are approximate, based on arbitrary summarization, only to indicate the general scope of the file at that time (1973).

The UFOCAT codebook is being prepared for publication by the Center for UFO Studies. Use of UFOCAT is encouraged from those whose interest is scientific and who will, in turn, make their findings freely available. Inquiries should be addressed to D.R. Saunders, Center for UFO Studies, 924 Chicago Ave., Evanston, Illinois 60202.

## OUTLINE OF TYPICAL UFOCAT ENTRY

| COLUMNS | TYPE OF INFORMATION |
|---|---|
| 1-5 | Indirect File Number (blank for primary entries) |
| 6 | Footnote Flags |
| 7-11 | UFOCAT File Number (physical file location on disc) |
| 12 | Blank (used as control character for update program) |
| 13-16 | Level and identification of direct source |
| 17-20 | Position within source |
| 21 | Flag character for indirect source |
| 22-24 | Year (22 is blank for 20th Century) |
| 25-28 | Date (month/day) |
| 29-32 | Time (hour/min.) |
| 33 | Date Time Flags |
| 34 | Weather Flags |
| 35 | Terrain Flags (object location) |
| 36 | Vehicle Flags (witness location) |
| 37-56 | Location (alphabetic; 56 used for flags) |
| 57-58 | State (or country) |
| 59-60 | County (or province) |
| 61-63 | Number of witnesses |
| 64 | Witness type |
| 65-67 | Witness Age/Sex (or age/sex configuration of group) |
| 68 | Witness name flags |
| 69-84 | Witness name(s) (alphabetic) |
| 85-88 | Absolute Sidereal Time (computed) |
| 89 | Type of report (as indicated by source) |
| 90-93 | Subtype(s) of report (as emphasized by source) |
| 94-95 | Explanation of report (as given by source) |
| 96-98 | Number of objects |
| 99-101 | Duration of event (normally in minutes) |
| 102-104 | Size or apparent size |
| 105-112 | Longitude |
| 113 | Coordinate flags |
| 114-120 | Latitude |
| 121-128 | Orthotenic position (to be computed) |
| 129-132 | Information content of report (to be computed) |
| 133-136 | Credibility (to be computed) |
| 137-140 | Strangeness (to be computed) |
| 141-145 | Detail codes for Colors |
| 146-150 | Detail codes for Lights |
| 151-155 | Detail codes for Shapes |
| 156-160 | Detail codes for Structures |
| 161-165 | Detail codes for Motions |
| 166-170 | Detail codes for Formations |
| 171-175 | Detail codes for Evidences |
| 176-180 | Detail codes for Viewing Conditions |
| 181-185 | Detail codes for Witness Data |
| 186-200 | Miscellaneous detail codes |

Coding for columns 121-200 has been completed for only a small portion of the file, and these columns are not shown on current printouts.

PRELIMINARY UFO INFORMATION USE SURVEY

George Eberhart, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, has conducted under the auspices of the Center the following survey. Its purpose was to: (1) Assess the level of activity of workers in the UFO field; (2) document the kind and types of sources utilized; and (3) better facilitate the Center's work in dissemination of information.

"Four hundred eighty-four questionnaires were sent out to active UFO researchers in May, and 33% of them responded. The majority had college degrees of some kind or at least college experience. Their fields of interest were quite varied, but there was a distinct tendency towards 'hard' sciences (15 people held degrees in physics). Their present occupations were equally diverse, with 'Professor' and 'Engineer' turning up most frequently.

"Only 23% indicated they had not conducted any UFO research in the past year. Library research and writing were most frequently checked as a common activity, while field investigation and 'consultation' were the commonest secondary activities.

Spheres of interest in ufology were not as evenly spread as I had thought they would be. Close encounters were listed as a major interest by 70.2% of the respondents, closely followed by occupant cases favored by 65.8%. Ancient astronauts and Fortean phenomena were tied for last place — only 12.4% listed them as major interests.

"Forty-four percent of those queried had written something on UFOs in the past 5 years. Astronomical literature was most frequently checked as a source of information on UFOs, followed by parapsychology and religion. Eighty percent listed 'Conversation with scientists openly interested in ufology' as a source of information, compared with 91% listing 'Ufological literature', and 75% 'Correspondence'.

"One-fourth of all the respondents spent 2-4 hours reading UFO literature the week preceding their answering the questionnaire, and 11.8% spent over ten hours. Fourteen percent spent 2-4 hours gathering data in the field the same week.

"The most popular UFO journals turned out to be (predictably) APRO Bulletin, Flying Saucer Review, and Skylook. The UFO books considered 'absolutely basic' for any library came in this order:

1. Hynek's UFO Experience (102 votes)
2. Jacobs' The UFO Controversy in America (27 votes)
3. Ruppelt's Report on UFOs (22 votes)
4. The Condon Report (22 votes)
5. McCampbell's Ufology (16 votes)

Sixty-five books in all were recommended.

"The attitude towards different types of libraries was divided. Thirteen percent said academic libraries were good sources of UFO data, while 18% said they were poor. Seventeen percent thought public libraries were good and an equal number thought they were poor. Probably it depends on which library you use.

"Quite a few people had complaints about library services in this field, and many had constructive suggestions for improvement. These included improved book selection, newspaper clipping and case files, and improved cataloguing and shelf arrangement for UFO materials."

EUROPEAN GROUPS

During the past year, Mark Rodeghier, research assistant with the Center for UFO Studies, attended Sussex University in England doing graduate work in astrophysics. He was able to establish important contacts with both English UFO organizations and European groups in several countries. Discussed here are some of his contacts and results of his work.

In regard to Center research and addition of data to UFOCAT (see article in this issue), and the most fruitful result of his year abroad, agreements have been made with a number of organizations for regular and continued data exchange. BUFORA in England will be sending the UFO reports in their files, many unpublished, to the Center by the end of this year. NUFON, the Northern UFO Network, has agreed to send both reports and their Northern (England) UFO Catalogue, now being completed, in the future. The CONTACT (UK) group, based in Oxford, has compiled perhaps the second largest catalogue of reports in the world, about 40,000 entries. A variety of sources were utilized, many not covered by UFOCAT. CONTACT (UK) was kind enough to offer a photocopied version to the Center of the complete catalog. Beginning this fall, it will be merged with UFOCAT.

In France, contacts were made with both the GIROVNI (Groupement International de Recherches sur les OVNI) section of LDLN, and the SVEPS (Societe Varoise D'Etude Des Phenomenes Spatiaux) group, located in Toulon. They, too, will forward old and new cases to the Center. Belgium has two major groups, SOBEPS and GESAG (Groupement Etude Sciences Avant-garde). Rodeghier was only able to meet the GESAG people, who have recently decided to cooperate in data exchange with the Center.

Rodeghier also met with the CONTACT (Italy) people in Rome, and people from SIGAP, the Cambridge UFO Research Group (both in England), GEPA (Groupement D'Etudes Des Phenomenes Aeriens) in France, and numerous individual workers, including of course the staff of Flying Saucer Review. Attending the Montlucon conference in France in late March, he discovered the research interests of many French groups to focus on possible UFO detection, the attempted provocation of UFO sightings, and raising the standards of investigation. Unfortunately for French workers, scientists there give little help and are loath to cooperate in any activity.

Though the situation is somewhat better in England, a new group, based in London, hopes to remedy such problems. The BUDC (British UFO Documentation Centre) has ties to both Cambridge and London universities, computer facilities, as well as a growing core of active scientists. It hopes to accomplish the same functions the Center does in the U.S. And they shall also be sending cases they investigate to the Center for addition to UFOCAT.

Government interest in the UFO phenomenon is rather dormant, except perhaps in France where Claude Poher is given help and the gendarmerie still actively investigate sightings. Public interest, on the other hand, is high, though nothing to match public interest in the U.S. The BBC does plan a UFO documentary this fall, and Italian TV produced a show in March. All three major English groups are planning a conference for early November, where researchers from all over Europe will be invited — the first major international conference in England for some time.

The Center hopes that international cooperation can be fostered, and while it enjoys the favor of these groups, wants to thank them all for their kind offers of assistance and cooperation.

SIGHTING REPORTS

Following are interesting sightings, from various sources, which have come through the Center during the past months:

APRIL 21, 1976, Harbor City, California, 11:00 AM (DD, two witnesses)

While driving near the San Diego freeway, the witnesses saw to their right a large, disc-like object with a dome on top. They estimated it to be 3000 feet high and one-half a mile away, and 200-300 feet in diameter. The object was of a white metallic color, and moving toward the east at only 5-10 mph. Its orientation was at a 45° angle to the direction of flight, and there appeared to be a window on the dome. Eventually it disappeared suddenly from sight. (Original source: letter from witness.)

APRIL 24, 1976, Yakima Reservation, Washington, evening (NL, three witnesses)

A local rancher was out looking for some people who had failed to return home. As he drove along the road, he noticed what he thought were headlights in the distance. Shortly afterwards, he observed another "set of headlights" pulling alongside the second. Continuing to drive toward the lights, he came upon the persons he was searching for, and they too had seen the unidentified lights. Suddenly, one set rose vertically and quickly disappeared; the other went out and was seen no more. A check of the area revealed that the lights could not have been on the road, but were in a range area. (Source: W. J. Vogel, investigator)

MAY 4, 1976, Orfordville, Wisconsin, 8:00 PM (CEI, two witnesses)

A farmer was driving through his fields at dusk when he noticed a stationery object 100-150 feet above the field. The object resembled two bright headlights, with another bright light underneath and two red rotating lights. An hour later, his son, while driving a tractor in the field, saw the same object hovering 100 feet high. Ignoring it for 15-20 minutes, he became alarmed when it followed him and he realized it wasn't manmade. He drove back to the barn, at which point the lights did a U-turn and disappeared to the east. (Original source: UFO Central)

JUNE 3, 1976, Troy, Michigan, 9:55 PM (CEII, two witnesses)

While driving, a couple observed a round cylinder with lights on the outside quite close to the highway. It approached within 250 yards at one point in the sighting, and it could be seen that the cylinder was turning or "churning" as a string of blue and white lights flashed, with a red light on the bottom. It alternated speed between slow, then very fast, slow, etc., and ignored the car for 25 minutes. During the sighting the car radio, which had been giving fine reception, was full of static. Eventually the object streaked out of view faster than a jet plane. (Original source: UFO Central)

JUNE 7, 1976, Cincinnati, Ohio, 10:40 PM (CEII, two witnesses)

The two men spotted an object hovering at treetop level a few thousand feet distant. It was circular and had revolving white lights. The neighborhood dogs were howling and whining during the whole sighting. As the object moved to the east slowly, one witness grabbed his camera and took 17 pictures. The object disappeared once, circled to the west, came back toward the east, and after ten minutes left the area. (Original source: UFO Central)

JUNE 20, 1976, Cloquet, Minnesota, 8:30 PM (CEII, several witnesses)

A woman driving on Interstate 35W sighted a cigar-shaped object, metallic appearing, with lights on each side. It made erratic (and fast) motions high in the sky, and was visible until she arrived at Forest Lake, Minnesota. Her radio was full of static during the entire sighting, which was almost two hours. Several others saw the object, which could not have been a plane, as the police checked and found none were in the area at the time (Original source: UFO Central)

JUNE 25, 1976, Sebring, Florida, 11:00 PM (NL, two witnesses)

A yellow or white ball with white flame in the rear was sighted toward the east by the two witnesses. It originally resembled a meteor, but the flames died out and the ball hovered about a mile distant. Then after moving slightly further away, it headed toward the witnesses, and flared up (like an explosion), turning orange in the process. The witnesses stated it rose into the sky, but was still visible as a small star-like object. The sighting lasted 1-2 minutes. (Original source: UFO Central)

JULY 22, 1976, Germantown, Wisconsin, 10:50 PM (NL, four witnesses)

A six-sided object with a flat bottom was observed to hover over the highway. No definite color was noted, but it had 4-5 lights in front, a green light on one end, and a red light on the other. The estimated height was one mile, and it hovered there for about 5 minutes. A red flame was coming out from the bottom of the object at all times. (Original source: UFO Central)

JULY 22, 1976, Winston, Missouri, 11:30 PM (NL, one witness)

While observing the sky with his 60-power telescope (size not given) some lights were noticed to the southwest. Upon close inspection with the telescope, the lights were seen to be attached to a round object, which appeared to be rotating and stationary. Another witness observed the phenomenon at this time, which also had red, green and white flashing lights. It remained visible for about one hour. (Original source: UFO Central)

(NOTE: CE-Close Encounter, NL-Nocturnal Light, DD-Daylight Disc, terms from THE UFO EXPERIENCE, J. Allen Hynek, 1972 (Regnery). UFO CENTRAL is the Center's toll-free number used by police and other agencies to transmit sighting reports.)

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A SURVEY OF POSSIBLE UFO SIGHTINGS BY AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

Following is an abstract of a research project in progress by Gert Herb in association with the Center.

"It has been said that amateur astronomers rarely report UFOs. They scan the sky systematically equippped with suitable optics during alleged peak UFO activity. So if UFOs exist, many more should be reported.

"But do they in fact see few UFOs, or is it that no one bothered to ask them? Whatever the answer, I expect that their possible observations of UFOs will yield more data than observations by the public.

"These considerations led to my survey involving at least 6000 amateur astronomers. Given an adequate response, I hope to establish the following:

(1) The relative sighting incidence among amateur astronomers, compared with that of the public.

(2) The actual time of highest UFO activity.

(3) Whether flaps are reflected in amateur astronomers' sightings (they should be less subject to social influences often alleged to cause flaps)."

## CONTINUING RESEARCH

Researchers are invited to submit a short paragraph for publication in this News Bulletin, requesting information from other readers on types of cases they are studying. Listed are some recent requests:

APE-LIKE CREATURE CASES- I am interested in any sightings or encounters with ape-like creatures. Leads to the witnesses or the area where they have occurred will be appreciated. Don Worley, 1051 Beech St., Connersville, IN. 47331.

ASTRONAUT REPORTS- A study of all astronaut and cosmonaut UFO reports and photos is being made by James E. Oberg. References needed to original reports, press interviews of astronauts, and UFO literature. Route 2, Box 1813, Dickinson, TX. 77539.

EXTENDERS OR HOSES- Reported dangling from UFOs. Case material requested by David Webb, 64 Jacquiline Rd., Apt. 10, Waltham, MA. 02154.

HUMAN REACTIONS TO UFOs- Case material on the various spontaneous human reactions to UFO encounters requested by George D. Fawcett, P.O. Box 557, Maiden, NC. 28650.

OCEAN SIGHTINGS- Mitchell C. Connell, 4537 W. Poinsetta Dr., Phoenix, AZ. 85304 requests reports of UFO sightings in the Florida, Bermuda, Puerto Rico area. Approximate coordinates, direction of arrival and departure, object descriptions.

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## ABOUT THE CENTER

The Center for UFO Studies is a not-for-profit organization whose objects are:

I. To provide a place for people to report UFOs with the knowledge that their reports will receive serious scientific attention.

II. To pursue a vigorous study of received reports and analysis of the entire phenomenon.

III. To provide reliable information on UFOs to scientific organizations and to the general public.

IV. To assist correlative studies in this and other countries.

V. To aid in the coordination of efforts of those in many different fields of study which can be applied to the solution of the problem.

* * * * *

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Persons or organizations interested in furthering serious scientific work on the UFO problem can participate best by volunteering their technical facilities, by donating material to the library, or by making tax-deductible contributions.

DONOR: $15; CONTRIBUTOR: $30; FELLOW: $100; PATRON: $1000.
(Add $5 for overseas airmail.)

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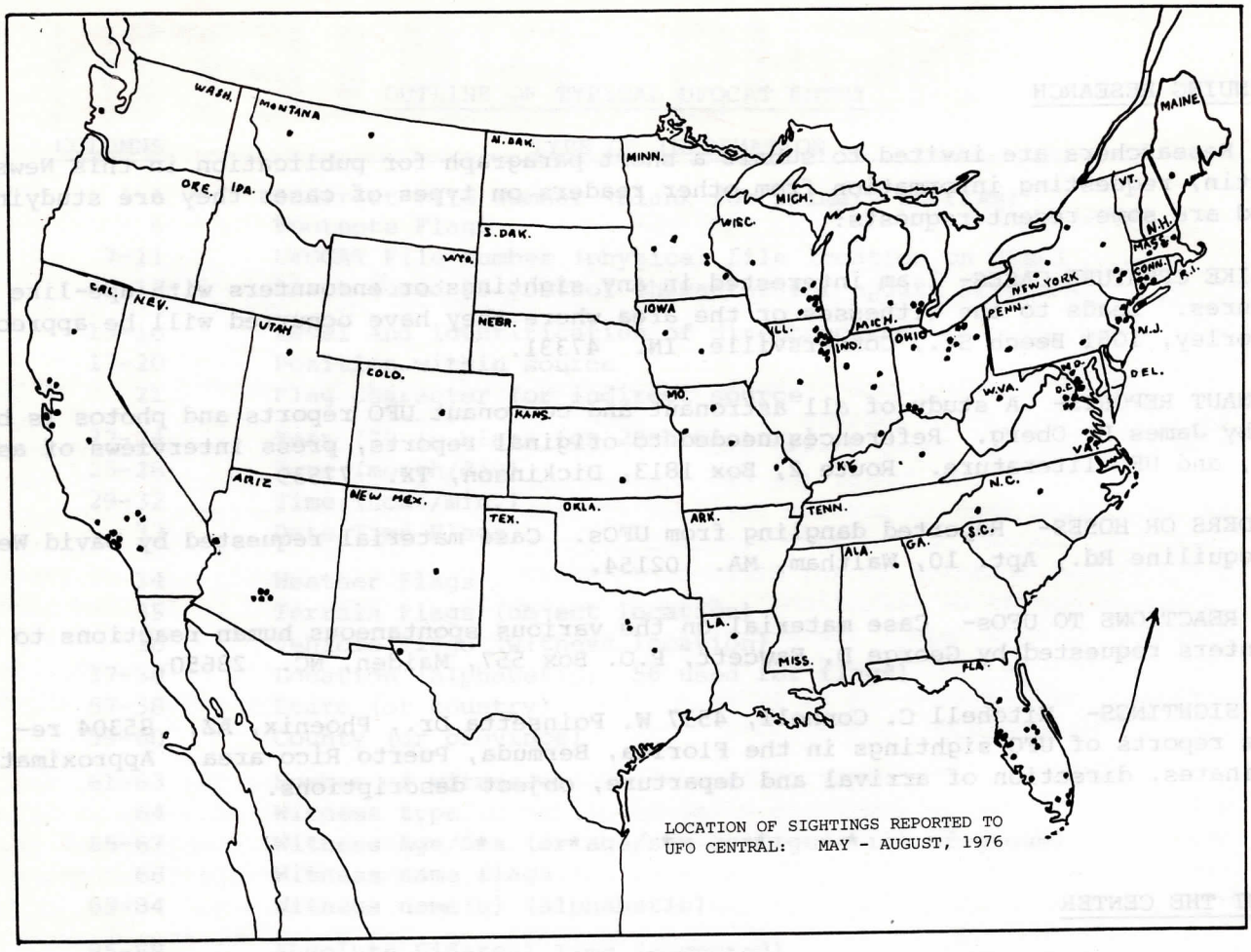


LOCATION OF SIGHTINGS REPORTED TO
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