In the shadow of the Moon: Experience a solar eclipse from 37 kilometers up

November 30 2012, by Jason Major

The Moon's shadow stretches over the Earth in this balloon-mounted camera view of the November 14 solar eclipse. Credit: Catalin Beldea, Marc Ulieriu, Daniel Toma et. al/Stiinta&Tehnica

On November 14, 2012, tens of thousands of viewers across northeastern Australia got a great view of one of the most awe-inspiring sights in astronomy—a total solar eclipse. Of course many fantastic photos and videos were taken of the event, but one team of eclipse hunters from Romania went a step further—or should I say higher—and captured the

event from a video camera mounted on a weather balloon soaring over 36,800 meters (120,000 feet) up!

Their video can be seen below:

During a solar eclipse the Moon passes in front of the disk of the Sun, casting its shadow upon the Earth. Any viewers within the darkest part of the shadow—the umbra—will experience a total eclipse, while those within the wider, more diffuse shadow area along the perimeter—the penumbra—will see a partial eclipse.

By launching a weather balloon carrying a wide-angle camera into the stratosphere above Queensland, eclipse hunter and amateur astronomer Catalin Beldea and her team were able to obtain their incredible video of the November 14 total eclipse from high enough up that the shadow of the Moon was visible striking Earth's atmosphere. Totality only lasted a couple of minutes so good timing was essential… but they got the shot. Very impressive!

Source: Universe Today

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