

Canadian astronomers on hunt for meteor

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Astronomers from The University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, have captured rare video of a meteor falling to Earth.

The Physics and Astronomy Department at Western has a network of all-sky cameras in Southern Ontario that scan the sky monitoring for meteors. Associate Professor Peter Brown, who specializes in the study of meteors and meteorites, says that Wednesday evening (March 5) at 10:59 p.m. EST these cameras captured video of a large fireball and the department has also received a number of calls and emails from people who actually saw the light.

Brown along with Wayne Edwards, a post doctorate student, hope to enlist the help of local residents in recovering one or more possible meteorites that may have crashed in the Parry Sound area.

“Most meteoroids burn up by the time they hit an altitude of 60 or 70 kilometres from Earth,” says Edwards. “We tracked this one to an altitude of about 24 kilometres so we are pretty sure there are at least one, and possibly many meteorites, that made it to the ground.”

Edwards says the lab can narrow the ground location where the meteorite would have fallen, to about 12 square kilometres and have created a map that may assist in locating the meteorite. The rock, or rocks, would probably weigh a kilogram or slightly more.

“We would love to find a recovered meteorite on this one, because we have the video and we have the data and by putting that together with the meteorite, there is a lot to be learned.”

Source: University of Western Ontario

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