

Gabon town gets rare glimpse of solar eclipse

November 3 2013



A rare hybrid solar eclipse is seen through clouds from the Canary Island of Tenerife on November 3, 2013

Despite rain and overcast skies residents of southern Gabon got a glimpse Sunday of a total eclipse of the sun, a rare phenomenon also visible in eastern Africa.

"I saw a black disc progressively cover the [sun](#). It's magnificent," said Clarence Diledou, who lives of the port town of Port-Gentil.

"But unfortunately the bad weather spoiled the party a bit."

The west African nation got peak viewing of the total [eclipse](#) as it swept over a path nearly 60 kilometres (37 miles) wide.

At its peak over land in central Gabon, the sun was blocked out for about a minute.

Weather permitting, partial phases of the eclipse were also visible in southern Europe and in the eastern United States.

In Port-Gentil, families gathered together for the occasion along the sea front, facing the sun.

Like many in the town, Diledou used special glasses distributed by authorities to watch the rare event.

Those who did not have any came up with imaginative solutions, among them Pauline Koumba, who put a bowl of water in her courtyard and watched the reflected eclipse.

"I saw the brief passage of the eclipse in my bowl. But it was over quickly and the black clouds spoiled the effect," she said.



Gabonese people look at a rare solar eclipse through special glasses, on November 3, 2013 in Libreville

Families also gathered in the capital Libreville, where the eclipse was less spectacular, but where the skies darkened noticeably for about half an hour from 1330 GMT.

It then continued across Africa, passing through northern Uganda and northern Kenya, although overcast skies marred the effect.



A partial Solar eclipse is seen just after sunrise over the Queens borough of New York across the East River on November 3, 2013 in New York

Experts say a safe way to view an eclipse is by making a pinhole camera—piercing a tiny hole in a piece of paper then turning your back to the sun and using the pierced page to project the image of the sun on another sheet of paper.

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Citation: Gabon town gets rare glimpse of solar eclipse (2013, November 3) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-11-gabon-town-rare-glimpse-solar.html>

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