

## **20,000 meteorites and counting: New book details productive collection program**

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Meteorites collected from Antarctica provide insight into the universe, help tell the history of the moon and Mars, and hold untold secrets waiting for scientists to decipher.

Case Western Reserve University's Ralph Harvey and colleagues continue to travel to the bottom of the Earth and add to the world's largest meteorite collection. And now they've written a book to promote exploration of the space rocks they bring back.

35 Seasons of U.S. Antarctic Meteorites: A Pictorial Guide to the Collection provides a history of the Antarctic Search of Meteorites program, details about thousands of specimens, what's been learned, and how researchers can obtain samples for free. In the center of the book, 80 photographs show some of the key discoveries.

The book is dedicated to William Cassidy, an emeritus professor of geology and planetary sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, who founded the Antarctic Search program, called ASMET.

"This program has been an enormous success because Bill Cassidy decided from the beginning to make samples of all of the meteorites found by ASMET available to scientists anywhere in the world, rather than making the search for meteorites a competition among countries and museums," Harvey said.

These pieces of planets and moons, asteroids and comets come from as

far back as the early formation of the solar system. They don't fall on Antarctica any more often than the rest of Earth, but the dark rocks are easier to spot on the windswept ice and snow than on the inhabited continents.

Harvey, an associate professor of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences at Case Western Reserve and field leader of AMSET, has led nearly 190 scientists down to the ice, where they've collected more than 20,000 meteorites on annual trips since 1976.

Harvey helped write the preface and three chapters. He, Kevin Righter, Antarctic [meteorite](#) curator at NASA's Johnson Space Center, Tim McCoy, past curator of Antarctic meteorites at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, and Cari Corrigan, present curator at the Smithsonian, edited the book.

Provided by Case Western Reserve University

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