

Museum acquires recently fallen meteorite from Junction City, Georgia

October 18 2022, by Shelly R. Humble



Tellus Science Museum Curator Ryan Roney holds one of the newest acquisitions to the museum's collection – a 219-gram meteorite that fell in south Georgia in late September. Credit: Tellus Science Museum

A meteorite exploded over south Georgia during the overnight hours of September 26, 2022, spraying fragments across the small town of

Junction City, Georgia, and Tellus Science Museum has already acquired a piece of the space rock.

At 12:04 am EDT that morning, the meteorite burst into a bright fireball that lit up the sky over Talbot County. The meteor was captured flying across the sky by a camera operated by planetary astronomer Dr. Ed Albin. After analyzing [radar data](#) and watching the captured video, Dr. Albin and fellow meteorite hunters Pat Branch and Carl Dietrich determined the location of the fall.

Being the first to arrive on the scene, the three saw a small impact crater on a road and scoured the area to find any fragments of the fallen meteorite. After intense searching, the three hunters were all able to collect pieces of the meteorite. The second largest, a 219-gram specimen found by Dietrich, was acquired by Tellus. "I got lucky," said Dietrich, who wanted the meteorite to be displayed in a Georgia museum.

"This is very exciting, because finding a meteorite soon after it falls is a very rare occasion, and it fell here in Georgia," said Tellus Executive Director Jose Santamaria. "And to think—this rock was in space a little over three weeks ago." The meteorite has been tentatively identified as a chondrite, commonly known as a stony meteorite. Further classification is under way.

"I am thrilled that Tellus Science Museum is able to further preserve Georgia's meteoritic heritage with the acquisition of this specimen," says Tellus Curator Ryan Roney.

Since the finding of the original fragments, Albin has returned to the site numerous times and has been greeted by many meteorite hunters from across the nation. So far there has been about a dozen fragments found.

"I'm sure there are many pieces still to be found," said Albin. "It was

estimated that the meteor coming through our atmosphere was maybe the size of a washing machine or a small refrigerator." Tentatively called the Junction City Meteorite, it marks the 27th Georgia meteorite, the 11th Georgia [meteorite](#) in Tellus Science Museum's collection, and 6th witnessed fall in the state.

Provided by Tellus Science Museum

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