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WHAT WE DO

By **EMILY LAKDAWALLA**

Oct. 14, 2009 | 14:58 PDT | 21:58 UTC

I was debating whether to write anything about a reported fireball that streaked across the sky in the Netherlands at roughly 19:00 local time (17:00 UTC) yesterday, October 13, but seeing this image ended my internal debate. Wow!

[We need your help.](#)

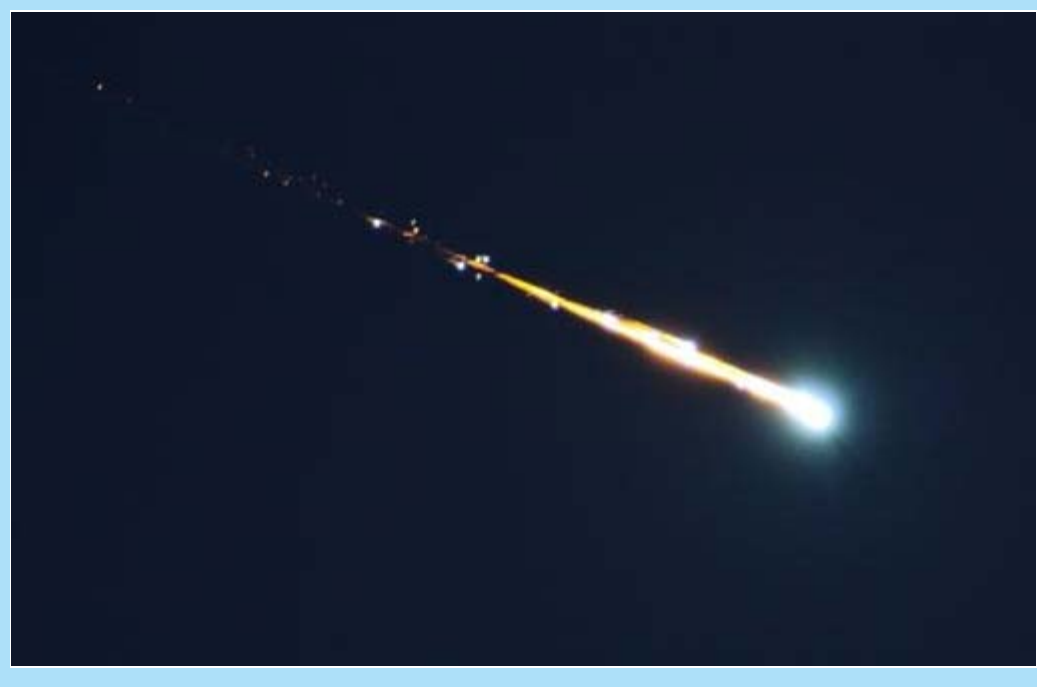
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Fireball over the Netherlands, October 13, 2009

Robert Mikaelyan acted fast as a bright meteor streaked across the sky at about 19:00 local time (17:00 UTC), snapping six photos of the meteor over three seconds. Credit: Robert Mikaelyan, Groningen, The Netherlands



Fireball over the Netherlands, October 13, 2009

This photo shows some of the fragments of the meteor that broke off as he watched, each becoming a separate fireball. Credit: Robert Mikaelyan, Groningen, The Netherlands

There are more of the same [here](#) (website's in Dutch).

Daniel Fischer is [collecting links](#) to various sources on the meteor, and included one to [a German forum where lots of images were posted](#) showing the dissipating trail of the meteor. The observer was in Bremerhaven, about 80 kilometers to the northeast of Groningen, where the fireball photos were taken. The Bremerhaven observer reported seeing the bolide as well -- maybe in two pieces -- and that it took four or five seconds to cross his sky.

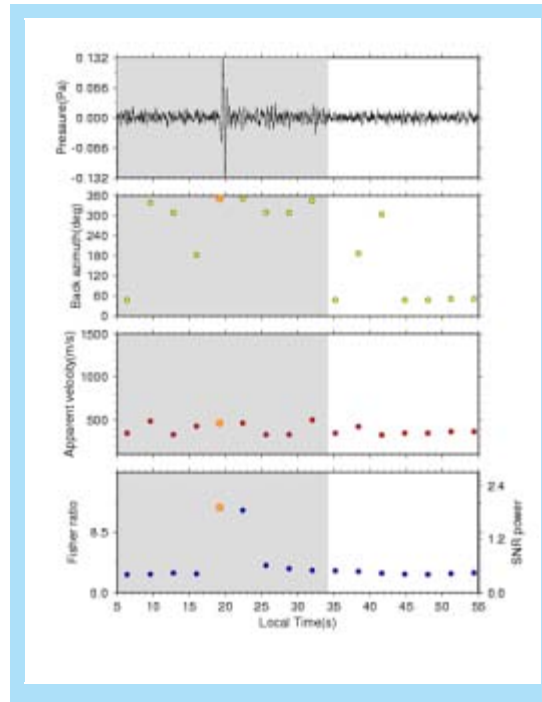


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Dissipating trail behind the Netherlands fireball

Maciej Liebert of Bremerhaven captured several photos in the aftermath of the fireball that crossed the sky of the Netherlands on October 13, 2009 after about 19:00 local time (17:00 UTC). Credit: Maciej Libert, Bremerhaven, the Netherlands

A reader pointed me to something cool which I also now see is posted on spaceweather.com: the apparent detection of a boom from the bolide on an infrasound array.



[Click to enlarge >](#)

Infrasound detection of Netherlands bolide

An infrasound array, designed to listen for ground-shaking events, apparently detected the explosion of the Netherlands bolide witnessed by thousands on October 13, 2009. Credit: [Láslo Evers](#), KNMI

As dramatic as these photos are, such fireballs are actually a relatively commonplace event. They're a reminder that [Earth orbits in a solar system shooting gallery](#), but that our atmosphere protects us against all but the biggest impactors. This one's only unusual because it happened over a densely populated area at a time of day when there were lots of people out and about.

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[Emily's on Twitter! »](#)

- Lovely colorized view of Intrepid crater, Opportunity sol 2414, by Kris K of Poland: <http://flic.kr/p/8SQ54D> [about 20 hours ago](#)
- Sobering Friday message: "There's a good possibility [Spirit] died, and we'll never hear from it again," Squyres now says <http://is.gd/gYU8L> [about 20 hours ago](#)
- RT @cosmos4u: The revival of the SEB on Jupiter seems to progress 'as planned': <http://is.gd/gYELw>. Rogers says: <http://is.gd/gYEQY>. [about 22 hours ago](#)
- RT @vive2run: Do you write recommendation letters? If so, read this <http://www.physorg.com/n...> [5:38 PM yesterday](#)
- Many, many thanks to @marschronicler for pointing me to PDF/citation manager Mendeley. It ROCKS. <http://mendeley.com> [5:00 PM yesterday](#)

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