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Meteorite hunters flock to southwest Wisconsin

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LIVINGSTON (WKOW) -- They look like rocks, but they're millennia older and worth so much more.

Meteorites continue to be discovered in southwest Wisconsin, bringing scientists and treasure hunters from across the country.

The meteor blasted thru the earth's atmosphere Wednesday night at 36,000 miles per hour -- a magnetic fireball that overpowered the bright lights of Milwaukee and lit up the night sky over Portage.

By the time it reached southwest Wisconsin, it exploded, scattering meteorites across the countryside.

"It had to be more than a ton. There should be hundreds of pounds on the ground," said Michael Farmer, a meteorite hunter who came from Tucson, Arizona.

"Whenever they fall like this, I'm on the first plane I can get on to get out here," Farmer said.

On Saturday, he made a grand find -- an apricot-sized metal object from outer space.

"It's not like anything you have here on earth. They're very heavy and very magnetic. If you put a magnet on it, it will stick to the magnet," Farmer said.

These meteorites are incredibly rare. As part of the meteor, they likely traveled the cosmos for billions of years before crash landing in Wisconsin.

"It was further out in space than our astronauts have been," Farmer said. "It's just something amazing."

Terry Boudreaux and his two teenage sons drove 400 miles around Grant and Iowa Counties this weekend, until they finally came across a farmer, just outside of Livingston.

"He said he was drinking a beer in his chair and the meteorite exploded above his house, and a piece of it hit his shed, and bounced right next to him. I went 'oh my gosh, you've got to be kidding,'" said Boudreaux, a meteorite collector from Illinois.

Boudreaux and his sons eventually found a grape-sized meteorite on the farmer's property. They'll keep searching for more, but time is running out.

"The farmers are plowing the fields now. It's terrible watching them plow these under. Get out and find them now. A lot of money can be found," said Farmer.

Especially when the next rock you see could really be a piece of cosmic history.

The meteorites they found so far are small enough to fit in your pocket -- most are worth about \$100 to \$500 dollars.



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