



Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

# Shiny steel orbs, three brilliant rings of light

## UFOs observed in Nebraska skies

There has been a recent lull in reported UFO sightings in the Lincoln area, although sightings and even abductions continue to be reported, according to local UFO researcher Scott Colborn.

Colborn is involved with several groups which coordinate UFO research and investigate claims of UFO sightings.

One of Colborn's projects involves the coordination of a 10-person support group for people who have had UFO experiences, whether recent or in the past. Those 10 are "just the tip of the iceberg," according to Colborn.

"Last year, there were about six reports of UFO activity in Nebraska," Colborn said.

Walter H. Andrus Jr., international director of the research group Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) located in Seguin, Texas, said most UFO sightings in Nebraska are reported in the eastern part of the state.

Colborn said one woman in the support group claims to have been abducted by beings from UFOs 10 to 12 times. The abductors sometimes take a "continuing interest" in certain people, and sometimes the subsequent abductions are partially remembered, he said.

Colborn witnessed a UFO in 1974 while sitting on his parents' patio in south-central Lincoln. Colborn and his father were facing north on an August evening when they noticed a "bright, round object like an enlarged, stainless-steel ball."

The unlit object was flying south to north at a low altitude. It made no sound and left no exhaust trail, moving against the breeze with a stable, forward motion.

Colborn and his father were

joined by his mother and girlfriend. The four all watched the object disappear over a stand of trees.

They compared notes afterward about what each had seen, and the accounts all were similar. "I knew I had seen something," Colborn said.

He had previously read a few books about UFOs, but that was "only a passing interest." After the sighting, Colborn was very curious about the object and sought an explanation.

"It could very well have been something besides what I thought it was," he said. Colborn later called the police and found that no one else had reported seeing the object.

The National Weather Service told Colborn that no weather balloons had been in the area at the time of the sighting and that there had been no unusual atmospheric phenomena.

A call to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln astronomy department rejected the idea that a satellite might have been flying low overhead. When he called Strategic Air Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, Colborn was told, "Project Bluebook was closed in 1969. The Air Force has no further interest in UFOs."

Colborn also called the local control tower and was told that no planes had been flying in that area at the time of his sighting. Moreover, he was told that planes fly over Lincoln in the opposite direction, from east to west or the reverse.

Concluding that he had seen a UFO, Colborn began to do a lot of reading about UFO sightings. He said it became a long-time interest which led to his assistant (and later full) directorship of the Fortean Research Center, P.O. Box 94627

Lincoln, Neb. 68509, an organization which researches claims of UFO sightings and other unexplained phenomena.

Seward resident Bill Bivin said he saw a UFO one spring evening about 35 years ago while walking home alone from a movie.

"I just saw a series of three rings flying in formation," he said. "They were flying across the sky in a triangular formation, not moving fast. I watched for a while and then went home and drew a picture."

Bivin carried that picture in his wallet for 20 years and then threw it out one day while cleaning his wallet.

His parents were not too excited when he told them about the event, Bivin said. "I told my friends, but I don't think they believed me."

"I was not scared. It was kind of neat, something unusual," said Bivin. "I have always thought there was some sort of intelligent life elsewhere in the universe."

Bivin's life and beliefs went through no great change, but he said maybe he should have kept his drawing of the UFO.

"If it happened again, I would probably watch again and draw another picture," he said.

Dale Bacon, who hosts the KZUM talk show "Exploring Unexplained Phenomena" with Colborn, described some patterns in local reports of UFO sightings.

He said that circles, Saturn-shapes and cigar shapes are common descriptions. There also is the "Adamsky" shape, something like an inverted hubcap with a can on top, taken from the TV show "The Invaders," he said.

"The most common description is a ball moving at incredible speed,

turning at 90-degree angles -- things that airplanes and helicopters cannot do. They are accompanied by a lack of sound and the presence of rays of light," Bacon said.

Circular impressions in the ground are sometimes found. "They defy explanation," Bacon said. "Not that there is none, but it hasn't been found."

Some people see only one craft, while others report seeing three of four in formation. Bacon said some people also report seeing several smaller crafts joining with a larger one.

Colborn said the historical approach to UFO reporting is changing. "In the '60s and '70s, objects were seen and there were some reports of non-human beings," said Colborn. "It was a big leap to associate these objects with other beings."

"In the '80s and '90s, there has been more evidence to suggest contact and abduction, which is my primary interest as a UFO researcher," Colborn said. "UFO abductions are taking place here in Lincoln."

A common theme in claims of abduction is a missing time element in travel, when a journey takes hours longer than it should, said Colborn.

Colborn described a typical abduction report: A person is sleeping in bed and wakes up with someone or something else in the room. The being comes to the bed and touches the person.

The person then finds himself or herself back in bed after two to three hours have passed, perhaps with dirt or sand on the feet and an inordinate fatigue.

"There is sometimes partial recall. They can remember being taken from the bedroom to another locale. The beings are clinical and do

not display emotion. They may try to relieve the pain or allay the fear of the abductee," Colborn said.

Bacon also described common experiences reported by those who claim to have seen UFOs, drawing on prior work at the Fortean Research Center and continuing efforts as co-host of the KZUM show.

"They are often shaken up for a while, but it later becomes something to look back upon and tell friends," Bacon said. "They may think their life has been drastically altered, but two or three years later, there have been no great changes in their lives."

Bacon said other people are radically changed and become "UFO believers." People often are filled with a sense of "we're not the only ones in the universe," he said.

Bacon went on to describe reported sightings of beings from UFOs, saying "There have been a large number of abduction cases recently, although that is not as prominent in Lincoln as elsewhere. It borders on the fringe."

"There is variation in the descriptions," he said. "Contact is most commonly reported with 'greys,' who are three to four feet tall with large heads and eyes and single-piece body suits."

Another common category is the "bug" type, which resembles an insect on two feet, Bacon said. Less frequently, people claim contact with beings that look "just like us."

With background in psychology and communications, Bacon says he has a "feel" for judging the sincerity or inventiveness of those who report UFO sightings.

"Do they exist? I don't know, but I am not so vain as to think our planet is the only one to support life," Bacon said.

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