



It's an unidentified object, but 'not a UFO'

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The circled object has been widely circulated online. It shows a bright spot during the July 22 solar eclipse (right) that many claim to be a UFO.

For years, UFOs have fascinated people, from those in the serious business of science to the layperson. The debate still rages, most of all in the US, the center of the scientific world.

But the latest sighting, many claim, has been in China, even though the scientist who is supposed to have sighted it says: "That's false news. I said 'an unidentified object' not 'an unidentified flying object'."

Ji Haisheng, director of Nanjing-based Purple Mountain Observatory, pronounces each word carefully to clarify that he hasn't made any claim of seeing a UFO during the July 22 solar eclipse, which could be seen across China.

The Daily Mail, however, reported on Sept 7 that China had "confirmed (that) 40 minutes of footage of the object was captured during this summer's solar eclipse and that research has already started on a year-long investigation to find out what it is".

The British newspaper quoted Ji as having said: "During the July 22 total solar eclipse observation, China had discovered near the sun an unidentified object, it's physical nature remains to be further studied."

Ji said he doesn't know why his explanation about a bright spot close to the sun, very likely to be the result of some coronal activity filmed during the total eclipse, was misunderstood.



"Obviously, there have been misunderstandings," Ji says while speaking to China Daily.

Ji says that on Sept 2 he received a call from a journalist who asked him about UFO images taken during the solar eclipse. "I was confused and retorted, 'what UFO?'"

It was not until the journalist referred to the photograph of a bright spot near the sun, posted on the observatory's website as a summary report about Chinese observation of the eclipse, that Ji realized what he was talking about.

The report refers to the bright spot as one of the best examples of Chinese scientists' success in capturing some fresh and clear images for up to 40 minutes of the corona of a solar eclipse.

Ji told the journalist that "people were being organized to study the data, complete the analysis and reveal the scientific results. That will take at least one year to finalize."

A week later, both the quotes ended up in the Daily Mail report as confirmation of "UFO 'filmed for 40 minutes' by Chinese scientists during solar eclipse".

The Daily Mail also reported that some students in Guangdong province, had captured images of a "walnut-shaped object" on camera while observing the eclipse from a rooftop.

Duan Lixin, of Yuannan UFO Video Analyzing Workshop in Kunming, says he has received some video clips of a "UFO captured during the solar eclipse". But the images are too blurred to be clearly identified.

"We find it hard to tell almost everything we see in the sky," he said. What people claim to be a "UFO could be celestial phenomenon, a balloon or even a straw hat".

Source:<http://english.sina.com/technology/p/2009/0911/270063.html>

