

25 Interesting Facts about Meteorites



1. When he was knighted, the fantasy author, Sir Terry Pratchett had his own sword forged out of iron ore and several pieces of meteorites that he had dug out. He also forged the sword himself. He hired an expert to tutor him through it, but he did all the work.

2. **Hoba**, the largest known meteorite to have hit earth, left no crater at all. Earth's atmosphere slowed the object to the point of terminal velocity. The **Hoba** meteorite is also the most massive naturally occurring piece of Iron known on the Earth's surface. It most likely 'skipped' across the earth's atmosphere like a skipping stone, due to it being unusually flat on both major surfaces.

3. Excavation made by researchers south of Cairo found strings of iron beads that they dated to an era thousands of years before Egypt's Iron Age. They finally concluded that the ancient Egyptians used these as jewelry and that the iron came from meteorites.

4. There have only been two confirmed cases of humans being hit by a meteorite. Statistically, there is a better chance of getting hit by a tornado, a bolt of lightning and a hurricane all at the same time.

5. Meteorites that fell to Earth during a meteor shower in July of 2011 have been confirmed to be from Mars. The rocks, discovered in Morocco, were likely ejected off the surface of the planet during an ancient asteroid impact.

6. For centuries, the main source of metal to Greenland's Inuits for making tools and harpoons was a 58-ton iron meteorite fragment.



7. Satellites are programmed to avoid meteorites so that they don't get destroyed. Of over 8,000 satellites are orbiting the Earth, only one has ever been hit and destroyed by a meteorite.

8. Before life developed on earth, meteorites that fell on the planet brought reduced phosphorus. This allowed oxidation to phosphates, which provided a mechanism for the generation of DNA and RNA, a precursor for life on earth.

9. Certain medals at the 2014 Winter Olympics contain fragments of the meteorite which hit Russia in 2013.

10. Russia has a cache of trillions of dollars' worth of industrial-grade meteor crater diamonds that are twice as hard as jewelry-grade ones.

11. An ancient statue that was recovered by a Nazi expedition to Tibet in the 1930s was originally carved from a highly valuable meteorite. It is believed to be part of the Chinga meteorite, which crashed about 15,000 years ago.



12. In 74 B.C., two Greek armies were facing each other across a field preparing for battle when a meteorite smashed the ground between them, causing both to flee.

13. Meteorites are not necessarily hot when they reach the Earth. In fact, many meteorites are found with frost on them. A meteorite has been in the near-absolute zero temperature of space for billions of years, so the interior of it is very cold.

14. The meteorite, which most likely wiped out the dinosaurs created a dust cloud so huge it blocked out sunlight for up to a year. The sound wave generated from the impact most likely instantly deafened most organisms with ears and released the equivalent energy of 100 teratonnes of TNT!

15. On average, 33 metric tons (73,000 lbs) of meteoroids hit Earth every day, the vast majority of which harmlessly ablates ("burns up") high in the atmosphere, never making it to the ground.



16. 214 million years ago Quebec was hit by a 5 km wide meteorite (fourth largest ever), which created a circular island surrounded by two crescent shaped lakes named Manicouagan Crater but known as the “Eye of Quebec”.

18. Most “shooting stars” (meteoroids) that hit the earth everyday are the size of a pebble.

19. A rocky meteoroid needs to be larger than 25 m before it is likely to make it through the earth’s atmosphere and cause any damage. It needs to be larger than a kilometer or two before there will be any global effects.

20. On March 17, 2013 a meteor impacted the Moon, creating an explosion visible to the naked eye from Earth.

21. An exploding meteorite is called a **Bolide**.



22. In 2009, the phone company Tele2 elaborately faked a meteorite impact in Latvia. According to Tele2’s officials, the stunt was a ploy to help direct the world’s attention toward the troubled Baltic country as it struggles with a prolonged economic downturn.

23. Scientists theorize that most of our planet’s water arrived from primitive meteorites.

24. Certain meteorites have a crystalline pattern called Widmanstätten pattern, which forms only in outer space and cannot be duplicated here on earth.

25. There’s a town in Kentucky that was built inside a 3 mile-wide meteorite crater. The town claims to be the only one in the US built entirely inside a crater. It also claims to be the home of ragtime music.

