# Met Office clarifies sightings of glowing orb in UK sky



The Met Office has provided clarification regarding a striking phenomenon observed across the UK on Monday evening, March 24, when many reported seeing a glowing, spinning orb in the night sky. The unusual spectacle sparked widespread speculation, with some individuals questioning whether it could be a UFO.

Eyewitnesses in various regions, including Greater Manchester, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, and parts of southern England shared their experiences on social media, expressing astonishment at the sight. Many concerned parents noted that their children were unsettled by the mysterious light.

As the galaxy glimmered above, videos and images of the bright, circular light rapidly circulated online, igniting conversations and curiosity among the public. However, the Met Office promptly addressed the matter, asserting that the sighting was linked to the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, which had been launched earlier that day from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida at approximately 1.45 PM local time (5.45 PM GMT).

The Met Office explained through a post on social media platform X: "We've received many reports of an illuminated swirl in the sky this evening. This is likely to be caused by the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, launched earlier today. The rocket’s frozen exhaust plume appears to be spinning in the atmosphere and reflecting the sunlight, causing it to appear as a spiral in the sky."

This phenomenon was visible for about ten minutes, with many observers noting its peculiar shape and the way it shifted in the atmosphere. For some, the display brought to mind previous extraordinary incidents, such as the 2009 Norway spiral, when a failed missile launch led to an unexpected visual effect. In a similar vein, a SpaceX launch in 2023 had confused spectators in the US with a similar spiral created by excess fuel that had been released into the atmosphere.

Astrophotographer Dave, who witnessed the event in Bristol, described the initial confusion surrounding the glowing spiral. "It looked just like a plane with its headlight on," he told the Press Association. "I suddenly realised it was SpaceX because I’ve seen it so much on YouTube, but I can totally see how others would have been weirded out by it – it really did look alien."

Lord Dover, a senior technical officer at the University of Hertfordshire’s Bayfordbury Observatory, elaborated on the explanation, stating that the Falcon 9 rocket had offloaded fuel in the upper atmosphere to reduce weight prior to its return to Earth. As a result, the fuel formed an expanding, swirling cloud that developed into a sizeable spiral shape as it traversed the Atlantic.

The Met Office noted that sightings of such phenomena are becoming more frequent in various parts of the world, but it remains unusual for these displays to be visible from the UK. The incident highlights the intersection of advanced aerospace technology and public fascination, drawing both amazement and intrigue from those who experienced the celestial display.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/mysterious-spinning-orb-spotted-spiralling-across-uk-skies-heres-what-caused-it-8007088> - This article explains that the mysterious spinning orb was observed across the UK and other countries, with the Met Office attributing it to a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launch. It details eyewitness accounts and suggests that the phenomenon was similar to previous events caused by rocket fuel.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/science/glowing-spiral-white-spinning-orb-uk-sky-met-office> - The GB News article highlights the Met Office's explanation that the glowing spiral was caused by excess fuel from a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. It also mentions sightings across Europe and captures the public's reaction to the event.
* <https://www.interstellaruniverse.info/> - Although this specific link may not directly provide information on the event, Interstellar Universe often shares insights into space phenomena and might offer related discussions or analysis of the event.
* <https://www.space.com/spacex-falcon-9-rocket-explained> - This URL provides general information about SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket, which could contextualize its capabilities and operations relevant to the event described.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_Norway_spiral> - This Wikipedia page details the 2009 Norway spiral event, which is mentioned in the article as a similar visual phenomenon. It helps understand how unexpected visual effects can occur during space-related activities.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england> - The BBC is a reliable source for UK news and might have covered the event, providing additional details or interviews with witnesses and experts regarding the mysterious spinning orb.
* <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/met-office-issues-explanation-after-31280947> - Please view link - unable to able to access data