# Mystery spirals in UK sky linked to SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launch



On the evening of Monday, 24 March, a series of blue and white spirals were observed in the night sky across various locations in the UK, leading many to speculate about their origins. Experts have indicated that the phenomenon was likely a result of the recent launch of the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Florida earlier that day.

Reports of the swirling lights began surfacing around 8pm, with Richard Whelan capturing footage of the unique sight in Hull. “I thought at first it was the moon casting shapes on the cloud, but when I zoomed in it was a moving bright light with a cloud circling around it,” Mr Whelan explained.

The phenomenon captured public attention and spurred numerous discussions, particularly across social media platforms in areas including Greater Manchester, Derbyshire, Lancashire, and Staffordshire. Observers described a "beautiful" swirling orb that appeared to slowly fade into the night. Many took to Facebook to compare notes, and a variety of explanations emerged. Some witnesses even speculated whether the spirals could be attributed to an unidentified flying object (UFO).

The UK's national weather agency, the Met Office, responded to the growing curiosity, confirming that it had received multiple reports regarding the illuminated swirl. A statement shared on X, formerly known as Twitter, indicated that the cause was likely linked to the Falcon 9 rocket: "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."

The Falcon 9 rocket completed its launch at approximately 1.50pm local time in Florida, corresponding to 5.50pm GMT, as part of a classified mission for the US government. As the rocket ascended, excess fuel released into the atmosphere created a visually striking spiral effect when the frozen fuel crystallised and reflected sunlight, a phenomenon that has been previously observed following other launches, including those from California earlier in 2023.

Respondents from the public noted the experience, with one individual from Stockport stating, "Did anyone else just see this swirling thing in the sky? It was spinning round and then went off into the distance," while another from Tameside remarked on the slow-moving object, "I thought it was a plane but it appeared too slow."

This unexpected astronomical display underscores the interplay between space exploration and public curiosity, as many continued to engage with the spectacle even as they sought to understand the science behind it.

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

## References

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcryPsLjTk8> - This URL contains information about the Falcon 9 launch on March 24, 2025, including the launch time and site, which supports the claim that the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket was launched earlier in the day.
* <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/492eca/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/evidence/evidbb.pdf> - This source does not directly corroborate the article's claims but provides general legal context regarding evidence and authenticity, relevant for understanding how visual evidence, like photos of spirals, might be evaluated.
* <https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2025/03/24/watch-live-falcon-9-launching-classified-mission-from-cape-canaveral-space-force-station/> - This article confirms the launch of the Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station on March 24, 2025, as a classified mission for the US government.
* <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/22/2024-07496/guidance-for-federal-financial-assistance> - This URL does not directly support the article's claims about the SpaceX launch or the blue spirals. It pertains to federal financial assistance guidance.
* <https://www.spaceflightnow.com/> - This website often provides detailed coverage of space launches, including SpaceX missions. It might have reported on the March 24, 2025, Falcon 9 launch and the subsequent observations in the UK.
* <https://www.noahwire.com/> - This is the source of the original article, providing context for the observed spirals and speculation surrounding their origin.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/spacex-rocket-launch-spiral-b2720938.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/spectacular-swirl-sky-seen-north-31272894> - Please view link - unable to able to access data