

They're watching us every day

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?When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.?

Sherlock Holmes

Every day in th



is great country of ours, high above our heads something strange is going on. According to the 2013 UFO?Survey, published by Ufology Research, almost three unusual objects per day are reported by average citizens.

The survey has some really interesting stats. Compiled by Geoff Dittman and Chris A. Rutkowski, the report is really the only document available on the subject, since the government gave up chasing UFOs some years back.

Since 1989, Ufology Research (formerly Ufology Research of Manitoba) has secured UFO case data from known and active Canadian investigators and researchers. The goal has been to provide data for use by researchers trying to understand this controversial phenomenon. No comparable studies are currently produced by any other research group in North America.

Last year marked the 25th year of collecting and analysing Canadian UFO report data by Ufology Research.

There were 1,180 UFO sightings reported in Canada in 2013, or about three each day.

The number of cases in 2013 is the second-highest number of UFO sightings recorded in Canada during the last 25 years.

The 1,180 UFO cases is much less than the peak year of 2012, when almost 2,000 reports were recorded. In 2013, Ontario had more than 40 per cent of all Canadian UFO reports. About 14 per cent of all UFO reports were classified as unexplained. The typical UFO sighting lasted approximately 13 minutes in 2013.

The study found that more than half of all UFO sightings were of simple lights in the sky. Witnesses also reported point sources of light, spheres and boomerangs.

Results of this study show that many people continue to report unusual objects in the sky, and some of these objects do not have obvious explanations. Many witnesses are pilots, police and other individuals with reasonably good observing capabilities and good judgement.

Numbers of reported UFO sightings remain high. Several theories for this can be suggested: more UFOs are present and physically observable by witnesses; more secret or classified military exercises and overflights are occurring over populated areas; more people are unaware of the nature of conventional or natural objects in the sky; more people are taking the time to observe their surroundings; more people are able to report their sightings with easier access to the Internet and portable technology; or even that the downturn in the economy is leading to an increased desire by some people to look skyward for assistance.

There is no incontrovertible evidence that some UFO cases involve extraterrestrial contact. The continued reporting of UFOs by the public and the yearly increase in numbers of UFO reports suggests a need for further examination of the phenomenon by social, medical and/or physical scientists.

Here are a couple of the more interesting ones.

On Sept. 27, 2013 at 8:51 p.m. at Winnipeg, an air traffic controller saw four lights in a V-shaped formation moving together silently

overhead. The witness said the lights were at an altitude of about 1,000 or 2,000 feet and were heading slowly northwest. Because there was no visible aircraft beacon, the witness did not believe the lights were on an ordinary aircraft.

On Sept. 28, 2013 at 8:13 p.m. at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, a former helicopter pilot and two other people watched as many as 50 orange lights moving in the southwest sky in pairs following the same trajectory south to north. They watched the procession for at least five minutes.

Just under two per cent of all reported UFO cases in 2013 were Close Encounters, emphasizing the reality that very few UFO cases involve anything other than distant objects seen in the sky. This is an important statistic, because the current popular interest in abductions and sensational UFO encounters is based not on the vast majority of UFO cases but on the very tiny fraction of cases which fall into the category of close encounters. Speculation on what aliens may or may not be doing in our airspace seems almost completely unconnected to what are actually being reported as UFOs.

Statistics indicate that the typical UFO experience has more than one witness, and supports the contention that UFO sightings represent observations of real, physical phenomena, since there is usually at least one corroborator present to support the sighting. As a sci-fi fan, I've always been a "believer" in life on other worlds. From the sheer volume of stars and planets in the cosmos (there are an estimated 170 billion galaxies in the universe), I find it very unlikely that we are the only intelligent beings. The odds are there are millions of earth-like planets capable of supporting life. After all, we don't need all this room!

For those who follow strict interpretation of religious doctrine, Genesis clearly indicates that God created the "heavens and the earth." Since "heavens" is plural, that means God created the universe. It does not say he didn't place "man" on other worlds. Further, in all "close encounters" aliens are described as humanoid "eyes, two arms, two legs and hands. Since these are similar to our own image, perhaps the All Mighty created them, too.

The naysayers always ask why aliens don't make themselves known to us. Would you? If we had the capability of visiting other worlds and dropped in on the natives who were picking up after their dogs; polluting the oceans; watching late-night talk shows and infomercials and otherwise simply creating a lot of noise, you'd likely turn your ship around and leave as fast as you can!

Humankind's fascination with the universe will never end. That's human curiosity and it's an amazing quality.

Perhaps one day, my kids or even my grandkids will make "first contact."

But it doesn't matter. We'll go on believing, scanning and sending out messages from earth.

Hopefully we'll get a helping hand along the way. We're simply not ready for it.