

News Release

4 March 2024

# Results of the 2023 Canadian UFO Survey

*Call them what you want, UFOs or UAP:  
Unidentified flying objects continue to be reported  
in Canada, from coast to coast to coast*



**In 2023, 570 UFO reports were officially filed in Canada with official government agencies, participating private organizations, media, and social media.**

**In 2023, about 50 UFO sightings were reported each month in Canada.**

**The percentage of UFO cases considered Unexplained in 2023 was about six per cent.**

**The provinces with larger populations tended to have the most UFO reports.**

**In 2023, there were noticeable monthly peaks in reported UAP activity in February and August.**

**Most reported UFOs were simple lights in the sky, known as Nocturnal Lights (NL) in 45 per cent of cases.**

**The most common shape of UFO reported in 2023 was a simple point source of light (45 per cent).**

**The provinces with larger populations also tended to have the most UFO reports.**

**More than 24,000 Canadian UFO reports have been catalogued during the past 34 years.**

***For more information, and for the full detailed analyses of 2023 Canadian UFO reports, visit [The Canadian UFO Survey](#).***

# The 2023 Canadian UFO Survey

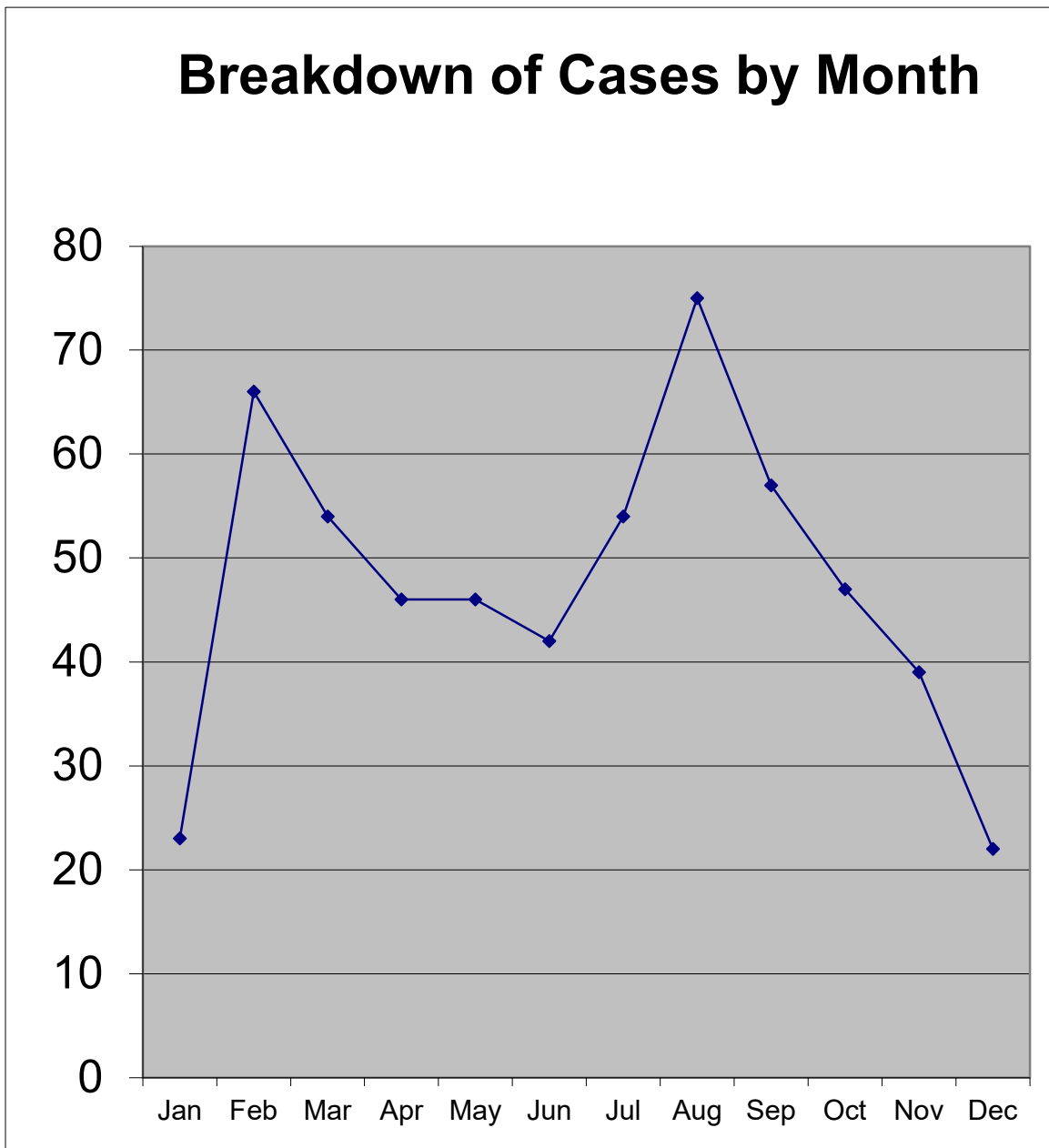
## Findings of the 2023 Canadian UFO Survey: An Overview

The results of the 2023 Canadian UFO Survey show that UFO sightings continue to be reported in Canada at a significant rate. **In 2023, 570 UFO reports were officially filed in Canada with official government agencies, participating private organizations, media, and social media.**

The annual Canadian UFO Survey is produced by Ufology Research, based in Manitoba, with the cooperation of investigators and researchers across the country who are working together and sharing data so as to better understand what is being seen and reported across the country.

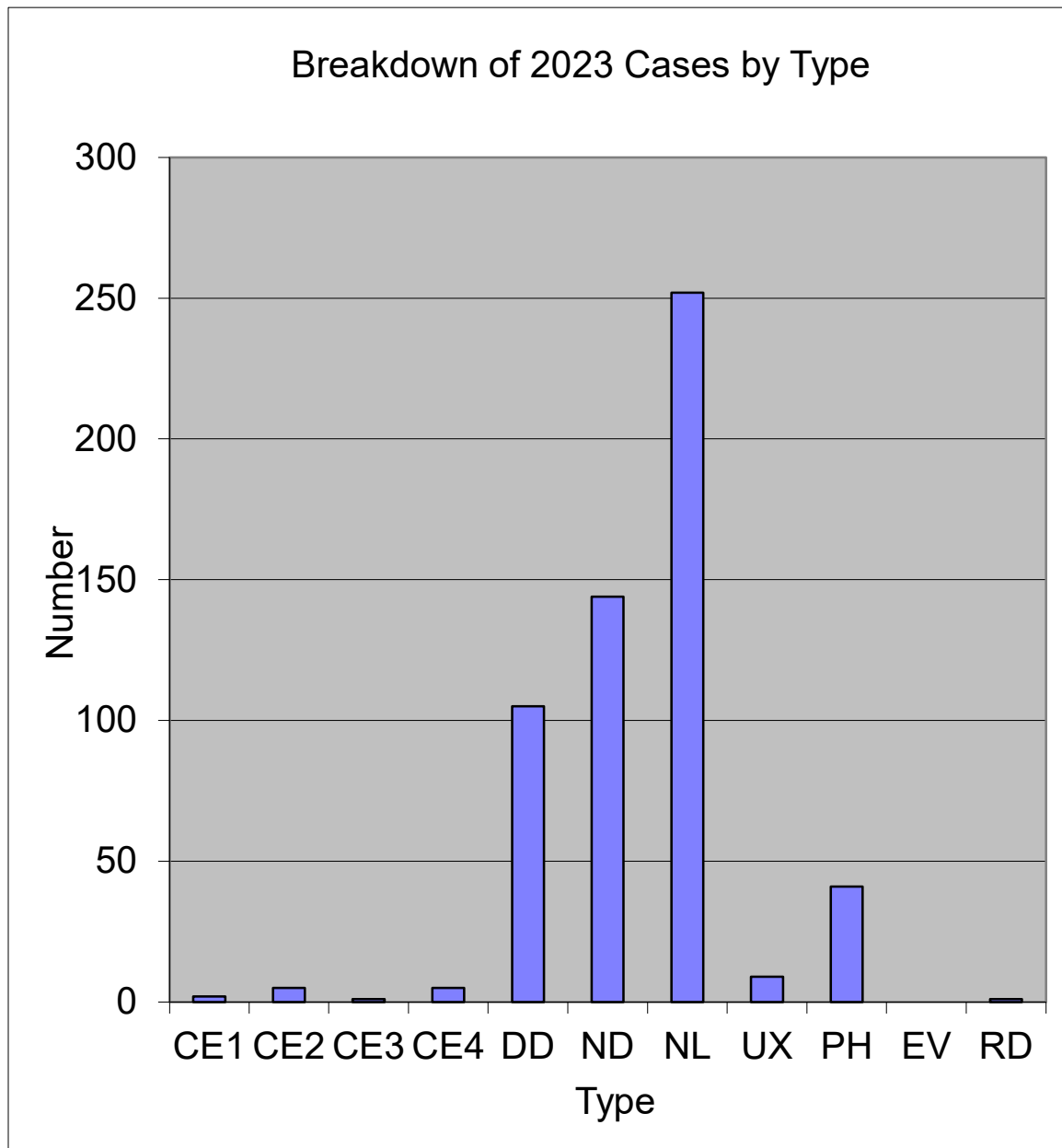
Since the annual Canadian UFO Survey was initiated in 1989, **more than 24,000 Canadian UFO reports have been catalogued during the past 34 years.** This is much more than the files of the United States Air Force's infamous Project Blue Book, which investigated and recorded 12,618 UFO reports from around the world between 1952 and 1969. And, while Blue Book listed 701 cases as Unexplained, there are currently about 2,612 Unexplained cases in the Canadian UFO Survey database.

## Monthly breakdown of Canadian UFO Reports in 2023



**In 2023, there were two noticeable monthly peaks in reported UAP activity: February and August.** The former is likely a reaction of the worldwide interest in the several “balloons” observed and intercepted by American missiles about that time. The August peak has been noted in previous years and there has not been a satisfactory explanation proposed for this.

## Breakdown of UFO Reports by Type



The types of UFOs are categorized in this Survey as follows:

NL (Nocturnal Light) - light source in night sky

ND (Nocturnal Disc) - light source in night sky that appears to have a definite shape

DD (Daylight Disc) - unknown object observed during daytime hours

C1 (Close Encounter of the First Kind) - ND or DD occurring within 200 metres of a witness

C2 (Close Encounter of the Second Kind) - C1 where physical effects left or noted

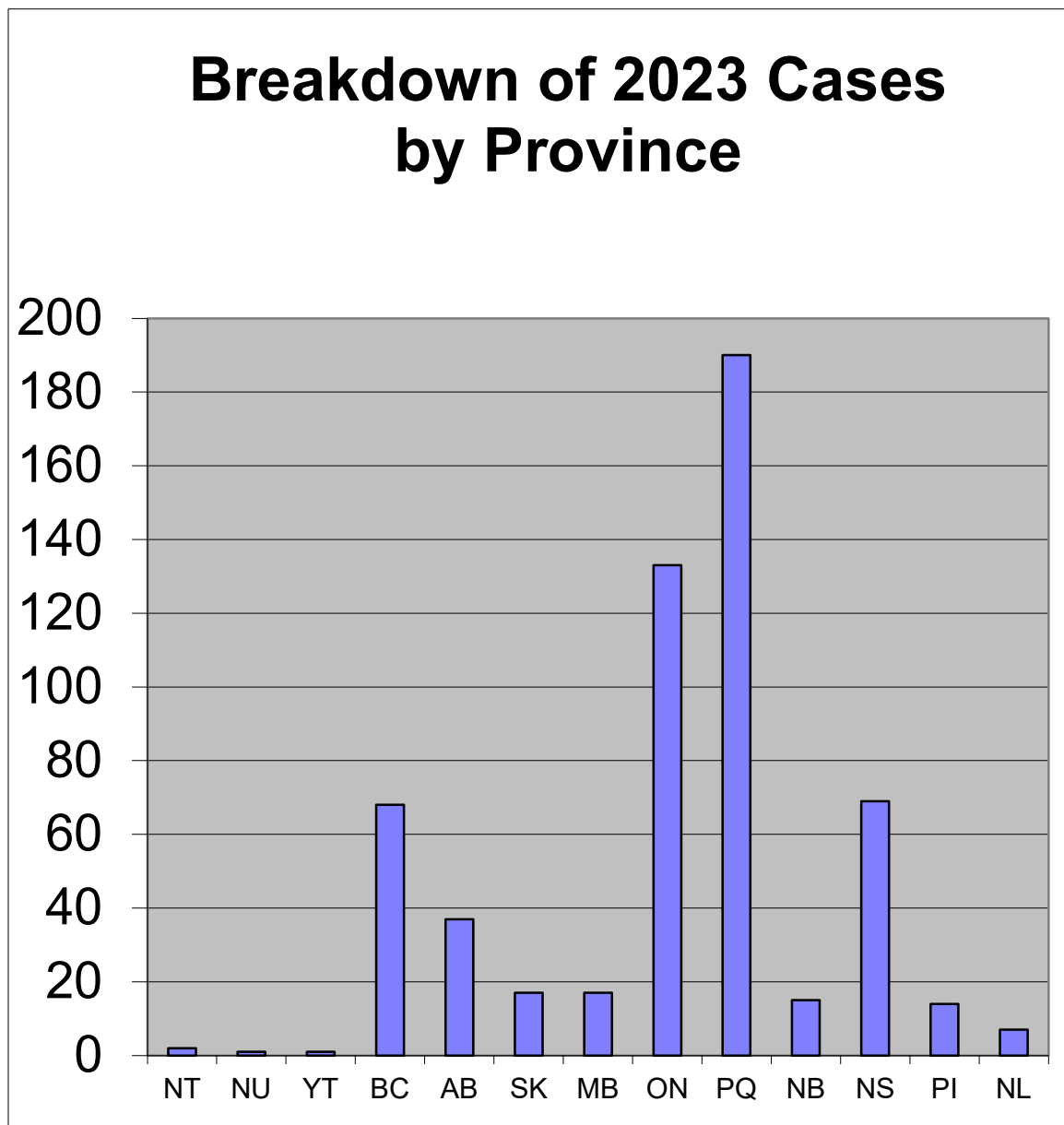
C3 (Close Encounter of the Third Kind) - C1 where figures/entities are encountered

C4 (Close Encounter of the Fourth Kind) - an alleged “abduction” or “contact” experience

**Most reported UFOs were simple lights in the sky**, known as Nocturnal Lights (NL) in 44.2 per cent of cases, while Close Encounters comprised slightly more than two per cent of the total. This is borne out by the bell-shaped distribution of Strangeness in 2023 (described later in the Survey), where most UFO sightings were unremarkable and simply lights or distant objects moving in the sky.

## Provincial Distribution of UFO Reports

**The provinces with larger populations tended to have the most UFO reports:** Ontario had 23.3 per cent and BC had 11.9 per cent, but Quebec seemed to have more than its share by population, at 33.3 per cent. Alberta was greatly underrepresented with only 6.3 per cent, and Nova Scotia was greatly overrepresented with even more than BC, at 12.1 per cent. This irregular distribution is explained to a large degree as because Quebec and Nova Scotia both have civilian UFO groups with very active public awareness campaigns and thus receive substantial media and social media attention.



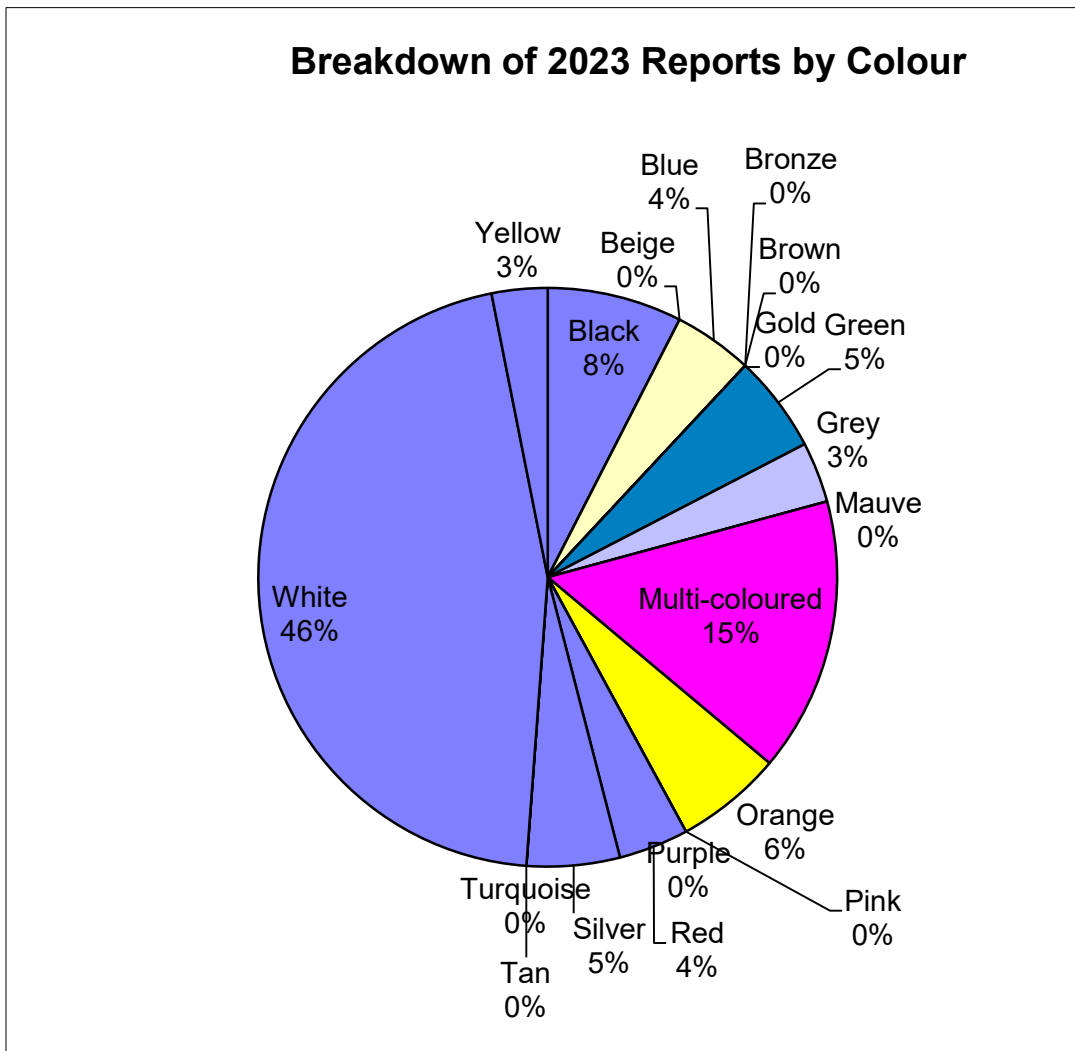
**The metropolitan city centres with the most UFO reports  
in 2023 were:**

<b>Metropolitan Areas</b>	<b>Number</b>
Montreal	42
Toronto	30
London	18
Vancouver	14
Halifax	11
Laval	11
Quebec City	11
Hamilton	9
Winnipeg	8
Calgary	7



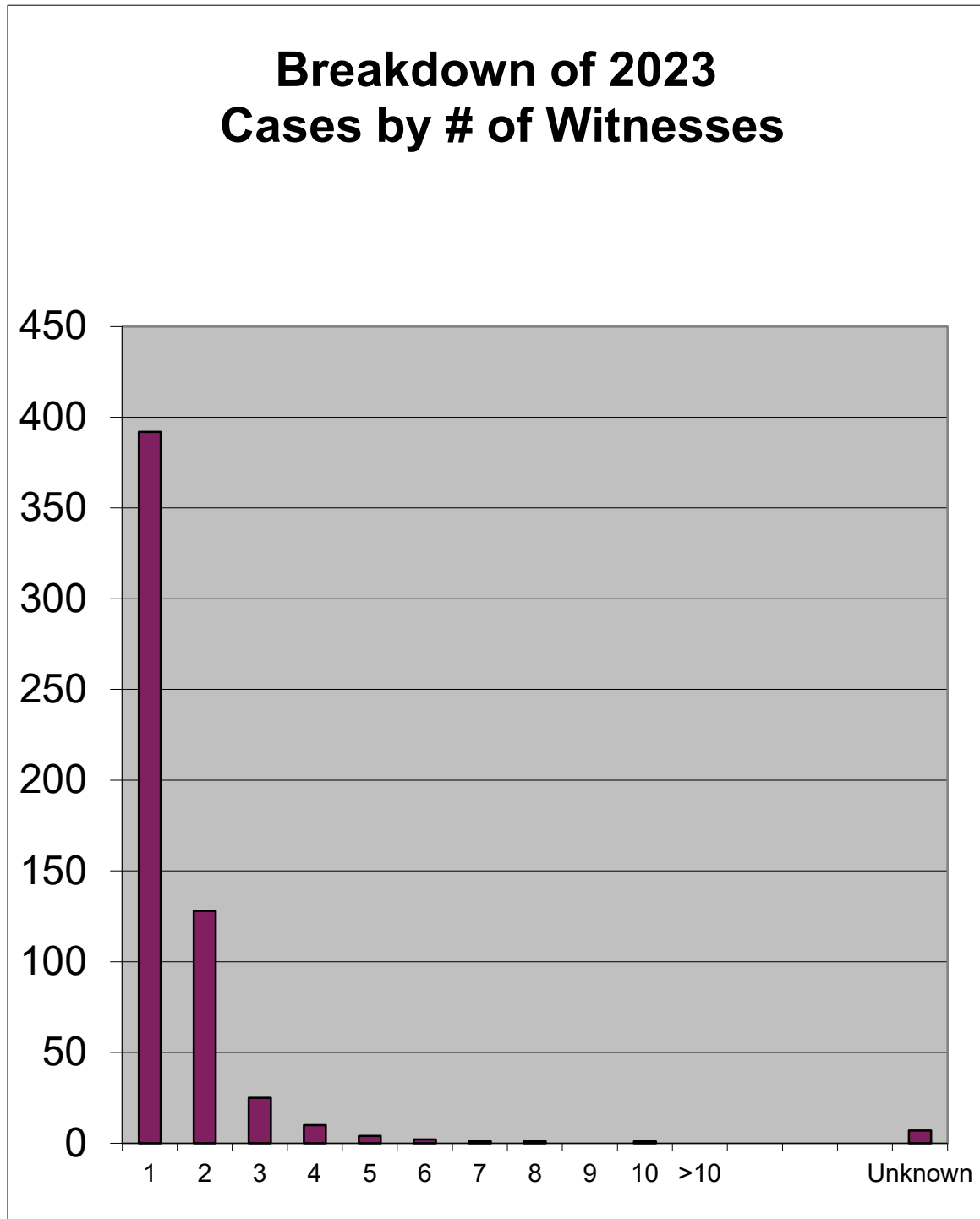
## Reported Colours of UFOs

As in previous years, the most common colour of UFO was White, reported 46 per cent of the time. The next most common was “Multicoloured” with 15 per cent, Black with eight per cent, and Orange, with six per cent. It should be noted, however that colours of UFOs were only reported in 67 per cent of cases, limiting the ability of investigators to assess cases.

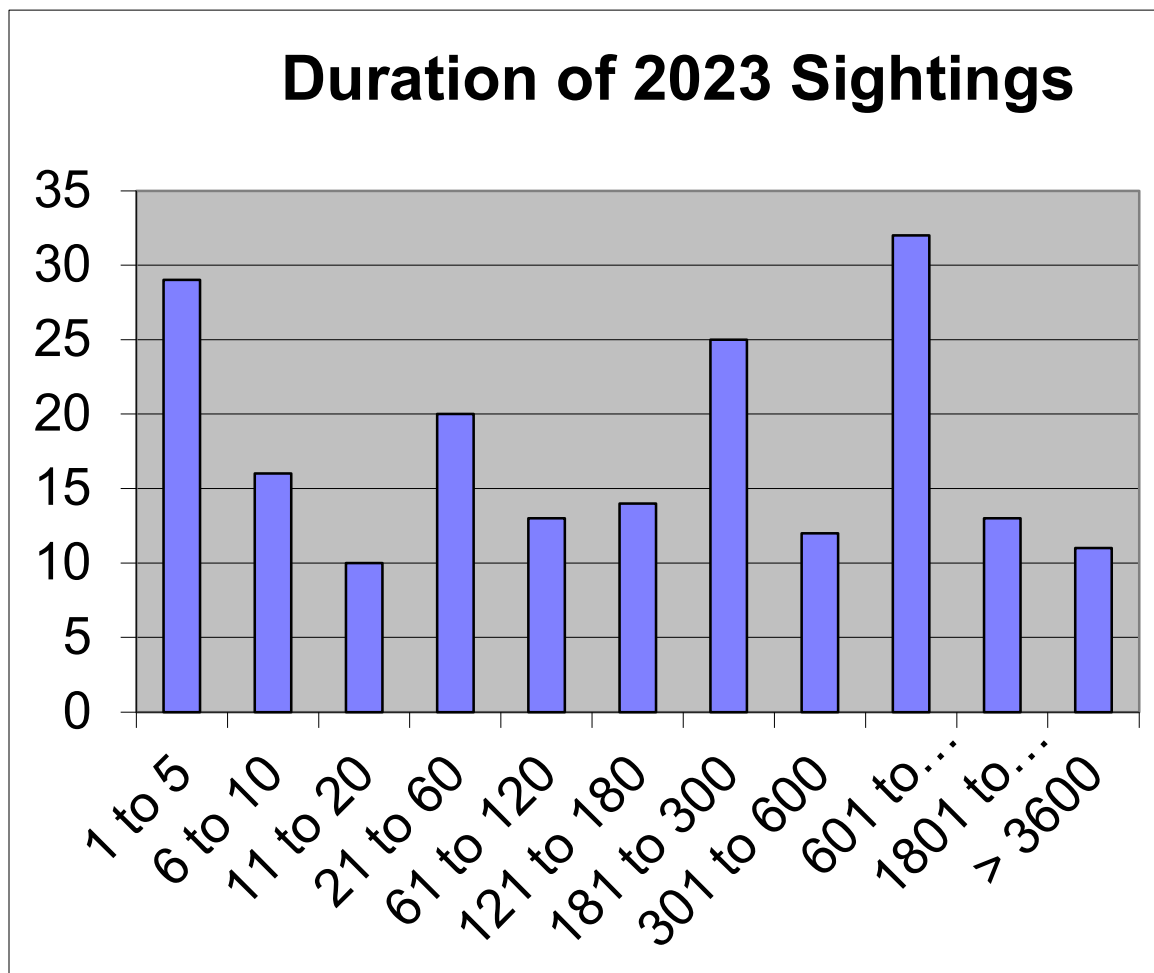


## Number of Witnesses per Case

In terms of the number of witnesses per case, many sightings were experienced by more than one person. The average number of witnesses per report in 2023 was 1.45



## Duration of UFO Sightings

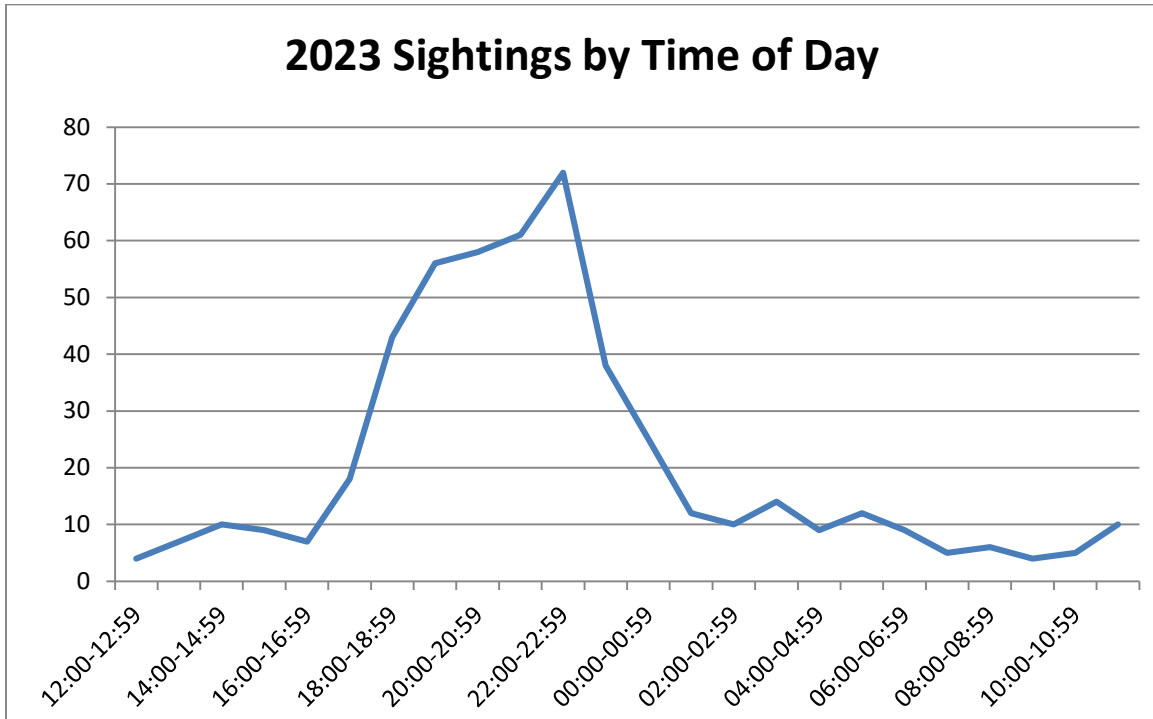


The average duration of UFO sightings in Canada in 2023 was about 16 minutes, up from 13 minutes in 2022.

The length of time an object is seen suggests some simple explanations for what was being observed by the witness. In fact, the duration of a sighting is one of the biggest clues to its explanation. Experience in studying UFO reports has shown that short duration events are usually fireballs or bolides, and long duration events of an hour or more are very probably astronomical objects moving slowly with Earth's rotation. Long-duration sightings tend to occur in the early morning hours, from about midnight until 6:00 a.m.

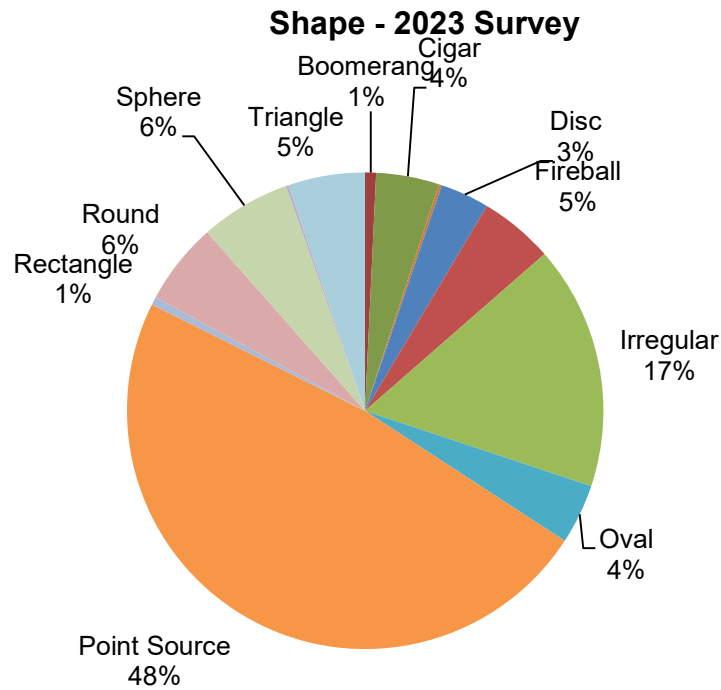
## Hourly Distribution of UFO Sightings

The hourly distribution of cases has usually followed a similar pattern every year, with a peak at 2200 hours local and a trough around 0900 hours local. Since most UFOs are nocturnal lights, most sightings will occur during the evening hours. Since the number of possible observers drops off sharply near midnight, we would expect the hourly rate of UFO reports would vary with two factors: potential observers and darkness.



## Reported Shapes of UFOs

The most common shape of UFO reported in 2023 was a simple point source of light (45 per cent). Other shapes reported were Triangle (five per cent), Sphere (six per cent), Cigar (four per cent) and Fireball (five per cent). The classic “flying saucer” was only reported 18 times (three per cent) in 2016. An “Irregular” object was reported in 16 per cent of the cases.

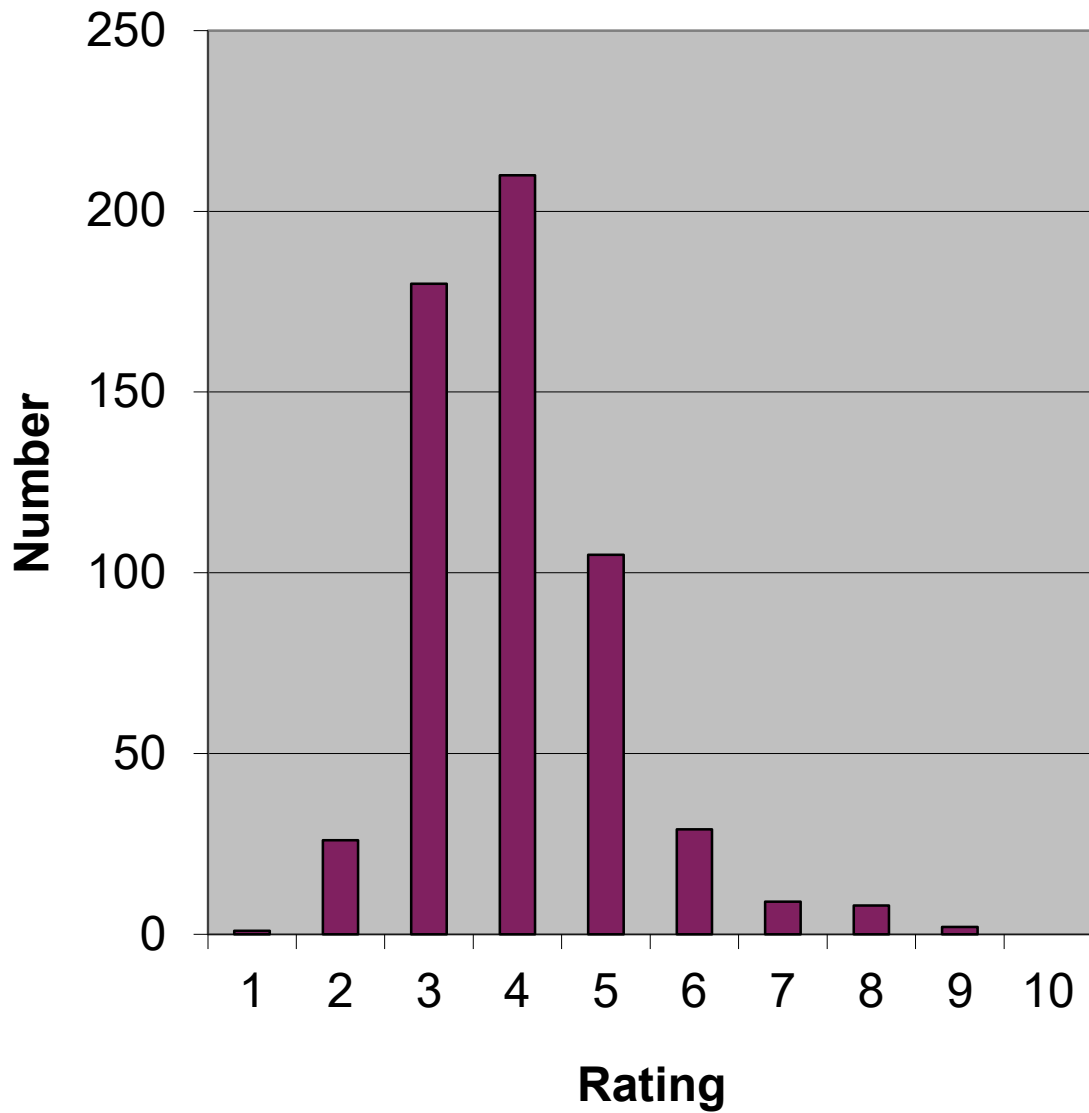


## **Strangeness**

**The average Strangeness rating for UFO reports during 2023 was about 4.0, where 1 is considered not strange at all and 9 is considered exceptionally unusual.**

The assigning of a Strangeness rating to a UFO report is based on a classification adopted by researchers who noted that the inclusion of a subjective evaluation of the degree to which a particular case is in itself unusual might yield some insight into the data. For example, the observation of a single, stationary, starlike light in the sky, seen for several hours, is not particularly unusual and might likely have a prosaic explanation such as that of a star or planet. On the other hand, a detailed observation of a saucer-shaped object which glides slowly away from a witness after an encounter with grey-skinned aliens would be considered highly strange. A Strangeness rating is assigned during the data entry process, based on the given information about each case. It is subjective, but based on the general criteria noted above.

## Breakdown of 2023 Cases by Strangeness



## **Reliability of UFO Reports**

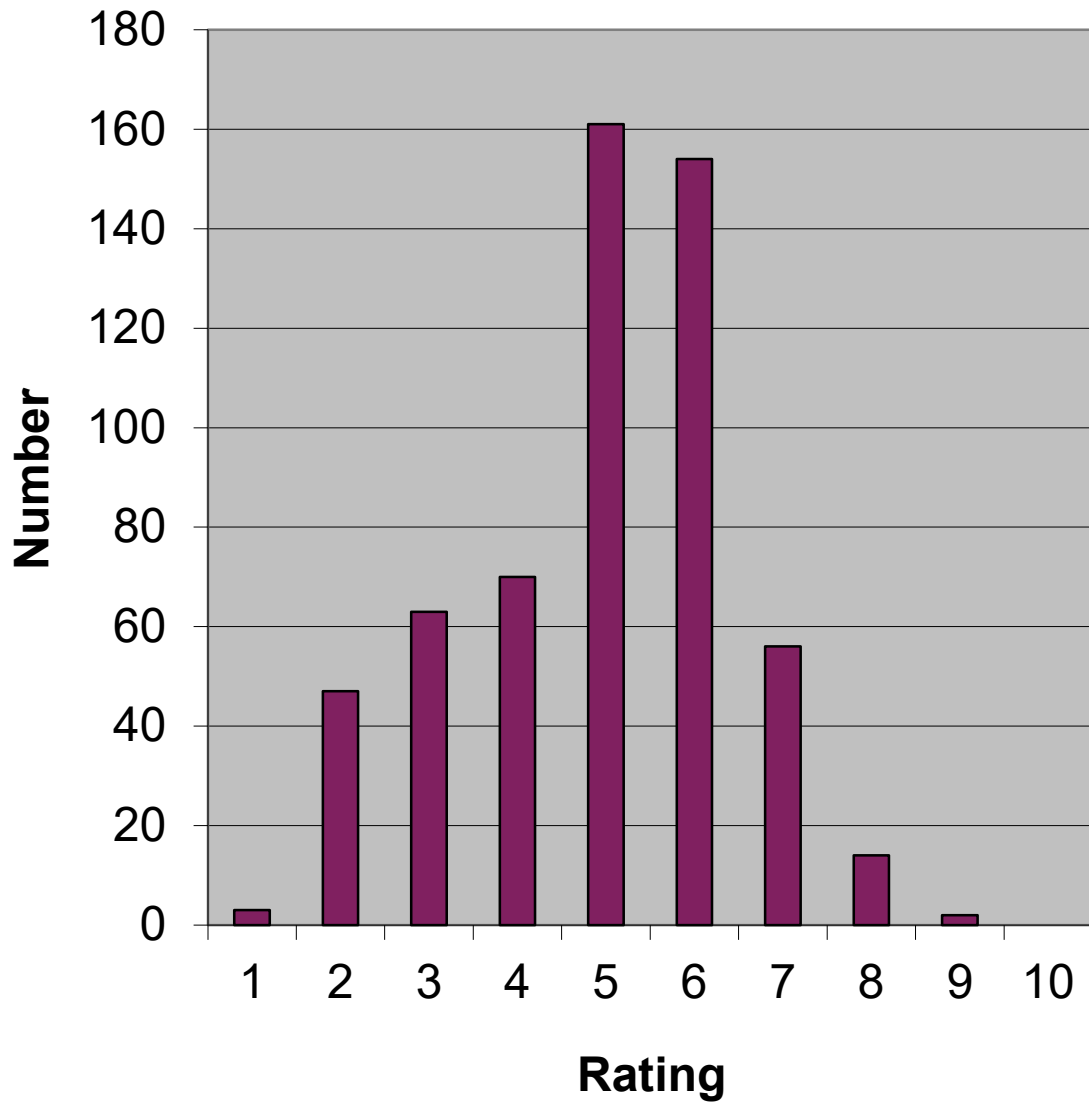
The average Reliability rating of Canadian UFO reports in 2023 was just under 5, meaning that most cases had minimal investigation, and were likely only report forms filled out by a witness, without extensive supporting documentation or investigation.

Higher reliability cases include actual interviews with witnesses, a detailed case investigation, multiple witnesses, supporting documentation, and other evidence. Since data for many cases are taken from websites and second-hand postings, or in fact self-postings, there is usually no significant investigation of UFO sightings. Well-investigated cases comprise only a small fraction of all UFO data, a fact that makes UFO case data have limited value.

Reliability and Strangeness ratings tend to vary in classic bell-shaped curves. In other words, there are very few cases which were both highly unusual and well-reported. Most cases are of medium strangeness and medium reliability. These are the “high-quality unknowns.” However, there are also very few low-strangeness cases with low reliability. Low-strangeness cases, therefore, tend to be well-reported and probably have explanations.



## Breakdown of 2023 Cases by Reliability

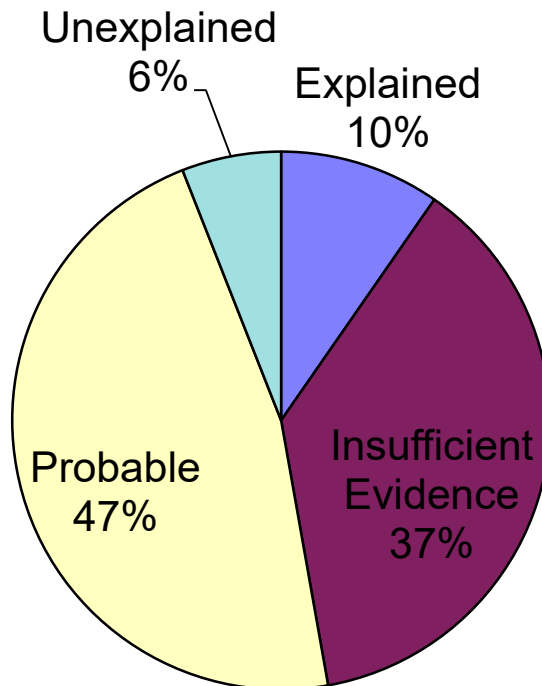


## **Conclusions and Explanations for UFO Reports**

**The percentage of UFO cases considered Unexplained in 2023 was about six per cent.** This is a result of careful scrutiny of raw report information available for analyses. The percentage of Explained cases was about 10 per cent.

In 2023, Probable Explanation cases represented 47 per cent of the total and Insufficient Information cases were 37 per cent. This was because of a more rigorous evaluation process during data entry, objectively assessing the amount of information available for review in the reports. Many reports in 2023 did not have enough information to allow assessment, thus the percentage of Insufficient Information cases was higher than in 2022. Conversely, this situation also resulted in a decrease in Explained cases, which were about 15 per cent in 2022.

## Breakdown of 2023 Reports by Conclusion



It should be emphasized the classification of Unknown does not imply alien visitation. Each case may still have an explanation following further investigation. And of those that remain unexplained, they may remain unexplained, but still are not incontrovertible proof of extraterrestrial intervention or some mysterious natural phenomenon.

## **Sources of UFO Case Data**

Sources for UFO reports in 2023 included civilian Canadian UFO organizations, major USA-based groups such as NUFORC, cases reported directly to Ufology Research, and also Canadian government agencies. MUFON case data was not available for the Canadian UFO Survey in 2023.

One of the most significant hindrances of UFO/UAP research is the lack of a central repository or data collection agency, either civilian or governmental. There are many UFO groups and organizations that claim to be such, and encourage the public to consider them first, but the field is so fractured that coordination is almost impossible. Indeed, 2024 marks the first year since 1989 that a comprehensive collection of Canadian UFO case data has not been possible due to some organizations withholding proprietary case data from scientific study.

Although 2023 Canadian MUFON case data was not available, it has been reported that 321 cases were reported to them in 2023.

A user-friendly UFO reporting app was released in 2023 by EnigmaLabs, which kindly provided Canadian UFO report data for the Canadian UFO Survey. In 2023, 205 Canadian UFO reports were filed with EnigmaLabs. As adding EnigmaLabs data into the Canadian UFO Survey for 2023 would skew any comparisons with previous years, this data was not included in the yearly numbers.

## Five-Year Variance of UFO Report Numbers from Selected Sources

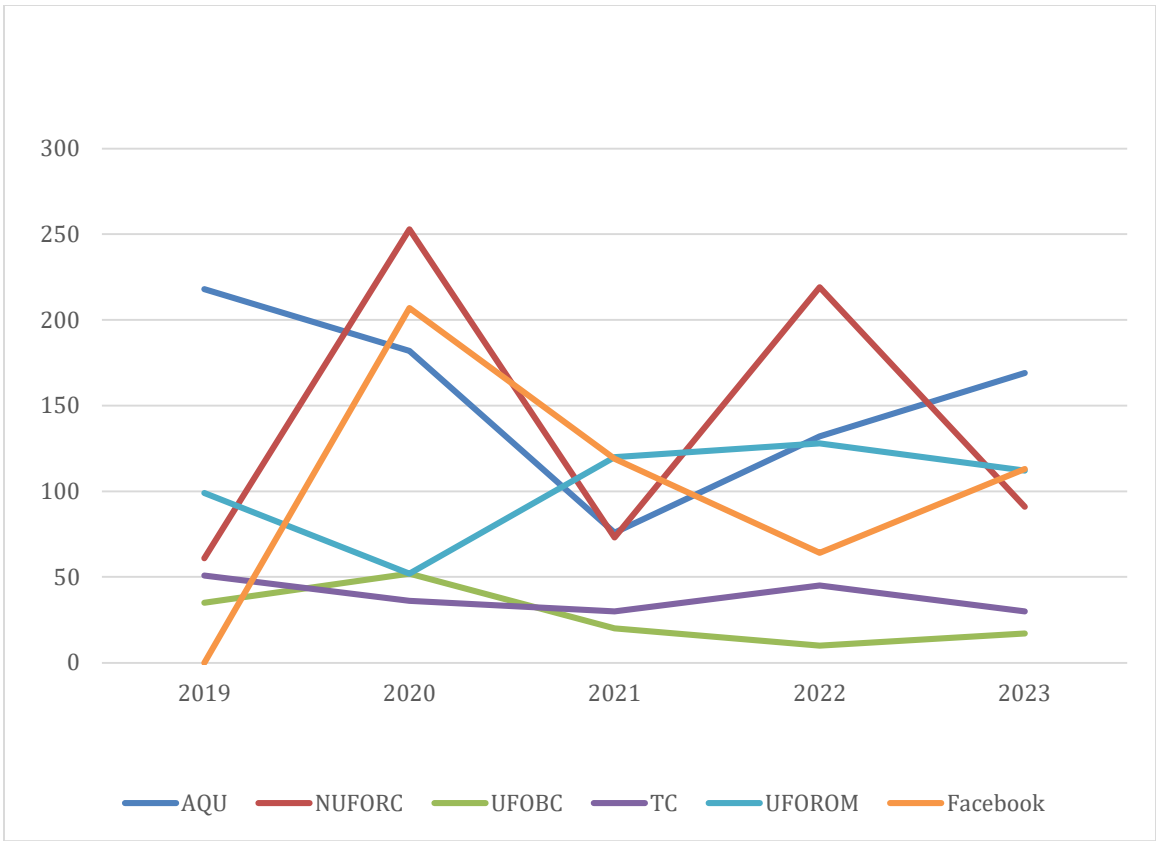
Over the past five years, the number of UFO reports has varied up and down considerably. This variance is due to many factors. The general increase in reports in 2020 was undoubtedly related to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in some way. The decrease the following year might have been related to the pandemic too, in a kind of suppression effect. Other factors probably include increased media interest in the subject and the surge in social media.

This variance of the actual UFO reports received does not support statements made by some experts that UFO sightings have “increased dramatically” or are at “an all-time high.”

Sources included here are the following:

l'Association québécoise d'ufologie (AQU)  
National UFO Reporting Center (NUFORC)  
UFOBC  
Transport Canada (TC)  
Ufology Research (UFOROM)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
AQU	218	182	76	132	169
NUFORC	61	253	73	219	91
UFOBC	35	52	20	10	17
TC	51	36	30	45	30
UFOROM	99	52	120	128	112
Facebook		207	119	64	113



## **A note about “UFO” versus “UAP”**

In the 1950s, the term used for objects seen in the sky that could not be identified was simply “flying saucer.” But the US Air Force decided that the phrase was too loaded with an assumption of aliens that it adopted the more objective term UFO. However, over the years, even UFO has come to mean ‘aliens’ in common parlance, so there have been attempts to steer things away from an extraterrestrial assumption. In 1980, a scientist suggested shifting terminology from UFO to “Transient Optical Phenomena of the Atmosphere” (TOPA) to again move away from the concept of aliens, but his recommendation was ignored.

Currently, several terms are interchangeably used, including Unidentified Flying Object (UFO), Unidentified Aerial Object (UAO), Unidentified Aerial Phenomenon (UAP), and Unidentified Anomalous Phenomenon (also UAP).

In Canada, however, Transport Canada has a classification system for report aircraft incidents as part of its Civil Aviation Daily Occurrence Reporting System (CADORS). One of the categories for an “Occurrence Event” is: “Weather balloon, meteor, rocket, CIRVIS/UFO.” The abbreviation CIRVIS means “Communications Instructions for Reporting Vital Intelligence Sightings” and refers to a government requirement that pilots report any unusual aerial activity, including Unidentified Flying Objects. As this is an official designation, the Canadian UFO Survey (which was initiated decades before the term UAP became popularized) continues to use the term UFO.

## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks are due to the many researchers across Canada whose dedication and passion for the subject allow studies like the annual Canadian UFO Survey. The willingness to share UFO case data is essential for the analyses and testing of hypotheses that may allow scientists to gain a better understanding of the UFO phenomenon.

Thanks are due to Ashley Kircher, Geoff Dittman, Curt Collins, and Ralph Howard for their assistance in preparation of the annual Canadian UFO Survey.



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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/chris.rutkowski>  
Instagram: @ufologyresearch  
X/Twitter: @ufologyresearch  
Canadian UFO Survey: <http://canadianuforeport.com>

## **Appendix: Higher-Quality UAP/UFO Reports in 2023**

### **Pilot reports spherical object flying over airport**

March 2, 2023 11:00 am Toronto, ON

Reported to Transport Canada

CADORS 202300482

“An unidentified object was reported by a pilot on the ground, standing south of Highway 401, between Runways 33L and 33R at Toronto/Lester B. Pearson, ON (CYYZ). The object was approximately 1000 feet above ground level (AGL), west of the pilot, and heading in a northeast (NE) to southwest (SW) direction. The object was roughly 10 to 20 feet in diameter, sphere shaped, and either white or light grey in colour. Toronto Area Control Centre (ACC) Shift Manager was advised.”

### **Amateur astronomer watches hexagon-shaped object cross face of Sun**

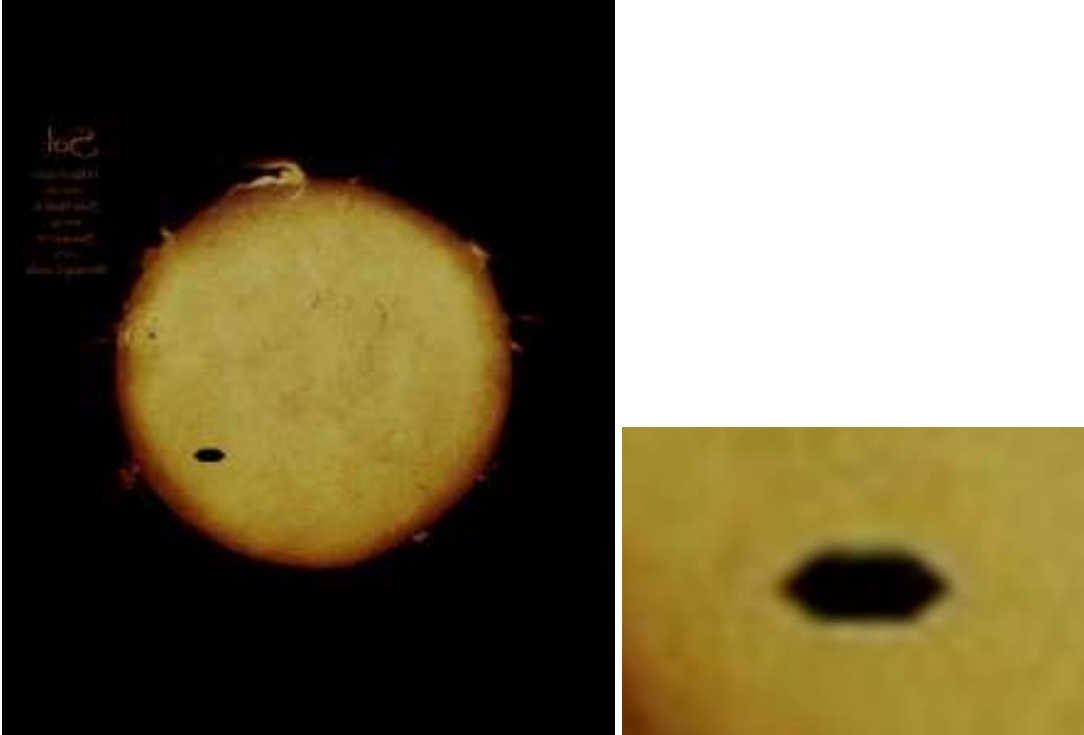
March 18, 2023 2:00 pm Winnipeg, MB

Reported to Ufology Research

Sketch of object by witness

“I like to sketch astronomical objects and I was sketching the sun one afternoon and this odd object crossed the disk of my sun, I added the object to my sketch as it appeared in my field of view. It was a hexagon just that plain and simple. Travelling from West to East and it took it three seconds to get across from limb to limb, it was slow moving.

March 18, 2023 at approx. 1400 CDT”



## **Two witnesses report a large lighted object cruising over their home**

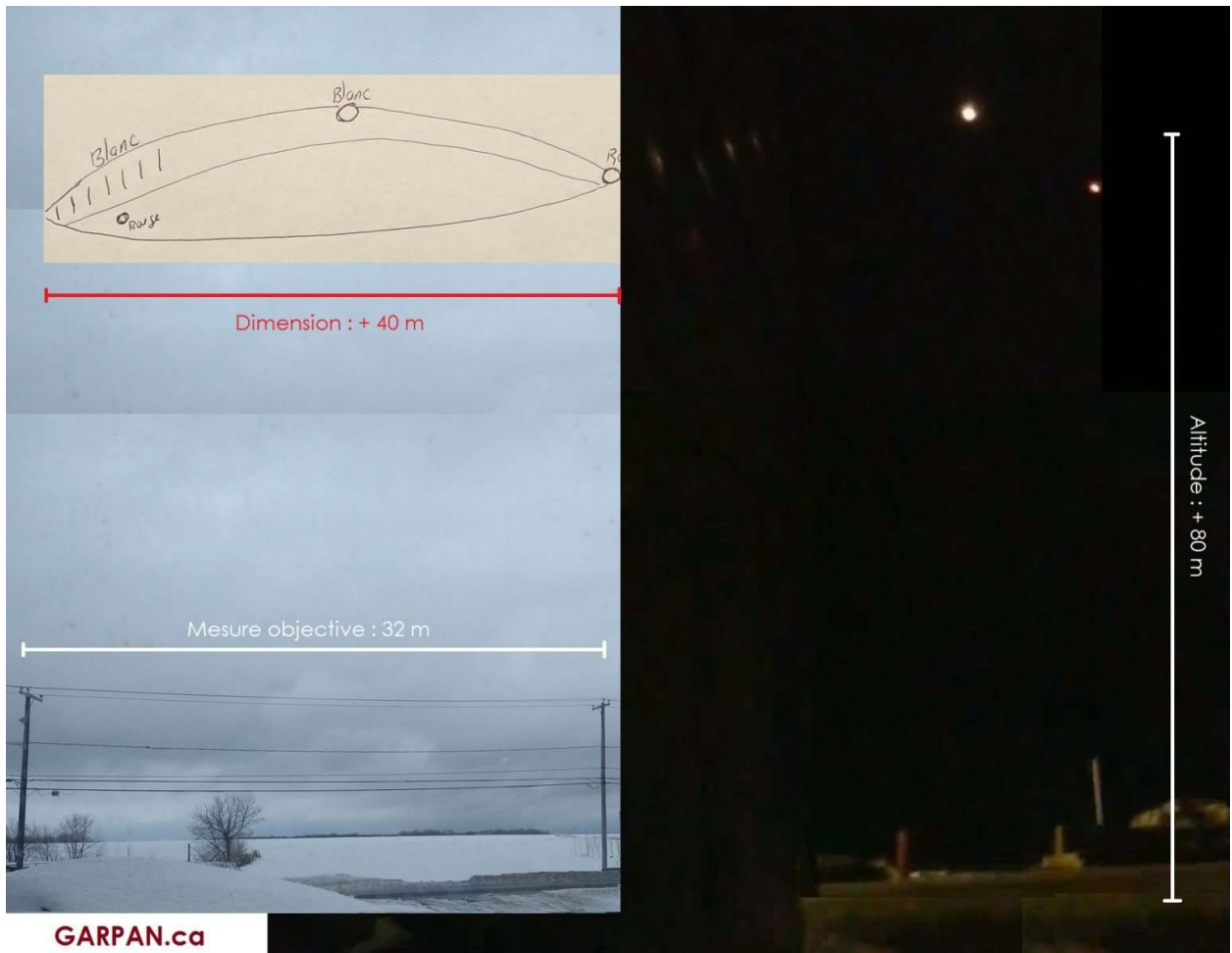
March 22, 2023 10:15 pm Donnacona, Quebec

Reported to GARPAN

<https://garpan.ca/video-probante-dun-ovni-de-30-metres-a-donnacona-22-mars-2023-a-22h15/>

Photo from witness; GARPAN reconstruction

“Two witnesses observed and filmed a large unidentified flying object approximately 40 meters in diameter which circulated very slowly at approximately 80 m altitude above their house. There was a red light at what appeared to be the bow, an intense white light on the starboard side, and a series of lights at the stern. The sound was not that of a plane or a helicopter, but possibly an airship.”



### **Huge triangular object materialized over witness**

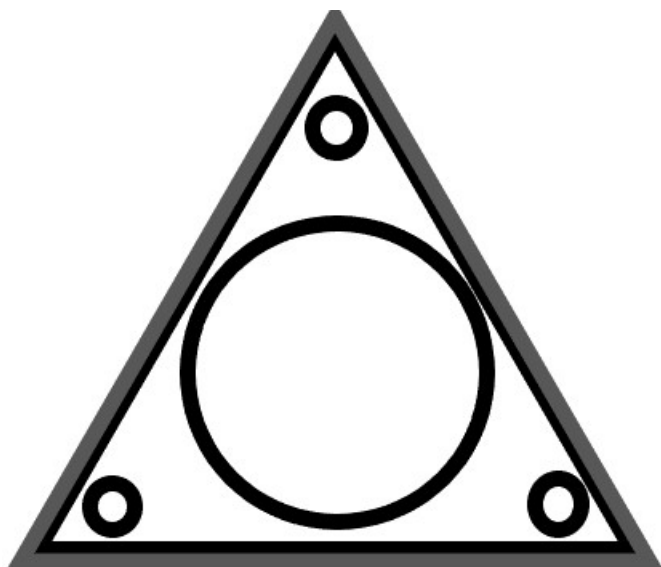
April 14, 2023 10:15 pm L'Assomption, Quebec

Reported to AQU

Illustration by witness

<https://ovni-expert.com/2023/04/15/triangle-apercu-dans-le-ciel/>

“Huge black triangle seen in the sky around 10:15 p.m. at L'Assomption. 3 white lights at each corner and large circle in its center. Materialized above me, tilted slightly to the side and went south - at a crazy speed. Disappeared from my sight in a few seconds.”



### **UAP like “dinner plate” flew over highway**

April 18, 2023 9:07 am Toronto, ON

Reported to NUFORC

<https://nuforc.org/sighting/?id=175436>

Unusual object was flying above Highway 401 during rush hour. I thought it was a bird but it flew seamlessly. Then I thought it must be a drone. As it got closer I couldn't understand what it was. Then I thought maybe it's a plastic bag blown by the wind. There was no wind and this seemed to move under control. I figured once it flew by, I can see what type of drone it is; as it flew by there was no backing, only a small hump at the back. The only item I could compare it to was that of a dinner plate, but flying horizontally but in a vertical position. I was driving west, this was flying east.

### **Loud UAP with bright “reactors” flew over witness in Quebec**

May 14, 2023 10:15 pm Verdun, Quebec

Reported to AQU

Illustration by witness

<https://ovni-expert.com/2023/05/21/un-engin-qui-na-rien-a-voir-avec-un-avion-ou-un-helico-militaire/>

“I first saw a little light in the clouds which moved very slowly from south to north, then for 4 seconds I saw it pass from one cloud to another. The back of the craft had 3 fireballs, one next to the other, resembling 3 ‘reactors’ hiding fire. It sounded heavier than a military plane, and what impressed me most was its speed, which was way too slow to be a plane or helicopter. A loud ‘machine noise’ was heard while it was in sight.”



**Stationary UAP observed on radar at Mirabel airport**

June 16, 2023 6:58 pm Montreal, Quebec

Reported to Transport Canada

CADORS 2023Q2246

“A stationary target was observed on radar at the Mirabel Airbus facilities at a maximum altitude of 4,300 ft without prior coordination. End of target display at 2358Z.”

**Huge, dazzling metallic “Tic Tac” flew over houses in Quebec**

August 4, 2023 6:30 pm Gatineau, Quebec

Reported to AQU

<https://ovni-expert.com/2023/10/13/debut-de-vacances-dete/>

“A metal object in the shape of an enormous ‘Tic Tac’ passes between me and my neighbor’s house. The object is not going fast; it seems to have a wingspan of 2 airliners but it is 2 or 3 times its diameter, it seems to me to be at the height of the clouds which are not very high. It was around 6:30 p.m. and the sun was reflecting off its metal which made it very bright but not at all dazzling.”

**Bright light moved among stars, made 90-degree turn, flew off**

September 7, 2023                      10:13 pm    Entre-lacs, Quebec  
Reported to Ufology Research through Night-Time Podcast

“Bright light, about 3-4 times larger and just as bright as a star. Star-shaped. No plane, balloon, helicopter, or object I know of could make the directional movements this object made. It passed through a system of 3 lined-up stars, made an oval-shaped movement to the left, a rapid 90-degree right turn, and continued to move in a straight line until I could no longer follow its trajectory.”

**Object like rotating metallic ring moved through sky**

September 10, 2023    11:05 am    Sainte-Sophie, Quebec  
Reported to AQU

<https://ovni-expert.com/2023/09/10/un-anneau-metallique-observe/>

“From our house we observed an oval ring, empty inside, which slowly rotated on itself but quickly moved away. It was black and metallic silver in color, although it was opaque in shape, it did not appear to be a solid object. It rotated 2-3 times over a period of 3 minutes and by the time I left the house with binoculars, it was already a small black dot in the distance.”