JOINT BELGIUM-JAPAN SEARCH FOR ANTARCTIC METEORITES IN THE 2010–2011 FIELD SEASON.
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Since the 2009–2010 field season in Antarctica, Belgium and Japan have jointly conducted searches for meteorites in the Sør Rondane Mountains (SRM), East Antarctica [1]. A total of 635 meteorite specimens were found in the Mt. Balchen area (approximately 72.0° S, 27.5° E), which is located at the eastern end of the SRM, in the 2009–2010 field season [2]. Here we report the search for meteorites hosted by the Belgian Antarctic Research Expedition (BELARE) in the Nansen Icefield (approximately 72.7° S, 24.2° E) that is located on the south of the SRM in the 2010–2011 field season.

The 29th Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition (JARE) conducted systematic searches for meteorites on the Nansen Icefield and found about 1400 meteorite specimens in the 1988–1989 field season [3]. The meteorites were termed Asuka-88 meteorites, which include rare types such as the Asuka-881371 angritic achondrite and the Asuka-881757 gabbroic mare basalt. A meteorite search team consisting of three Belgians and two Japanese performed systematic meteorite searches in the Nansen Icefield, where the meteorite search had not been carried out since 1989, from January 1st to 23rd, 2011, known as the SAMBA (Search for Antarctic Meteorites: Belgian Contribution) mission [4]. A total of 218 meteorites and meteorite fragments were collected during this period. Most of the collected meteorites are ordinary chondrites, but at least two achondrites were recognized in the field. The meteorites were individually put in clean polyethylene bags in the field and kept frozen until they were put in a freezer at the National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR), Japan. The position of each meteorite was recorded by GPS. The initial processing (weighing, measuring, photography, naming and brief description) and classification will be carried out at the NIPR. The meteorites collected by the joint Belgium-Japan team in the 2010–2011 field season will be termed Asuka 10 meteorites. Only a third of the Nansen Icefield was surveyed in 2010/2011, thus JARE and BELARE are planning to cover the rest of the area in 2012/2013.

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