IS THERE AN ET IN YOUR BACKYARD?

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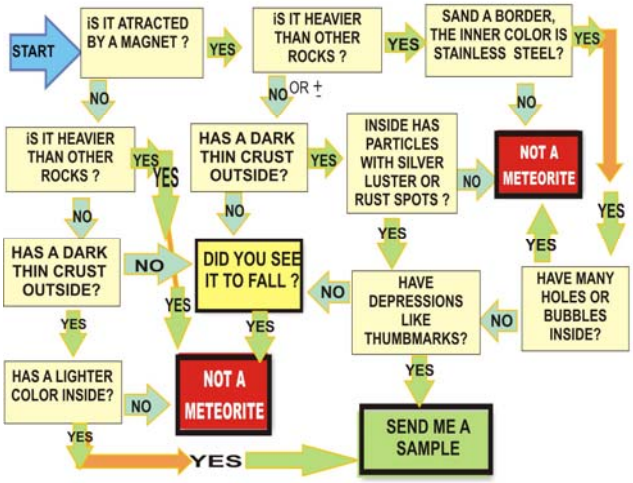
Meteorite falls are randomly distributed on the Earth. Although Brazil and USA detain almost the same area, our country has about 1/30 of recognized meteorites than the later. Currently, the Museu Nacional/UFRJ[1] is developing the project Brazilian Meteorites, with the collaboration of students, professionals and amateur astronomers interested in meteorites.

In 2009 a campaign entitled "Is There an ET in your Backyard?" was launched with the support of **CNPq**, **Faperj** and the partnership of **OBA** (Brazilian Olympiads of Astronomy) which distributed information about meteorites throughout Brazilian schools.

They contact schools through the whole countryside for encouraging children, teenagers and teachers over about 25,000 schools to find and send us samples of possible meteorites by the distribution of a poster calling for ETs and a folder with the explanations of meteorites. It has also distributed a small souvenir with meteorite dust inside a resin star for incentive.

Here we developed an easy to follow self test check-list teaching how to recognize meteorites. It is only an attempt but can help the children to eliminate most meteorwrongs, not sending tons of terrestrial stones to be examined at Museu Nacional.

METEORITE CHECK-LIST



With this divulgation of meteorites with children it is expected a significant increase in the number of new Brazilian meteorites. These results were expected to happen in some years, but nowadays a visual increase in meteorite number has occurred.

At 2009, two new Brazilian meteorites were approved by nomenclature committee and 3 more have been subjected this year, with two more to be submitted soon. This represents an increase of 10% in only a year.

Our targets, beyond found new Brazilian's meteorites, is with this project spreads the meteoritic and astronomical area and, in the same time, make ordinary people understand how important this science area has been to humanity.