

Hunting Marfa Lights

James Bunnell

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Mysterious and elusive, the nocturnal lights that appear near Marfa, a small town in West Texas, have fascinated scientists seeking explanations for these strange phenomena. Native Americans believed they were fallen stars, but contemporary studies dispute this assumption. Now a tourist magnet, Marfa attracts both curious observers and serious analysts.

Though the majority of these lights have a plausible reason, James Bunnell believes that three percent are unexplained. To get some answers, he installed three monitoring stations equipped with a total of nine cameras to obtain nightly videos, compiled information collected by others, and recorded his own experiences and took photos during frequent trips to the area. His conclusions are organized and charted in a precise, coherent presentation that includes the observations of thirty-four individuals who encountered these mesmerizing lights.

Hunting Marfa Lights is a scholarly evaluation that provides essential and nonessential details of Bunnell's work. The author grew up in Marfa, and he is a reliable source of information on this esoteric subject. His research methods are sound, based on an eight-year examination, from 2001 to 2009. He shares the trials and failures of his attempts to obtain reliable data, his territorial conflicts with wildlife, and his first captivating successes.

Considering the valuable records contained here, readers should overlook the poor production quality of the 120 black and white photographs and illustrations. Neither the photos nor the unattractive cover design detract from the importance of the text. Bunnell's investigation should be required reading for anyone interested in learning about Marfa lights, even though greater care could have been taken in editing the manuscript. His observations are extensive, but he goes beyond merely arranging the material in a logical manner. He offers his theory on what these lights may be and how they manifest themselves.

Bunnell is the author of two other books, *Seeing Marfa Lights* and *Night Orbs*. He retired from BAE Systems as director of Mission Solutions for Air Force programs and devoted his expertise to the research of Marfa lights. He was a member of the team for manned Apollo launches from 1968 to 1973 and received an Apollo Achievement Award for support of the Apollo 11. *Hunting Marfa Lights* is a worthwhile contribution to the ongoing scientific studies on these mystifying orbs.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (May 18, 2010)

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