

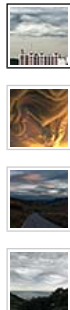


- HOME
- ANIMALS
- DAILY NEWS
- ENVIRONMENT
- GREEN GUIDE
- HISTORY
- KIDS
- MAPS
- MUSIC
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- SCIENCE & SPACE
- TRAVEL & CULTURES
- VIDEO
- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL
- MAGAZINES
- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER ADVENTURE
- SHOP
- SUBSCRIPTIONS
- TV & FILM
- TRAVEL WITH US
- OUR MISSION

MAIN ANIMAL NEWS ANCIENT WORLD ENVIRONMENT NEWS CULTURES NEWS SPACE/TECH NEWS WEIRD PHOTOS VIDEO

Monday, June 22, 2009

PICTURES: New Cloud Type Discovered?



[More News Photos](#)



Email to a Friend

1 of 4 [Next >>](#)

June 3, 2009--These choppy clouds over Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in an undated picture could be examples of the first new type of cloud to be recognized since 1951. Or so hopes Gavin Pretor-Pinney, founder of the Cloud Appreciation Society.

The British cloud enthusiast said he began getting photos of "dramatic" and "weird" clouds (including the above) in 2005 that he didn't know how to define.

A few months ago he began preparing to propose the odd formations as a new cloud variety to the UN's World Meteorological Organization, which classifies cloud types.

Pretor-Pinney jokingly calls it the "Jacques Cousteau cloud," after its resemblance to a roiling ocean surface seen from below. But the cloud fan has proposed a "formal," Latin name: *Undulus asperatus*--roughly, "a very turbulent, violent, chaotic form of undulation," explained Pretor-Pinney, author of the new *Cloud Collector's Handbook*.

Margaret LeMone, a cloud expert with the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, said that she has taken photos of asperatus clouds intermittently over the past 30 years.

It's likely that the cloud will turn out to be a new variety, LeMone said.

"Having a group of people enthusiastic about clouds can only help the field of meteorology," she added.

Asked how has such a striking cloud type could go unrecognized, Pretor-Pinney cites its rarity--and the proliferation and portability of digital cameras. "Technology has allowed us to have this new perspective on the sky."

--Christine Dell'Amore

—Photograph courtesy Jane Wiggins

SHARE What's This?

- [Digg](#)
- [StumbleUpon](#)
- [Reddit](#)

RELATED STORIES

- [Laser Triggers Lightning "Precursors" in Clouds](#)
- [Rainmaking Bacteria Ride Clouds to "Colonize" Earth?](#)
- [PHOTOS: Striking Clouds](#)



LATEST PHOTO NEWS
WEEK IN PHOTOS:
Tomato Fight, Toxic Lake, More



LATEST VIDEO NEWS
New Snakes, Butterflies Found in African Mountains

Most Viewed News
ADVERTISEMENT

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PRESENTS

TERRA FIRMA
SPECIALTY GRADE COFFEE
- ESTD 1888 -

[← Rollover to Expand](#)

Single-Origin Brazil Specialty Grade Dark Roast Whole Bean Coffee 12 oz. Fair Trade Certified.



ORDER NOW »

WHAT'S YOUR GREEN IDEA?



You could win \$20,000 to put it into action. Take part in the Green Effect, a new initiative from SunChips and National Geographic to inspire people to take small steps for big change.

[Learn More](#)



- [Books & Atlases](#)
- [Clothing & Accessories](#)
- [DVDs](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Catalog Quick Shop](#)

Sign up for free Newsletters

Once a month get new photos and expert tips.
[Sign up](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



EMAIL NEWSLETTER Photos and News of the Week

Get the top photos and news of the week from National Geographic News, plus occasional breaking-news alerts.

[See Sample >>](#)

Enter Your Email Address

SIGN UP

Sponsored Links

[2009 mercury mariner pictures](#)

Find Official Photos of the Mercury Mariner and Complete Info.
MercuryVehicles.com/Mariner

[Clouds](#)

ClipArt - Pictures Clouds
www.Bing.com

[Privacy Policy](#)

MOST VIEWED NEWS



MARS LAKE PICTURE: First Proof of Ancient Shores Found



FATHER'S DAY PICTURES: "Best" Animal Dads



Huge Pre-Stonehenge Complex Found via "Crop Circles"

NEWS FEEDS

[XML](#) [RSS](#)

Get our news delivered directly to your desktop—free.
[How to Use XML or RSS](#)



Ads by Google

[Email the News Staff](#) [Contact Other Staff](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



[Home](#) | [Animals](#) | [Daily News](#) | [Environment](#) | [Green Guide](#) | [History](#) | [Kids](#) | [Maps](#) | [Music](#) | [Photography](#) | [Science & Space](#) | [Travel & Cultures](#) | [Video](#)

[Mobile](#) | [Magazines](#) | [Shop](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [TV & Film](#) | [Stock Footage Sales](#) | [Travel With Us](#) | [About the Society](#) | [Educators](#)

[Give to NGS](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Press Room](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Global Sites](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

© 1996-2009 National Geographic Society. All rights reserved.