**Georgia Meteorites**

**Did I Find A Meteorite?**

By

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Filed; 24/April/2022

First of all, does it stick to a magnet? Yes? Still, you should accept the fact that you probably did not find a meteorite, There is a great deal of naturally occurring iron in Georgia, much of it is still pure enough to stick to a magnet.

However, just to be sure, let’s continue with the observations and test procedures below. If your find passes a magnet, bright scratch, & nickel test, (#3, #5, & #7) contact me for further guidance. Thomas Thurman; GeorgiasFossils@aol.com

It did not stick to a magnet? It’s not a meteorite. Even most stony meteorites have enough iron content to stock to a magnet.

**Meteorites fall into three broad classifications**

* Irons
* Stones
* Stony-Irons

There is plenty of naturally occurring iron in Georgia so a metal detector is not helpful. Also, three centuries of habitation by an iron using civilization have left many not-meteorites in the soil for us to find.

Can your find be explained by naturally occurring iron minerals? Our natural terrestrial iron will almost always be found with sand, encrusted in sand, and often with sand inclusions. If you see sand included on your find, it is probably not a meteorite. If there is sand inside your find, it is not a meteorite.

There is one large, confirmed Georgia meteorite which had been buried for so long that it became encrusted with sand on the exterior as it weathered. This is the famous Sardis Iron, Georgia’s largest meteorite. But it is important to note that there was no sand inside the meteorite. So, let’s continue to the tests below.

**#1; Context**

Does your find match the rocks of the local terrain?

Use a hammer and break open other local rocks and critically compare them to your find. Meteorites are never abundant in any local area.

**#2; Crust**

There will often be a fusion crust on the surface. This is typically a black coating. There may also be dimples on the surface, little pits the size of a fingertip.

**#3; Magnet Test**

All irons will respond strongly to a magnet.

The vast majority of stones contain enough iron to respond to a magnet.

Does your find respond to a magnet?

**#4; Inclusions or veins?**

There will often be metallic inclusions surrounding silicate bodies, possibly rounded bodies. Do you see thin black veins?

**#5; Bright Scratch**

Fresh scratches on an iron meteorite will be bright, like bare metal or the color of a 5 cent coin. Fresh scratches on terrestrial iron will be dark, rust colored. If you get a bright scratch, polish a small spot with a whetstone, or fine file, is the polished spot bright?

**#6; Is the iron softish?**

Meteoritic iron is malleable, meaning it will bend or is on the soft side. You can dent it.

Natural terrestrial and man-made irons are both brittle, they will break instead of bend.

**#7; Nickle**

Iron meteorites are fairly rich in the metal nickel.

Terrestrial & manmade iron is nearly devoid of nickel.

Nickel test kits are available at Walmart and pharmacies. Some people are allergic to the nickel found in inexpensive jewelry. Such test kits are readily available. Test for your find for nickel, if the test is positive, test again. If your find tests positive for nickel three times in a row, then have it looked at by someone with the experience to confirm it. I would be happy to assist; Thomas Thurman; GeorgiasFossils@aol.com