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All About Rare Black Diamonds

According to new research, [Black Diamonds](#) found in only a few places on Earth may have crashed down from space in the form of a kilometer-sized rock.

These [Black Diamonds](#), also called [Carbonado Diamond](#), are only found in Brazil and the Central African Republic. Unlike other [Diamonds](#), they are made of millions of diamond crystals that are stuck together.

They are also porous, which is strange. Scientists say it would have been difficult for gas to become trapped in rocks at depths of about 200 kilometers below the Earth's surface. The intense pressure there turns carbon into conventional diamonds.

"This is the feature that first led some of us to think, well, perhaps there has to be a different alternative," says Stephen Haggerty, a Geologist at Florida International University in Miami, and an author of the new study.

Because [Black Diamonds](#) have only been found in two places and never in traditional diamond fields, some scientists suspected they crashed to Earth from space.

Haggerty believes they came from a large, diamond-bearing asteroid that may have fallen to Earth billions of years ago, when space rocks heavily bombarded the planet and the Moon. [Carbonado Diamond](#) has been dated to be between 2.6 billion and 3.8 billion years old.

According to Haggerty, "At that time, South America and Africa were one island, which could account for [Black Diamonds](#) showing up on two continents today."

He and his colleagues believe the [Black Diamonds](#) have ancient, exotic origins, forming around a star other than the Sun. Using an infrared synchrotron at Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York, they found hydrogen in the [Carbonado Diamond](#) that indicates the [Black Diamonds](#) came from hydrogen-rich interstellar space.

The [Black Diamond Dust](#) from which they formed may have been released when a star exploded in a supernova billions of years ago.

The [Black Diamond Dust](#) then became part of the cloud of gas and dust from which our solar system condensed. Over time, it coalesced into larger clumps that became embedded in asteroids "like plums in pudding," Haggerty says.

The new spectral measurements of the [Carbonado Diamond](#) closely resemble those of other [Black Diamonds](#) found in meteorites, as well as black diamonds seen in space.