

10-1-2011

October started out just about right for us as the weather is finally cooling in Arizona and we were going meteorite hunting.

This trip was planned for many months in advance with much study of the Gold Basin Strewn Field and what might be left there. Both Wendy and I are running a 60% skunk rate at Gold Basin and it is difficult to justify the expense of going there. This time, it felt like we were going to do well and the feeling turned out right.

Wanting to get an early start, we decided to get a cheap motel in Kingman on Friday night, putting the trip time to Gold Basin down to an hour on hunt day. We booked a room at the Motel 6, "Kingman East" and to our surprise; this is one of the nicest Motel 6 units we have stayed in. With a Denny's less than a block away and a grocery store across the highway, we were set!

The plan was to meet Dolan Dave somewhere along Gregg's Hideout Road and find a good spot to hunt. Dave was very kind to stop at Fry's near where he lives and pick a video cable up I needed for my All Sky Cam project. Just as we were arriving in Kingman, Jason sent a text message and said he was going to be doing a film thing at Gold Basin. He did not know we were planning a hunt there, so we responded we were in Kingman with plans to hunt Gold Basin in the morning. Soon after that, we were making plans to meet up after his film thing was over. We did not expect half of the prospecting community to be in Gold Basin that day....oh wonderful!

We knew there was a chance of rain that night and into the next day. But this is Arizona, it hardly ever rains here! 2 am came along pretty quick and I awoke hearing running water outside! I got up and looked outside and it was pouring rain! Jumping back into bed, I was thinking to myself that this storm will pass and it will be a good day. It seemed no sooner than I shut my eyes to go back to sleep and the alarm on my cell phone went off marking the start of our hunting day.

We got up and got ready to go. We had timed everything so that we would meet up with Dave at 6:30. As we departed the motel, it began to rain! Wendy made a few comments about hunting in the rain and I still felt this rain would pass. As we continued North on Stockton Hill Road, the rain was coming and going and some parts of the road were already drying!!! It was dark, very dark. We had our eyes open for cows on the road, for which it is known for. Much of Stockton Hill Road goes right through free range and all we needed to do was hit a cow!

As we approached Pierce Ferry Road, we noticed vehicle lights coming down the hill from Dolan Springs. I mentioned to Wendy, that I bet that is Dave! Sure enough, the timing was perfect! And as we stopped at the stop sign, Dave went by! It could not have been more perfect! This was a good sign! We both stopped at the corner of Gregg's Hideout and made a quick plan and we were off! I mentioned we would be hooking up with Jason about 10 am and we all had phones and radios so we did not think it would be much of an issue getting him to where ever we were. The whole area is pretty much open and a gentle slope, unless you are down in a wash. The little FRS radios work pretty good there.

Still, I'd love to make the transition to the MURS radios as they have more power and a better frequency selection for hunting.

Shortly after, we arrived at the hunt area and geared up. The hunt was on! We all hunted going the same general direction, zig zaging as we went. Each of us had our own little hill we were following. After about an hour, nothing. At least the weather was holding and the clouds were keeping the temperature at a comfortable level.

I started working my way toward Dave to see what he thought about moving and suddenly ZIP-ZIP, loud and clear! I could not see anything obvious so I started the process of moving the desert pavement away. Swung again. The Gold Bug II let out a really loud ZIP-ZIP. Something was there and I was hoping it was not junk. As I dug down a little further with the pick, I heard the "click" on the pick and I knew I had it. Finally! A nice small fragment of Gold Basin! My third ever!

Ended up, it was about 1/2" below the surface. I let out a "Got one" on the radio and did the required meteorite dance. Marked the location on the GPS as Dave was making his way over to take a look. Wendy was hunting like the Ever Ready Bunny and was hundreds of yards ahead of us. She'd have to take a look at it later. We used it as a throw-down after that.

After that find, none of us were doing any good and we all decided to work our way back to the trucks to get a bite to eat and re-think our plans. On the way back, I spotted a desert tortoise. What a nice surprise. We all got together there to look at it and take some pictures.



I realized I hadn't seen one of these in the wild for the last 15 years. This little fellow changed our luck! From there, we began to score! First me, then Dave, then Wendy!

We made it back to the truck. After eating some food and taking a break we decided to try another area. As we began hunting, we all heard Jason calling on the radio. We guided him in and he began hunting with us after a short meet and greet. Dave and I began scoring and Jason and Wendy were skunking! Sometimes, that's the way it is and as Jason says, it's all good.



These were two feet apart

We continued to hunt for a few hours and Dave noticed he was getting short on water. We all decided to head back to the truck and by that time we were a good distance away. The clouds had cleared and it was getting hot. The breeze stopped too! Everyone was feeling it. On the way back, I was sharing my water with Dave, so we were all ok. I think I boiled over though and when I got back to the truck I drank a bottle of water quickly. That was a mistake. My stomach was telling me it did not like me doing that and I started feeling ill. So, being pooped out, Wendy and I decided to call it a day and head back home.



18 Meteorites recovered for preservation and science at a total weight of 260.5 grams.

Dave and Jason were going to hunt some more as Jason needed to break his skunk streak. About two hours into our drive home, we got a text from Jason! He finally scored and they had found another hot spot and cleaned up. At that time I remember the text saying 17 finds!!

So, another good hunt, everyone scored and we got our fix for meteorite hunting! The next hunt is Franconia, next weekend! We are all looking forward to it!

