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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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Authority on Meteorology.

A DOUBLE LUNAR RAINBOW

Lunar rainbows (seen opposite the moon in the sky and not to be confused with halos and coronas surrounding the moon) are usually rather faint and show little or no color. Occasionally the colors are brilliant, but the appearance of a distinctly colored primary lunar rainbow surrounded by a secondary bow, also showing color, is a very rare event. This unusual spectacle was witnessed on July 9, 1930, in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, by F. M. Fryxell and Karl Kent. The former writes:

"The great arch gradually deepened in intensity, its outlines and colors becoming strikingly distinct. Meanwhile a secondary, outer bow came into existence, its colors much paler than those of the primary bow, brightest near the horizon and fading out toward the crest. At the time of its maximum intensity the primary bow compared favorably in brilliancy and distinctness of coloration with the magnificent solar rainbows we see so frequently in these mountains following afternoon thunderstorms. In its night setting the double lunar rainbow formed a scene of awesome splendor impossible to describe satisfactorily; the most impressive nocturnal spectacle I ever witnessed."

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