

Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS)

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Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System Latest News

A comet, officially designated 3I/ATLAS, originating from outside our solar system has been recently spotted by the Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS) in Chile.

About Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System

- It is an **asteroid impact early warning system developed by the University of Hawaii and funded by NASA.**
- It consists of **four telescopes (2 in Hawaii, 1 in Chile, 1 in South Africa)**, which automatically **scan the whole sky several times every night** looking for moving objects.
- Although the ATLAS system is also used to **identify dwarf planets, supernova explosions, and life exposure remanence from a star being absorbed by a supermassive black hole** in a distant galaxy, the **main purpose** of this project is to **search for large “killer asteroids”** that may have a tremendous impact on life on earth.

- ATLAS will **provide a warning time depending on the size of the asteroid** — larger asteroids can be detected further from Earth.
- ATLAS will see a small (~20 meter) asteroid several days out, and a 100 meter asteroid several weeks out.
- The system is **specially designed to detect objects that approach very close to Earth** – closer **than the distance to the Moon**, about 240,000 miles or 384,000 kilometers away.

Source: FP

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