

# Why Antarctica?

Antarctica has become the richest source of meteorites on the planet. Since the 1970s more meteorites have been found there than all the meteorites found in history. This is remarkable, as it is hard to get there and demands expensive technological support. The conditions in Antarctica make meteorite hunting very easy, providing that you can get there and survive the cold!

For the full story go to this web site [http://geology.cwru.edu/~ansmet/why\\_ant/index.html](http://geology.cwru.edu/~ansmet/why_ant/index.html) ANSMET is the Antarctic Search for Meteorites. The NHM *Meteorites* book also has a section on Antarctic meteorites.

The map below shows how the Antarctic ice sheets have concentrated meteorites against the Transantarctic mountain range. Where ice sheets get trapped against mountain ranges the ice can be blown away (ablated) by strong winds to uncover perfectly preserved meteorites. (See the NHM *Meteorites* book for a section view)

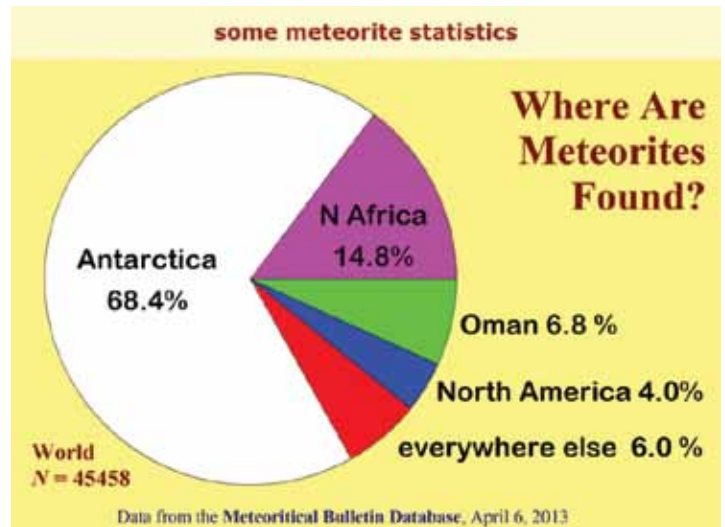


Image source: [http://meteorites.wustl.edu/meteorite\\_types.htm](http://meteorites.wustl.edu/meteorite_types.htm)  
Credit: Randy L. Korotev, Washington University in St. Louis

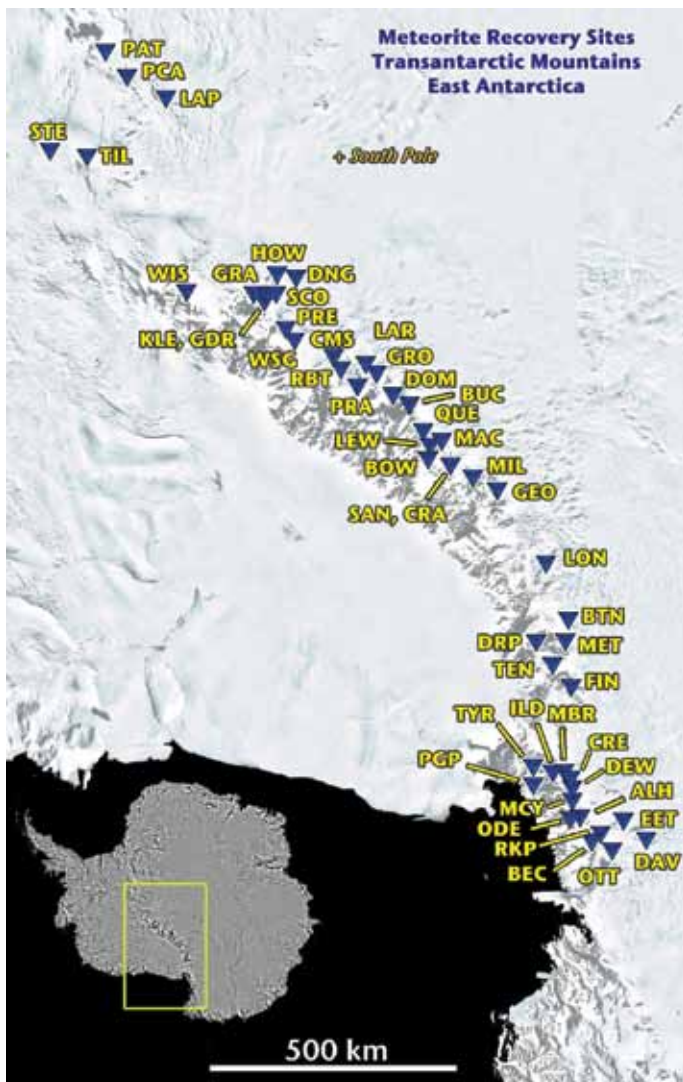


Image source: <http://curator.jsc.nasa.gov/antmet/>

## Pictures from the 2012/13 ANSMET Expedition



Pre-expedition climbing and rescue training.



Air transport is the only way to move to the ice field sites.



Wind and snow can keep scientist stuck in tents for days on end.