

February 18th, 2014

Contacts:

Patrick Paolucci

[press@slooh.com](mailto:press@slooh.com)

877-427-5664 x3

## **Hast thou seen the White Asteroid? Help Slooh Find Lost Asteroid 2000EM26**

An asteroid the size of three football fields is lost in space, after failing to reappear as expected on Monday night while making a close brush with Earth (Feb. 17). The asteroid, nicknamed Moby Dick, has not been seen since March 14th of 2000, just days after it was first discovered on March 5th. Slooh attempted to recover the asteroid as it passed within 8.8 lunar distances of Earth on Monday night, but failed to capture an image of the asteroid at its predicted position, indicating that the astronomical community doesn't know all it needs to know about its whereabouts. While Near-Earth Asteroid 2000 EM26 poses no threat of actually hitting the planet, Slooh is calling on amateur astronomers to find the asteroid and determine its orbit more precisely.

*"We are calling on amateur astronomers to find this asteroid, and as a reward we will promote their accomplishment on our homepage for one year", says Michael Paolucci, CEO of Slooh. "We don't have the authority to name the asteroid after them, but we would if we could."*

Scientists estimate that 2000 EM26 is up to 885 feet (270 meters) in diameter, and is moving through the solar system at a break-neck 27,670 mph (12.37km/s). It has proven to be a very challenging asteroid to image, underscoring the difficulty presented to the scientific community in fulfilling NASA's Asteroid Grand Challenge, to locate all Near-Earth Asteroids and know what to do about them.

"Discovering these Near-Earth Objects isn't enough. As we've seen with 2000 EM26, all the effort that went into its discovery is worthless unless follow-up observations are made to accurately determine their orbits for the future. And that's exactly what Slooh Members are doing, using the robotic telescopes at our world-class observatory site to accurately measure the precise positions of these asteroids and comets." says Paul Cox, Slooh's Observatory Director. "We not only need to find them before they find us, but we also need to keep a watchful eye on them!"

2000 EM26's flyby comes almost exactly a year after two major Near-Earth Object (NEO) events on Feb. 15, 2013. That day, as Slooh broadcast live images of Near-Earth Asteroid 2012 DA14 as it flew closer to Earth than our communication satellites, another unrelated space rock exploded without warning above Chelyabinsk, Russia, causing substantial damage to buildings and injuring more than 1,000 people.

## 2000 EM26 Image

*Somewhere in this image, amongst the trailing star field, there should be a static round point of light – the light reflecting from an asteroid some 394-886ft in diameter (120-270m). Based on the orbital data held by NASA/JPL, this is where Potentially Hazardous Asteroid 2000 EM26 should have been. So if it's not here, where was this chunk of primordial space rock as it made its closest approach to Earth on Feb. 17th 2014?*  
[http://images.slooh.com/events/2014-02-18\\_NEA2000EM26\\_Show/asteroid\\_2000EM26\\_2014\\_logo.jpg](http://images.slooh.com/events/2014-02-18_NEA2000EM26_Show/asteroid_2000EM26_2014_logo.jpg)

Sky Chart for 2000 EM26 - high level of orbit uncertainty

[http://images.slooh.com/events/2014-02-18\\_NEA2000EM26\\_Show/skychart\\_2000EM26.jpg](http://images.slooh.com/events/2014-02-18_NEA2000EM26_Show/skychart_2000EM26.jpg)

2000 EM26:

Classification: Aten [NEO, PHA]

120-270m (394-886ft)

32 observations over 9-days from 2000-03-05 to 2000-03-14

Uncertainty = 7 (MPC "U" parameter: orbit uncertainty estimate 0-9, with 0 being good, and 9 being highly uncertain)

Not recovered in 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, or 2012.

Animation -

<http://images.slooh.com/events/NEA+2000EM26+Timelapse.mp4>

## About Slooh

Since 2003 Slooh has connected ground-based telescopes to the Internet for access by the broader public. Slooh members have taken over 2.4m photos of over 40,000 celestial objects, and participated in numerous discoveries with leading astronomical institutions. Slooh's automated observatories develop celestial images in real-time for broadcast to the Internet. Slooh's technology is protected by Patent No.: US 7,194,146 B2 which was awarded in 2006. Slooh's flagship observatory is situated on Mt. Teide in the Canary Islands, in partnership with the Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands (IAC). Slooh has also broadcast live celestial events from partner observatories in Arizona, Japan, Hawaii, Cypress, Dubai, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Norway. Slooh's free live broadcasts of potentially hazardous asteroids (PHAs), comets, transits, eclipses, solar activity etc. feature narration by astronomy experts Bob Berman and Paul Cox and are syndicated to media outlets such as NBC, ABC, CNN, Fox News, National Geographic, the BBC, Wired, The Weather Channel and more. Slooh's live celestial events have been viewed over a billion times, the highlight of which was the 2011 lunar eclipse broadcast live on [Google's home page](#).

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/slooh](http://www.facebook.com/slooh)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/slooh](http://www.twitter.com/slooh)