Hildebrand, Alan Russell (1955-) Encyclopedia Article

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Canadian geologist

Alan Russell Hildebrand is part of the Geological Survey in Canada and The Geology and Geophysics Department at the University of Calgary. Hildebrand's greatest accomplishment in the field of geology includes the discovery of the catastrophic Chicxulub Crater in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico that is considered the site of the catastrophic event that resulted in the extinction of the dinosaurs. Additionally, Hildebrand is one of the leaders for the **Prairie** Meteorite Search and is a member of the Meteorites and Impacts Advisory Committee.

Alan R. Hildebrand began his career in geology after receiving his bachelor's degree in geology at the University of New Brunswick in 1977. Initially, Hildebrand worked in the mineral exploration industry. Eventually Hildebrand returned to school to seek his Ph.D. in planetary sciences. As part of his dissertation, Hildebrand discovered the Chicxulub crater in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. In 1992, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. In 1999, he became a member of the faculty in the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Calgary and currently holds a Canada Research Chair in Planetary Sciences. Additionally, Hildebrand is a research scientist for the Geological Survey of Canada, with his research focusing mainly on the **K-T event** as well as meteorite processes and impacts.

It has been theorized that the dinosaurs became extinct 65 million years ago by a disaster that has become known as the K-T event (Cretaceous-Tertiary Mass Extinction event). Presumably an asteroid hit the earth, its impact killing 70% of the species on Earth. In 1990, Alan Hildebrand discovered the Chicxulub Crater in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. The crater has a diameter of 112 mi (180 km) and has been dated at about 65 million years ago. The asteroid that is responsible for creating the Chicxulub Crater is believed to have had a diameter of 6 mi (10 km).

Alan Hildebrand is currently one of the leaders for the Prairie Meteorite Search, a national project that focuses on the discovery of meteorites by prairie farmers. Researchers involved in the project travel to prairie farms to instruct locals on what meteorites look like and examine specimens found by the farmers. Additionally, Hildebrand volunteers for the Meteorites and Impacts Advisory Committee to the Canadian Space Agency. This committee is responsible for discovering meteorites around Canada and investigates possible fireballs.

See Also

K-T Event; Meteoroids and Meteorites; Cretaceous Period