



CAN I REALLY SEE THE NORTHERN LIGHTS IN THE UK?

Video transcript: Secrets of hunting the aurora

CAROL KIRKWOOD:

I happen to know that The Sky at Night's presenter Dr Lucie Green is close at hand. Let's hope she can tell me how I can see the Northern Lights here in the UK.

So tell me what exactly are the Northern Lights and why are people so enamoured by them?

DR LUCIE GREEN:

The Northern Lights are created by electrical currents that flow through the tops of the Earth's atmosphere. But what we know today is that these electric currents are actually generated by the Sun. In the UK, what we need are strong bursts of solar activity. So at the moment it's a really good time to see them because the Sun is at the peak of its activity cycle.

CAROL KIRKWOOD:

So what are the ideal conditions for seeing the Northern Lights?

DR LUCIE GREEN:

Well I would say keep an eye on what the Sun's doing and take a punt. Find your dark sky site that's away from light pollution. Any cloud cover at all will block the view. And the other thing is that you need a view to the northern horizon. That's where you'll see the aurora.