



THE DARK SKY OBSERVER

The Dark Sky Observer is a publication of the North Jersey Astronomical Group (NJAG), whose purpose is to promote the study and knowledge of the science of astronomy.

The Dark Sky Observer needs your input! Letters, comments, suggestions, book and product reviews, and articles are welcomed and encouraged. Contact the editor at 973-340-5963, kdconod@earthlink.net, or at this address:

Dark Sky Observer

North Jersey Astronomical Group
P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472
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VISIT OUR WEB PAGE AT

<http://community.nj.com/cc/njag>.

Mary Lou West also maintains a web page at:
<http://www.csam.montclair.edu/~west/njag.html>

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are only \$15.00 per year (\$20.00 for family and \$10.00 for student memberships). Benefits of membership include: \$10 discount on subscriptions to "Sky & Telescope" or "Astronomy" magazines ("Sky & Telescope" subscribers also get a 10% discount on all books, maps, and products at Sky Publishing); a subscription to this newsletter; an e-mail list for the latest club and astronomy news; use of our dark sky sites; field trips to local planetariums, science centers, and star parties; a lending library of astronomical books; a Telescope Loan Program; and star parties for special celestial events.

Make checks out to the NJAG and mail to: North Jersey Astronomical Group, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472. If you have any questions regarding membership, contact our Acting Membership Committee Chair, Kevin Conod at: kdconod@earthlink.net or 973-340-5963.

UACNJ

The NJAG is a member of the United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey (UACNJ), a consortium of more than a dozen astronomy clubs, united to better help support, coordinate, and communicate ideas between stargazers in and around the state. The UACNJ operates an observatory at Jenny Jump State Forest near Hope, NJ which serves as the NJAG's dark sky site.

SUMMER STARGAZING

July 20 & 27, August 17 & 21

Join us at the Iris Gardens in Montclair for some Friday night stargazing! Bring the kids, feel free to bring a telescope. Weather permitting. Starts at about 9:30 p.m. Directions: Follow the usual directions to Montclair State University. Instead of turning into the main entrance on Normal Avenue, proceed over the railroad tracks to the traffic light. Go straight through the light and make the first left onto Highland Avenue. Take Highland down a few blocks until you see a park on your left. This is the Iris Gardens. Park on either side of the road (make sure you don't block traffic).

METEOR WATCHES

August 11 & November 17
9:00 p.m. - 12:00 Midnight

Weather Permitting at Riker Hill Art Park, Beaufort Ave., Livingston
Catch a shooting star! The Newark Museum, the County of Essex Department of Parks, and NJAG will sponsor free Meteor Watches on August 11 and November 17. From 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight, join us for the annual Perseid and Leonid meteor showers. Our telescopes will also focus on other wonders of the night sky.

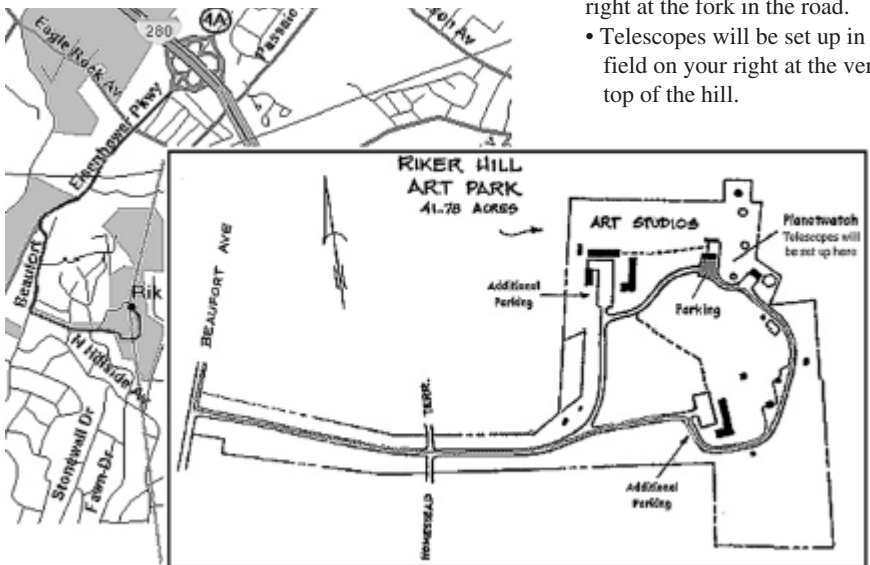


Our telescopes can't see through clouds! If this event needs to be canceled due to the weather, a message will be left after 6:00 p.m. at: (973) 680-8420.

Directions to Riker Hill Art Park:

Riker Hill Art Park is located off Beaufort Ave. in Livingston.

- Take the NJ Turnpike to Exit 15W or Garden State Parkway to Exit 145
- Take Route 280 West to Exit 4A
- Take Eisenhower Parkway south. Go straight at the first light.
- Cross the railroad tracks and go up the hill.
- Make a left onto Beaufort Ave.
- Make a right turn to continue on Beaufort. A few blocks down make a left at the sign for Riker Hill Art Park.
- Go straight at the stop sign. Keep to the right at the fork in the road.
- Telescopes will be set up in the field on your right at the very top of the hill.



NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the NJAG will be Wednesday, September 12. Anthony Pisano, of Pisano Opticians in Montclair, has tentatively agreed to give a talk on the latest telescopes.

Meetings begin promptly at 8:00 p.m. in Richardson Hall, room 226, on the campus of Montclair State University. Call 973-680-8420 or see our web page for directions.

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STUMP THE ASTRONOMERS

Have a question about astronomy?

Send it in to Kevin Conod at the address on page 1

or to kdconod@earthlink.net

and we'll try to have an answer in the next newsletter.

UNITED ASTRONOMY CLUBS OF NEW JERSEY

8TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Saturday, September 8, 2001
1:30 to 11:00 p.m.
UACNJ Observatory
Jenny Jump State Forest
Hope, New Jersey

This event is directed towards individuals who wish to learn more about amateur astronomy as well as having topics for more advanced amateurs. The programs include both general and technical presentations, solar observing, and an evening star party. See the UACNJ web page for more info: <http://users.erols.com/njastro>

SOUTH JERSEY STAR PARTY

October 12-14, 2001

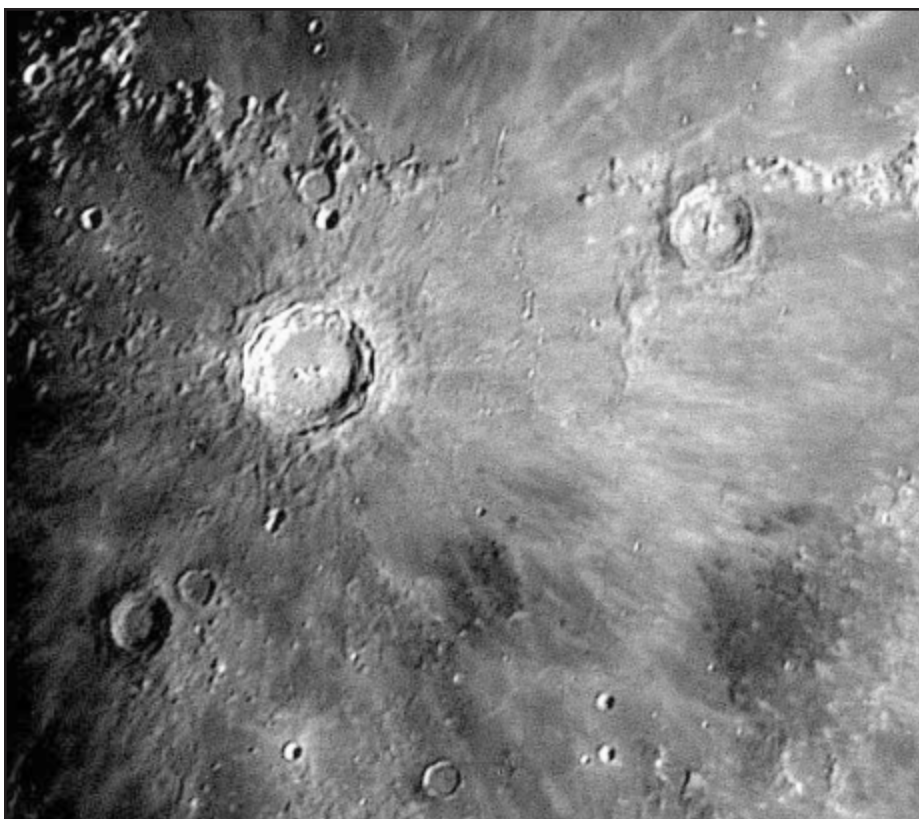
Belleplains State Forest

It's time to start making plans for the Fifth Annual SOUTH JERSEY STAR PARTY, which this year takes place October 12-14, 2001 at Belleplains State Forest in Cape May County, NJ. The event offers one of the best dark sky areas in the state, along with great company and events. Mark your calendar now, and sign up for the South Jersey Star Party! Registration is \$10 before October 5. Camping on observing field is \$15/person.

Contact:

SJAC c/o Nelson J. Biggs, Sr.
3780 Cedarville Rd., Cedarville, N.J. 08311
biggsnj@cs.com
For more info and directions see the SJAC web site:
<http://hometown.aol.com/sjastroc/index.html>

*Joe Marzullo's detail-rich Lunar Crater photo was taken on February 6, 2001.
Can you identify the crater?*



RENEWING MAGAZINES

As you may know, NJAG members get a discount on Astronomy and Sky & Telescope magazines. If you get a renewal notice remember that you make the check out to the magazine and send it the NJAG's Post Office Box. We verify your membership and send it on to the magazine. If you send your renewal directly to the magazine, it eventually gets sent back to the NJAG for verification and that may interrupt your subscription.

GET YOUR COPY OF THE ASTRONOMER'S JOURNAL!

The NJAG is making copies of "The Astronomer's Journal" available to its members at cost. The journal is a great 100 page notebook for writing down info and sketching objects while stargazing. Price is only \$7.00 (Please include \$4.00 for postage and handling if you want it mailed to you).

The Astronomer's Journal is a daily log designed to be used at the eyepiece by amateur astronomers of all skill levels. Each page has 16 fields of entry, two sketching circles, and ample room for detailed notes. In addition, The Journal has a blank table of contents that the user fills in with a brief description of each entry; it acts as a valuable reference for information contained in the book. Spiral bound and three-hole punched for observing convenience.

Make checks or money orders out to the North Jersey Astronomical Group and send to:

Astronomer's Journal, NJAG, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472.

“ I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary. Whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”

Issac Newton

P.O. BOX REMINDER

We've been asked several times recently where to send membership and magazine renewals. Remember that the NJAG has a Post Office Box in Clifton. All correspondence, membership renewals, etc., no matter what the topic, can be sent to the P.O. Box (hey we're paying for it, you might as well use it!). We'll make sure it gets to the correct party. North Jersey Astronomical Group, P.O. Box 1472, Clifton, NJ 07015-1472

NEW NJAG MAILING LIST

The NJAG's very successful e-mail list has operated via Listbot.com since September 2000. Listbot recently announced that it is closing down its free mailing list service. As a result we have opened a new list through Yahoogroups. If you'd like to keep in touch with other members and be informed of NJAG activities, star parties, and special events, you can register at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/njag>.

INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION FLYOVERS

The International Space Station periodically passes over our area s at times that are good for viewing. In general it moves from southwest to northeast, though the orbit is a little different on each pass. It takes about 10 minutes to go from horizon to horizon, but you really can't see the first and last couple of minutes because of ground clutter.

We watched it last week, and it was wonderful! Incredibly bright with its new solar panels, and movin' fast! It's sure to bring on lots of UFO sightings!

To read more about the space station, and for exact sky charts for your area, go to: <http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/News/2001/News-NewStar.asp>
Check the JTrack and JPass sections for specific orbit details.

“O universe, which nightly I can see—
Dark halls starlighted to infinity –
With eyes so tiny they can hardly be—
O mighty universe, do you see me?"

Jerome Wyckoff, in the style of Emily Dickinson

STARLINE

For a weekly update on the night sky,
call the StarLine at 973-680-8420.



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Kevin Conod took this great photo of the Milky Way on April 20, 2001. It took the Wide Field Photo prize, as well as Best of Show, in the last Astrophotography contest.



August

5 Mercury at superior conjunction

6 Venus near Jupiter

11-12 Perseid Meteor Shower

13-14 Moon near Saturn

15 Moon near Jupiter

16 Moon near Venus

20 Thin crescent Moon in West

26-27 Moon near Mars

FAVORITE COSMIC LINKS

Don't forget to check out some of our favorite astronomy sites on the Internet.

Visit <http://community.nj.com/cc/njag>

and click on "Links" on the left hand side.

