

Saskatoon Skies

The Newsletter of the Saskatoon Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

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Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
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To view *Saskatoon Skies* digitally, see our website:
<https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/newsletters.html>

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MEMBERSHIP? JOIN TODAY!

Regular: \$121.00 /year

Youth: \$71.10 /year

Family: \$115.50 + \$41.00/additional adult + \$22.20/additional youth

The Saskatoon Centre operates on a one-year revolving membership. You will be a member for the next 12 months no matter when in the year you join. Members are encouraged to renew early to avoid disruption in publications. Renew through the National Office at <http://www.rasc.ca/join>.

Benefits of Membership in the Saskatoon Centre

- knowledgeable & friendly amateur astronomers
- use of the Sleaford Observatory
- use of the U of S Observatory (after training)
- Saskatoon Skies Newsletter
- Observer's Handbook
- borrow the Centre's projector to give astronomy outreach presentations - contact Les Dickson at astrochem@sasktel.net
- rent the Centre's Telescopes <https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/telescopes.html>
- use of the Centre library
- Journal of the RASC (electronic format)

SASKATOON CENTRE'S MAIN OFFICERS:

President - John Takala

Vice-President - Nick Larsen

Secretary - Lorie Tedford

Treasurer - OPEN (Les Dickson to fill in until filled)

National Council Rep - Joelle Sheard-Patrick

Canadian Tire money - Darrell Chatfield

If you cannot attend a meeting but would like to donate your old Canadian Tire money please to assist with club purchases, email Darrell at novachat@sasktel.net.

NEWSLETTER & U OF S OBSERVATORY INFO

Newsletter Editor - Colin Chatfield

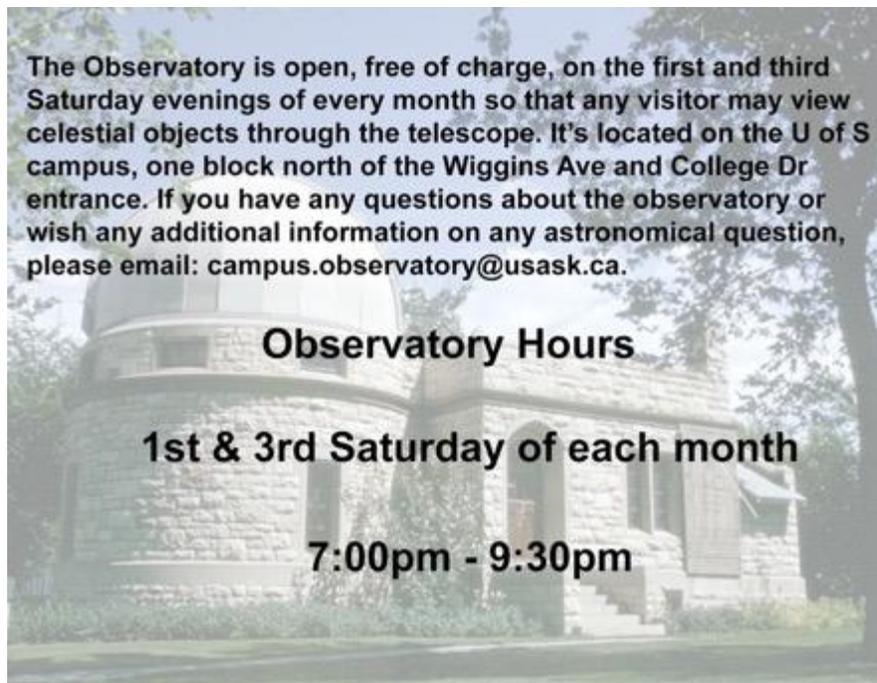
Copy & Collate - Les & Ellen Dickson

Labels & Temps - Mark de Jong

Web Posting/Content Editor - Tenho Tuomi/Andrew Kostiuk/Brent Burlingham

Saskatoon Skies is published monthly by the Saskatoon Centre of the RASC. Distribution is approximately 80 copies per issue. Saskatoon Skies welcomes unsolicited articles, sketches, photographs, cartoons, and other astronomy or space science material. Submissions should be sent by e-mail to the editor at colcha@gmail.com in MS Word or text format. Images (new or old): any format, less than 30MB, sent by e-mail as attached files. Send any articles of interest to the night sky or astronomy. **Deadline for submission of all articles for an upcoming issue is the first Friday of each month!**

Saskatoon Skies is also posted on our Saskatoon Centre homepage as a .pdf file and can be downloaded free-of-charge. Members may choose to receive the newsletter by regular mail or via the Internet. Articles may be reprinted from Saskatoon Skies without expressed permission (unless otherwise indicated), provided that proper source credit is given. Saskatoon Skies accepts commercial advertising. Please email the editor at colcha@gmail.com for rates. Members can advertise non-commercial items for free.



Hours subject to change, so check below for more info -

Website - <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/physics/community/observatory.php>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/usaskobservatory/>

RASC CALENDAR OF EVENTS & MEETING INFO

Feb 14	Observer's Group - Sleaford Observatory	Nick Larsen
Feb 16	RASC Saskatoon Centre General Meeting	John Takala

Observer's group viewing starts at dusk at the Sleaford Observatory dark site. Get there early and set up for a great night of observing! Members and their guests only.

For a complete list of club events, please visit: <https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/activities.html>

February RASC General Meeting

for all members and guests

Join us on February 16th, 2026, at 8:00PM (Executive meeting at 7:00pm)

Webinar (info below)

***Please note:** the meeting will be at the U of S Observatory at 108 Wiggins Ave (on the U of S Campus)*

7:00pm - **RASC Executive Meeting** (Members may attend the executive meeting as observers if they wish)

A Zoom registration link and phone-in numbers will be emailed to Members. After that, the procedure to register and join the meeting is the same as for the webinar (explained below).

NOTE: links to register to attend the webinar will be emailed out as well so we know who is planning to attend. After registering, an email invitation will be sent with a link to join via computer or a number to phone in. When joining via computer, participants will have to first download and install the Zoom app, if they have not done so already.

8:15pm - **Main Program -**

BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

All books are in either new, or like new condition. Retail price in brackets. Please email at novachat@sasktel.net or text/call 306-222-0515 if you want a particular book or to make arrangements. All books being sold by Darrell Chatfield.

“Deep-Sky Observers Handbook” Volume 1-5	Enslow-Lutterworth	\$40.00
“International Encyclopedia of Astronomy” 1987	Patrick Moore Color	\$10.00
“Backyard Astronomers Guide” T. Dickinson & Alan Dyer 2008	Color	\$25.00
“Atlas of Deep Sky Splendors” 1978	H. Verhenberg B & W	\$22.00
“Amateur Astronomers Catalog of 500 Deep Sky Objects” Vol 1 1980	B & W	
R. Morales		\$15.00
“Observing the Constellations” 1989	J. Sanford Color charts	\$10.00

- **2 - 1.25” rack and pinion focusers** for refractor type telescopes. Brand new. Never used. Inset diameter is 57mm. Heavy duty type with metal knurled knobs. All have boxes. \$20.00 each.

- **Original Celestron orange tube C5” scope** with tangent arm. Fork arms. SCOPE ONLY. No tripod or wedge. 5 x 30 finder, 1.25” visual back, diagonal, eyepiece, lens cap, metal case. Was used as a spotter scope. Not a mark on the tube. Clean looking. \$250.00

- 1 1.25” eyepiece extender - 3” long \$20.00
- 1 1.25” Celestron off axis guider c/w 12.5mm ep. Can be illuminated. New. \$45.00
- 1 Celestron 1.25” reticle. Can be illuminated \$20.00
- 1 3.5” long 1.25” tele-extender \$20.00
- 3 1.25” visual backs new \$10.00 each
- 1 1.25” to 0.965’ visual back \$10.00
- 1 Camera to visual back adapter Lightly used \$10.00
- 1 Threaded visual back to 16mm male threads camera adapter \$10.00

- Original orange tube Celestron finder. 10 x 40mm. 304mm (12") long. Comes with bracket meant for a C8" telescope but would fit other scopes. Not a mark on these items. \$65.00

- 6" primary mirror in a 3- point adjustable mirror cell. Some mirror spots. Nice condition. \$85.00 (came from the following tube).

- 7" diameter x 48" long aluminum Newtonian style tube. Ivory exterior with blackened interior. Also has a focuser. Finder bracket supplied as is. There may be some packing tape on the outside that needs to be removed. \$75.00

Telescope for sale: Celestron 1100 EdgeHD on CGX mount. Includes 3 counterweights, finder scope, t-adaptor, dovetail bar, dew cap/lens shade. Excellent telescope in very good condition. New price on this equipment is over \$10,000. Asking \$6500.

Orion auto-guider for sale including Orion 80 short tube OTA with guide scope rings, and ring mounting bar and Starshoot auto-guider - \$400.

Contact Kevin Fenwick at k.fenwick@sasktel.net for more information.

TELESCOPES FOR RENT

Jeff Swick

Saskatoon Centre has made its telescopes available for rent to RASC members on a monthly basis. We have three Sky-Watcher 8 inch Dobsonian telescopes, each with a kit of eyepieces and Antares 8x50 right angle finder scopes. Also we have one Telrad Reflex Sight.



Visit the website for more info -
<https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/rent.html>

NOTE: The club's 3 new smart scopes have now arrived. RASC Saskatoon now owns one SeeStar s50 and two Dwarf 3's. They will soon be available to loan out to club members, and for use at future outreach events. We will be discussing the logistics at the next meeting so stay tuned for more details.

MINUTES OF JANUARY MEETINGS

Lorie Tedford

**Minutes of the Monthly Executive Meeting of the RASC Saskatoon Centre
Monday, Nov 17th, 2025 - 7:00 pm Hybrid: Online & In-person U of S Observatory**

Attending: Joelle Sheard-Patrick, Les Dickson, Brent Burlingham, Darrell Chatfield, John Takala, Nick Larsen, Jeff Swick, Yannis Pahatouroglou, Verity Moore-Wright

1. **Call to order** 7:00 pm - John Takala (President and Chair)
2. **Call for additional announcements/items** to add to the agenda - none.

- 3. Approval of the November Executive meeting minutes** as circulated in the December newsletter. Moved by Darrell Chatfield, seconded by Les Dickson. Carried.
- 4. Announcements from the chair** - None at present.
- 5. Reports from the Executive Council:**
 - a. President's Report** - John Takala - none at present.
 - b. Financial Report** - Les Dickson
 - i.** Purchased scopes for the rental program, had a few Sleaford power and maintenance expenses and payment for SSSP 2028.
 - ii.** See report below.
 - c. Fundraising** - Verity Moore-Wright - Going to work with Joelle Sheard-Patrick for the Library Telescope Program fundraising.
 - d. National Council Rep** - Joelle Sheard-Patrick
 - i.** Materials needed for outreach will be ordered with National.
 - e. Activities Coordinator** - Joelle Sheard-Patrick
 - i.** The three rental scopes have arrived.
 - ii.** A manual/quick set up guide will be made to go with the scopes as well as sort out the rental details before releasing the scopes to members for use.
 - f. Sleaford Updates** - Darrell Chatfield
 - i.** The RM completed snow removal of the site. The rates for clearing snow have increased.
 - ii.** The snowblower has been fixed, working and now is advertised for sale.
 - iii.** When using the warm up shelter, use the left door for now as the other door needs to be fixed.
 - iv.** The Sleaford/U. of S. Joint Committee needs to appoint a contact to host a meeting.
 - g. Media Coordinator for Advertising** - Jeff Swick
 - i.** Will work with Lorie Tedford for a point of contact for talking to different outlets.

6. Old Business

- a. The Treasurer and Telescope Rental Coordinator positions are still open. If anyone is interested, please contact John Takala or email sk_centre@rasc.ca.
 - i. Joelle Sheard-Patrick has volunteered to be the interim Telescope Rental Coordinator.
- b. Library Telescope Program
 - i. Joelle Sheard-Patrick has been in contact with the library and they are very excited for this program.
 - ii. Joelle Sheard-Patrick and Verity Moore-Wright are going to work together to put together a fundraising campaign to get the library telescopes to use for the program. Potentially looking at a smart scope or a backpack scope. Something user friendly and lightweight.
 - iii. A point of contact with the club for this program will be needed.
- c. Co-op Card for RASC
 - i. John Takala will set this up.

7. New Business

- a. Improvements to the website and social media to make it more accessible to new members.

Motion to adjourn. Moved by Brent Burlingham, seconded by John Takala. Carried.

**Minutes of the Monthly General Meeting of the RASC Saskatoon Centre
Monday, Nov 17th, 2025 - 7:00 pm Hybrid: Online & In-person: U of S Observatory**

1. **Sharing/Networking Time** 8:00-8:15 pm
2. **Call to order:** 8:20 pm - John Takala
3. **Call for additional items** or changes to the agenda
 - a. Events with Tim Yaworski
 - b. Ron Waldron Workshop
4. **Call out to new members/guests:** Jeff and Kelly.

5. **Adoption of the November General meeting minutes** as circulated in the December newsletter. Moved by Les Dickson, seconded by Lisa Caldwell. Carried.
6. **Executive Meeting Summary** - John Takala
7. **Open Positions**
 - a. **Treasurer**
 - b. **Telescope Rental Coordinator**
 - c. **Tim Yaworski's Upcoming Events**
 - i. Wintershines Festival February 14th, 16th, 21st. If anyone can bring smart scopes and participate, contact Tim.
 - ii. February 20th at Beaver creek - Intro to Deep Sky Imaging. There will be an educational program if there are clouds.
 - iii. March 3rd at Meewasin - Moon Eclipse and Sunrise.
 - d. **Introduction to Astronomy Workshop** with Ron Waldron
 - i. The date is still to be announced.
 - ii. Beginner workshop on telescopes and astronomy.
 - iii. Contact Ron or John if interested.
8. **Program**
 - a. Harry Potter Universe - this digital presentation explores the Harry Potter universe and how astronomy plays into the names of the characters and activities at the Hogwarts School of Magic - Ron Waldron
9. **Call to adjourn** - 9:04 pm **moved** by Brent Burlingham, **seconded** by John Takala. **Carried**

BROKEN COMETS

Tenho Tuomi

Some comets break up when they pass too close to the sun at perihelion. I had pictures in the December newsletter of long period comet C/2025 K1 (ATLAS) breaking up.

Short period comets can break up too if their orbit is changed after a close pass of Jupiter. That is thought what happened with periodic comet 240P/NEAT. A piece broke off and first reports of it came on October 3, 2025 well before its perihelion date of December 19, 2025. I photographed this comet before in February 2019 on its last 7.6 year orbit. This comet was discovered in December 2002 so it had several safe passes of the sun before a piece broke off.

These are pictures I took on November 15 and December 10 of comet 240P/NEAT and the smaller fragment B following it.





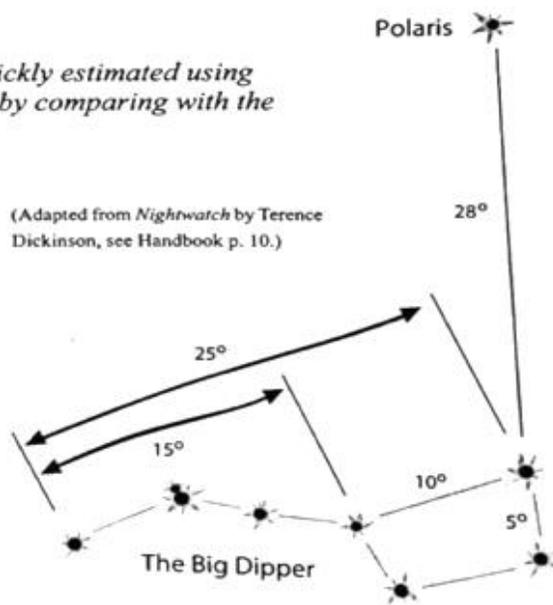
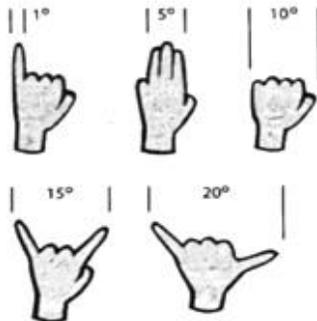
FEBRUARY NIGHT SKY EVENTS AND INFO

Images on the next few pages used, with permission, from the 2025/26 Observer's Handbook. It can be obtained by joining the RASC here <http://rasc.ca/join> or ordered from <https://secure.rasc.ca/store>.

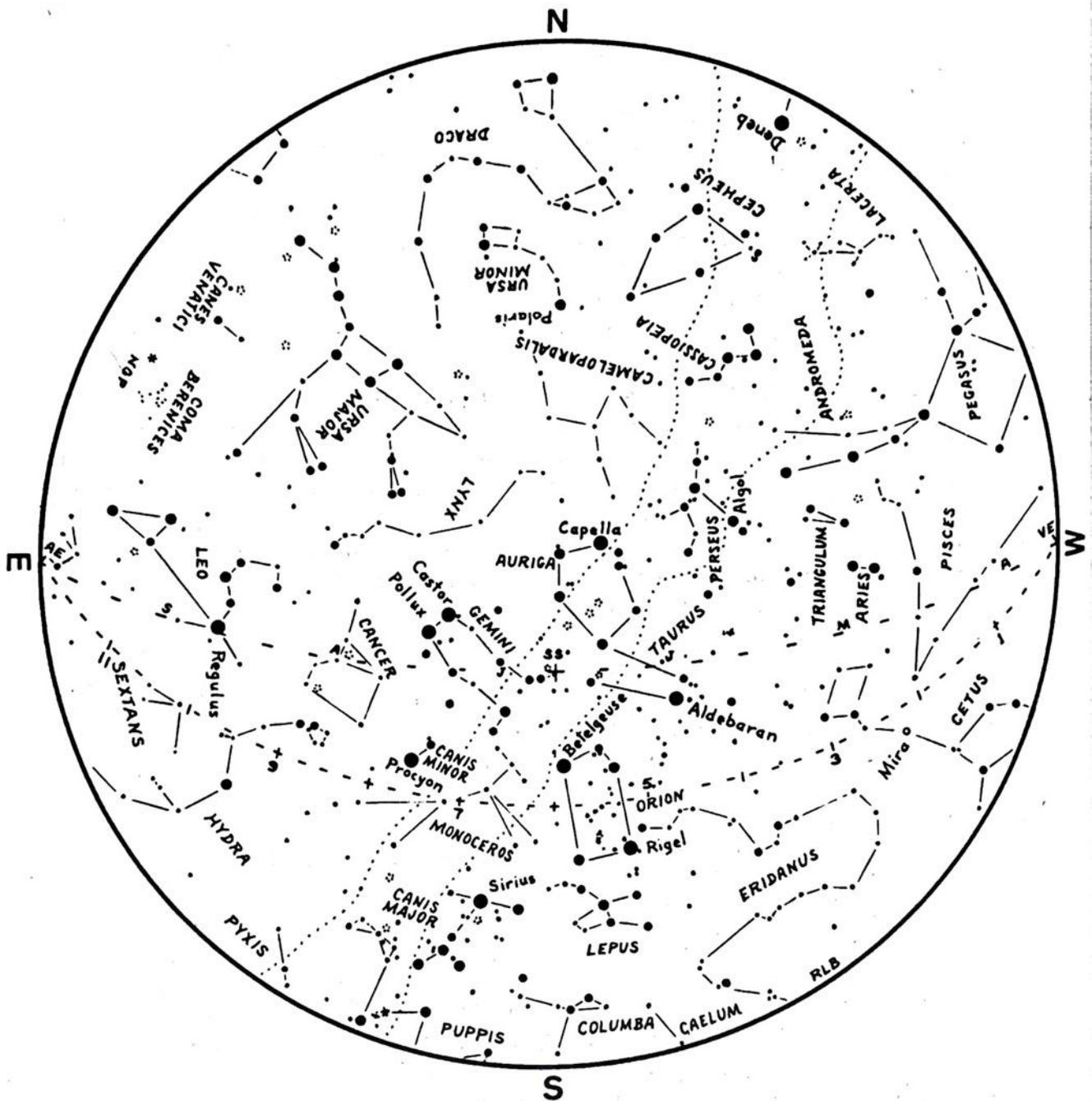


HANDY SKY MEASURES

Angular measure in the sky can be quickly estimated using the fingers of an outstretched arm, or by comparing with the star separations in the Big Dipper.



			FEBRUARY EVENTS		Jupiter's Satellites	
Time (UT)					West	East
	d	h m				
Sun.	1	12 22 09	Moon 1.2° N of Beehive (M44)			1.0
			full Moon			2.0
Mon.	2	0 31	Algol at minimum			3.0
Tue.	3		Zodiacal light vis. in N lat. in W after evening twilight for next two weeks			4.0
			Regulus 0.4° S of Moon, occultation¹			5.0
			Moon at descending node			6.0
Wed.	4	3 19 18	Uranus stationary			7.0
			Algol at minimum			8.0
Thu.	5					9.0
Fri.	6					10.0
Sat.	7	9 18 09	Spica 1.8° N of Moon			11.0
			Algol at minimum			12.0
Sun.	8					13.0
Mon.	9	12 43	last quarter			14.0
Tue.	10	14 58	Algol at minimum			15.0
			Moon at apogee (404 576 km)			16.0
Wed.	11	4 17	Antares 0.7° N of Moon, occultation²			17.0
Thu.	12	19 06	Double Shadows on Jupiter			18.0
Fri.	13		Venus at greatest heliocentric lat. S			19.0
			Algol at minimum			20.0
Sat.	14	11 47	Mercury at ascending node			21.0
Sun.	15	15	Pluto 0.9° S of Moon, occultation³			22.0
Mon.	16	4	Saturn 0.9° S of Neptune			23.0
			Algol at minimum			24.0
Tue.	17	8 36	new Moon (lunation 1276)			25.0
			Annular Solar Eclipse (See p. 126)			26.0
Wed.	18	6 19	Moon at Ascending Node			27.0
			Mercury 0.1° N of Moon, occultation⁴			28.0
Thu.	19	23	Mercury at perihelion			29.0
			Algol at minimum			30.0
Fri.	20	5 24	Mercury greatest elongation E (18°)			31.0
Sat.	21	18	Saturn 5° S of Moon			
Sun.	22	2 13	Algol at minimum			
Mon.	23					
Tue.	24	3	Moon in Pleiades (M45)			
			first quarter			
			Moon at perigee (370 135 km)			
Wed.	25	12 28	Algol at minimum			
			Mercury stationary			
Thu.	26	23 02				
Fri.	27	17	Mars at greatest heliocentric lat. S			
			Jupiter 4° S of Moon			
			Algol at minimum			
Sat.	28	6 19 51	Moon 1.3° N of Beehive (M44)			



REIMBURSEMENT FOR CENTRE EXPENSES

The Centre has a reimbursement procedure on submission of expense claims. A writeable pdf claim form can be found on the Centre webpage under the Executive tab. The expense form **must** be submitted *along with original receipts* to the Treasurer within 30 days of the transaction. All expenditures must be preapproved by the Executive or be within allocated budgets.

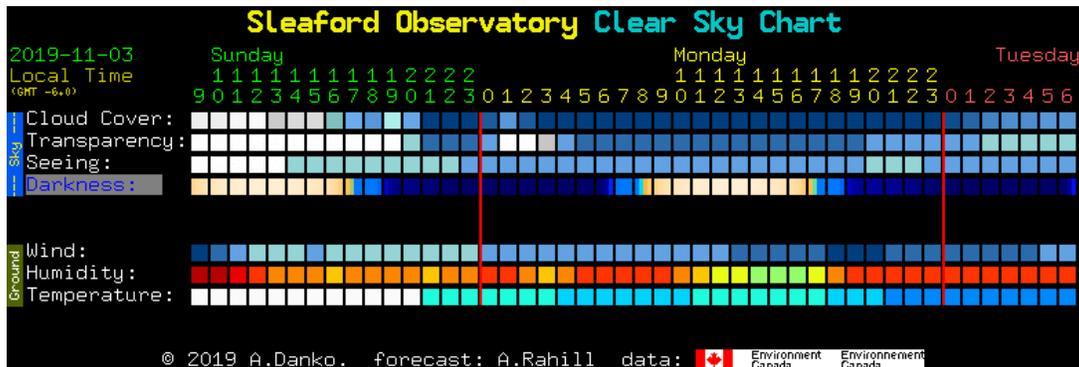
Please contact the Treasurer with any inquiries.

CLEAR SKY AND WEATHER INFO

To find clear skies, visit the Clear Dark Sky website -

<https://www.cleardarksky.com/csk/>

Once there, one can enter your location to find clear skies. The chart will appear as follows:



Environment Canada provides weather information for astronomy -

www.weather.gc.ca/astro



Saskatchewan Light Pollution Abatement Committee -

<http://myotherlife.net/slpac/>



www.darksky.org

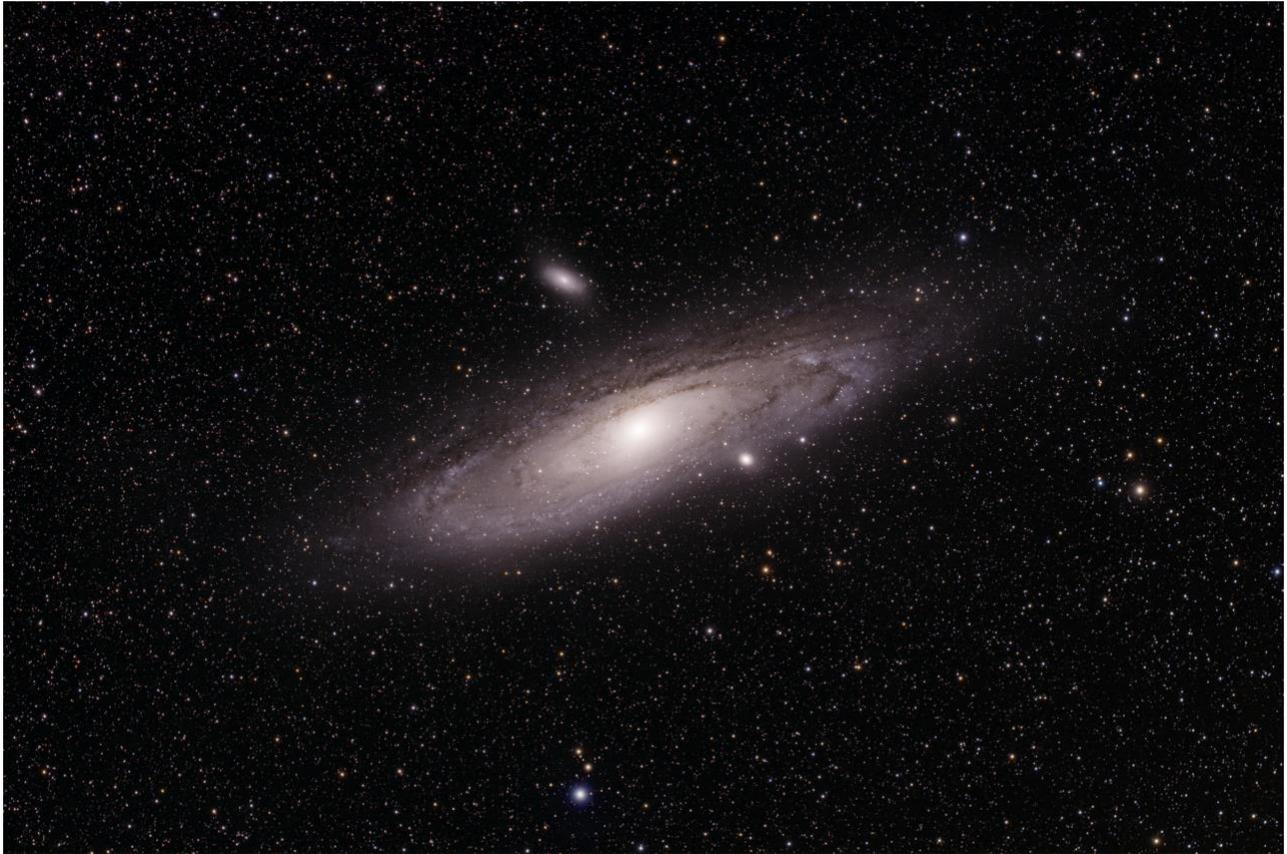


Photo by Justin Lukan

OBSERVING CERTIFICATES AND CLUBS

RASC OBSERVING PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATES

The RASC offers four observing certificates for **members** who observe all objects in each of the following observing lists in this chapter:

- THE MESSIER CATALOGUE (p. 312)
- THE FINEST NGC OBJECTS (p. 316),
- THE DEEP-SKY CHALLENGE OBJECTS (p. 320),
- DEEP-SKY GEMS (p. 322).

See rasc.ca/certificate-programs for details and contact the RASC Observing Committee Chair at rasc.ca/contact/observing for further information.



The RASC also offers the **Explore the Universe Certificate** for novice observers (who do not have to be RASC members), the **Explore the Moon Certificate** for beginning members, and the **Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Certificate** and the **Double Stars Observing Certificate** for intermediate to advanced members. In addition, **Astroimaging certificates** are available for those members with a photographic bent. See rasc.ca/astro-imaging-certificate

RASC OBSERVER'S HANDBOOK 2023 – STANDARD EDITION

Join the Club! Observe all 110 Messier, 110 Finest NGC, 400 Herschel I or II, 140 Lunar, 154 Sky Gems or 35 Binocular objects, or Explore the Universe and earn great OBSERVING CERTIFICATES!

MESSIER CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects:

*R. Huziak, G. Sarty,
S. Alexander, S. Ferguson,
D. Chatfield, T. Tuomi, L.
Scott, G. Charpentier, B.
Johnson, L. Dickson,
B. Burlingham, Norma Jensen,
Donna-Lee May*

Ron Waldron	108
Brent Gratias	104
Marcel Müller-Goldkuhle	94
Wade Selvig	75
Wayne Schlapkohl	43
Ellen Dickson	34
Graham Hartridge	9

CHATFIELD BINOCULAR CERTIFICATE

Certified at 35 to 40 Objects:

T. Tuomi, R. Huziak

Jim Goodridge	12
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FINEST NGC CLUB

Certified at 110 Objects:

*R. Huziak, G. Sarty,
D. Chatfield, T. Tuomi*

Larry Scott	110
Scott Alexander	97
Norma Jensen	83
Sandy Ferguson	23
George Charpentier	13
Brent Burlingham	97

EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE

Certified at 55 to 110

Objects: *T. Tuomi, B. Gratias*

Wayne Schlapkohl	55
Jim Goodridge	35

ISABEL WILLIAMSON

LUNAR OBSERVING CERTIFICATE

Certified at 140 Objects:

T. Tuomi, N. Jensen

EXPLORE THE MOON CERTIFICATE

T. Yaworski

Brent Gratias	37
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HERSCHEL 400 CLUB

Certified at 400 Objects:

*R. Huziak, D. Chatfield,
T. Tuomi*

Gordon Sarty	251
Scott Alexander	117
Larry Scott	45
Sandy Ferguson	18

HERSCHEL 400-II CLUB

Darrell Chatfield	400
Tenho Tuomi	378
Rick Huziak	246

LEVY DEEP-SKY GEMS

Certified at 154 Objects:

Tenho Tuomi	150
Darrell Chatfield	70

Messier, Finest NGC, and David Levy's Deep-Sky lists in the *Observer's Handbook*.

The Explore the Universe list is available here <http://www.rasc.ca/explore-universe>
Messier and Finest NGC lists, charts and logbooks: <https://www.rasc.ca/certificate-programs>

Herschel 400 List: <http://www.astroloague.org/al/obsclubs/herschel/hers400.html>

Chatfield Binocular List is at: [https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/Chatfield Binocular List.pdf](https://saskatoon.rasc.ca/Chatfield_Binocular_List.pdf)

“Isabel Williamson Lunar Observing Program Guide” program details can be found at:

<https://www.rasc.ca/isabel-williamson-lunar-observing-program>