



Sky Watch

Issue #11
December '06

The Newsletter of the Brevard Astronomical Society

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Summary of Nov meeting:

(1) Discussion of upcoming officer elections, including the process to elect via E-mailed ballots (*no hanging chad's please.....*)

(2) A motion to accept the BAS Loaner scope process was approved.

Upcoming BAS Meetings & Agenda:

Dec 20th –
Christmas Dinner and Election of BAS Officers; for 2007.

Grandpa's Steak House
(located 1 mile East of I-95 at SR 520). 3660 W. King St, Cocoa, FL 32926. (321) 638-4379

Moon Phases:

Full: Dec 4th



New: Dec 20th

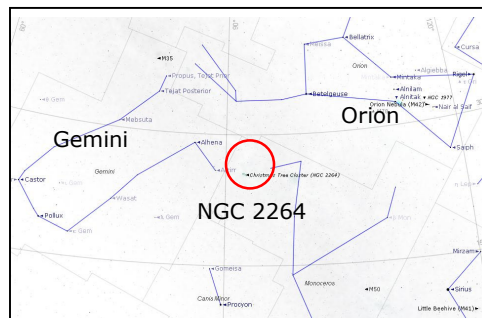


What's in the Sky in Dec?

Check out the Christmas Tree cluster for a holiday treat!

NGC 2264 is the designation number of the New General Catalogue that identifies two astronomical objects as a single object: the Cone Nebula and the Christmas Tree Cluster. Both objects are located in the Monoceros constellation [Easier to find off Gemini] and are located about 800 parsecs or 2600 light-years from Earth. The Christmas Tree Cluster [is] sometimes incorrectly referred as NGC 2264. However, the designation of NGC 2264 in the New General Catalogue refers to both objects and not the cluster alone.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_Tree_Cluster



PLANETS:

This time of year, it is better to be an early bird rather than a night bird for observing planets. Although **Saturn** rises in the northeast around 10:30 pm in Leo, and transits at approx 5 am by mid month. **Uranus & Neptune** begin setting approx 10 pm in the evening, so you may need to get set up early with a dark view of the SSW. **Jupiter, Mars & Mercury** rise just before dawn in tight groupings to the SE.

Submitted by John Norczyk:

Did you know?

Did you know that the moons of Uranus are named after characters from the works of William Shakespeare and Alexander Pope?

Planetary Challenge of Uranus Moons

At sixth magnitude Uranus is visible on a clear, dark, moonless night, for some one with really good eyes. Binoculars will do nicely. Going back to the original definition of a planet we get an association with the word "wanderer". If you observe Uranus for several nights you will see its motion against the background of fixed stars. It takes Uranus 84 years to complete one trip around the Sun. At this rate Uranus moves about 4.3°/year or about 1/100° per day relative to the Sun. It would take several days of observation to detect this motion with binoculars. Another characteristic of a "traditional" planet is its disk-like appearance in a small telescope. Since Uranus is about 1.8 billion miles from Earth, its disk is only about 3-4 arc seconds, compared to more than 30 arc seconds for Jupiter. A low quality telescope or poor viewing conditions might not reveal in clean disk.

According to Sky Tonight, "Four of Uranus's 27 known satellites can be seen in moderate to large amateur telescopes. Both Titania and Oberon have been glimpsed with apertures as small as 20 centimeters (8 inches). Umbriel and Ariel, however, because they lie much closer to the planet's glare, are normally difficult with even twice that aperture."

<http://skytonight.com/observing/objects/planets/3310476.html>) This site provides a Java Script utility to help locate and track Uranus's moons.

Happy hunting! JN

Upcoming BAS Star Parties:

(Potential) South Site Star Party (new loc by C54 Canal)
Dec 21st (contact Bill Manley)

North Site Star Party: Shilo,
Dec 23rd. (contact Dave Guibert)



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Outreach News:

January 11 (5:30 - 7:00pm)
-West Melbourne School of
Science Star Party See the
BAS website or contact
Oscar Sifuentes to
volunteer.

Club Telescope News:

The BAS currently has two telescopes
for use by club members. Contact Bill
Manley (Newsletter Editor e-mail) for
additional information.

The 16" Dobsonian remains at the
planetarium.

The 8" Orion has been loaned out to
Rich Rosa. There appears to be a
problem with the encoder card on the
go-to (before borrowed).

I had to type something here to
get this formatting to work !!!!!!!

Merry Christmas to all

A "quick ref" Messier Guide – I found this handy little chart via a link (Utah Skies I believe...) through the KSC website, and find it very useful to quickly identify Messier number vs. object type (open, globular, galaxy, nebula...). I thought other members may find it useful as well. (B. Manley)

M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10
M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20
M21	M22	M23	M24	M25	M26	M27	M28	M29	M30
M31	M32	M33	M34	M35	M36	M37	M38	M39	M40
M41	M42	M43	M44	M45	M46	M47	M48	M49	M50
M51	M52	M53	M54	M55	M56	M57	M58	M59	M60
M61	M62	M63	M64	M65	M66	M67	M68	M69	M70
M71	M72	M73	M74	M75	M76	M77	M78	M79	M80
M81	M82	M83	M84	M85	M86	M87	M88	M89	M90
M91	M92	M93	M94	M95	M96	M97	M98	M99	M100
M101	M102	M103	M104	M105	M106	M107	M108	M109	M110

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