

UNIVERSE

A vibrant, multi-colored nebula with a bright blue-white core, set against a dark starry background. The nebula features intricate, wispy structures in shades of red, purple, and magenta, with a central region of intense blue and white light. The surrounding space is filled with numerous small, distant stars of various colors, creating a rich, cosmic scene.

MAR 2026

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In This Issue



Page 2	Index, Society Information
Page 3	Team Space
Page 4	March Observer by Greg Bryant
Page 11	Comets in March by Greg Bryant
Page 13	Wiruna Wanderings—December 2025 by Alessandro Spina
Page 15	Macquarie University Professional Amateur Research Opportunity
Page 16	DarkSky International Request for Submissions
Page 17	Journey to the Centre of Archive by Lesa Moore
Page 18	Looking After Your Health At Wiruna by Greg Priestley
Page 21	Comino’s Comment
Page 22	Crux Quiz—The Questions by Markus Stone
Page 23	Sky Events in March by Kendra Melson
Page 24	Meetings & Dates
Page 25	Wiruna Fees—Context, Value and Recent Changes
Page 27	Members News by Lesa Moore
Page 28	Comet C/2024 E1 (Wierzchos) Image by Ken Wallace

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April 2026 submissions required by 19 March.

UNIVERSE Correspondence and Contributions -

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Front Cover by Chi Chan: **NGC 2264** was captured from Wiruna on the Christmas Eve 2025. Listed in the New General Catalogue by J. L. E. Dreyer in 1888, it combines a loose open cluster with surrounding emission and reflection nebulae. It is an active star-forming complex in the constellation Monoceros, about 2,500 light-years away and about 1-5 million years old. The massive O-type star S Monocerotis located near the centre of the image, dominates the area, ionising the surrounding hydrogen and shaping the nebular structures through radiation and stellar winds. While the stars themselves form an irregular cluster, the ionised hydrogen (H α) emission outlines the familiar "tree" shape seen most clearly in narrowband images, giving it the popular name, the Christmas Tree Cluster. Prominent features include the Cone Nebula, a dense, dark dust pillar embedded in the emission region, the bright central Snowflake Cluster around S Monocerotis, and blue reflection nebulosity often called the Fox Fur Nebula. Jets and Herbig–Haro objects provide direct evidence of ongoing stellar birth, making NGC 2264 a classic nearby stellar nursery. Equipment: RASA 8, ASI2600MC Pro, Wave 150i. Processing: PixInsight 1.9.3

Rear Cover by Ken Wallace: **C/2024 E1 (Wierzchos)** from Hazelbrook – Feb 10. The comet passed perihelion on January 20. At the date of the image, it was about 155 million km from Earth, making its closest approach on February 17 at around 151 million km. Imaged with a Celestron Origin RASA (152 mm, f/2.2, 335 mm focal length), 21 x 10 sec (3.5 minutes).

March Observer

By Greg Bryant

Planets in March

Venus begins its evening apparition, though it will initially be seen in a bright sky as by month's end the magnitude -3.9 planet is only setting around an hour after sunset. Last January saw the planet in conjunction with the Sun, with Venus being on the far side of the Sun, and now the planet is slowly climbing higher each night. Looking ahead, Venus will be at its greatest elongation from the Sun in the evening sky in August.

On 8 March, Venus is in conjunction with 1st magnitude **Saturn**, with the two being just 1° apart. This will be a difficult sight as the planets are setting around 40 minutes after sunset, during nautical twilight. Atmospheric extinction will play a role – by the time they're just 5° above the horizon, their apparent brightness will have dimmed by 3 magnitudes (and more if your sky isn't crystal clear) and still against a twilight sky. Binoculars will assist greatly here.

Uranus is in the evening sky in Taurus, setting mid-evening as it heads towards conjunction in May. Glowing at magnitude 5.8, Uranus is similar in brightness to the nearby stars 13 Tauri and 14 Tauri, so be careful in identifying the planet.

Jupiter is high in the northeastern sky as evening begins, and visible until after midnight. Located in the midst of the constellation Gemini, Jupiter is shining at magnitude -2.3. On the evening of 26 March, Jupiter is around 4° from the First Quarter Moon.

Mercury is in inferior conjunction with the Sun on 7 March but then rises quickly into the morning dawn sky, becoming visible mid-month as it heads towards greatest elongation early next month. Mercury is in conjunction with **Mars** on 14 March, when 4° will separate the two, and the planets are 2nd and 1st magnitude respectively. Mars too is emerging from solar conjunction, and both planets will be rising just under an hour before sunrise in the constellation Aquarius, so the sky will be brightening rapidly as the planets climb in the dawn sky (see above Venus – Saturn conjunction warning about brightness dimming). Four days later, on the morning of 18 March, the Moon joins the scene, in conjunction with both planets. At this time, the Moon is just one and a quarter days before New Moon, so it's a very thin crescent in a brightening sky and you'll have a better chance in observing this mid-month dawn gathering with binoculars.

Saturn and **Neptune** reach conjunction with the Sun this month and will return to visibility in the morning sky in April.

Earth is at the autumn equinox on 21 March.

Moon Cycles

Full Moon	Third Quarter	New Moon	First Quarter
3 Mar 10:37pm	11 Mar 8:38pm	19 Mar 12:22am	26 Mar 6:18am

On the night of 2-3 March, and again on 29-30 March the near-Full Moon will be near Regulus, and on 10-11 March, the last Quarter Moon will be near Antares. Observers in other parts of the world will see occultations. The main lunar event this month, however, is on the evening of 3 March – a total eclipse of the Moon and we in New South Wales will be well-placed to observe.

Total Lunar Eclipse in March

In last September’s issue of *Universe*, I went into detail about the general observing circumstances of lunar eclipses, so I refer you to that for background information as it’s relatively recent (also available in the online ASNSW Member section). For now, here’s what is in store this month. The times below are calculated for daylight saving time, and the Moon’s altitude is for Sydney to assist you with planning a clear eastern viewing position – if you’re west of Sydney, the Moon will be lower in the eastern sky throughout the evening stages. With the Moon moving through the northern constellation of Leo during the eclipse, it will remain fairly low for us.

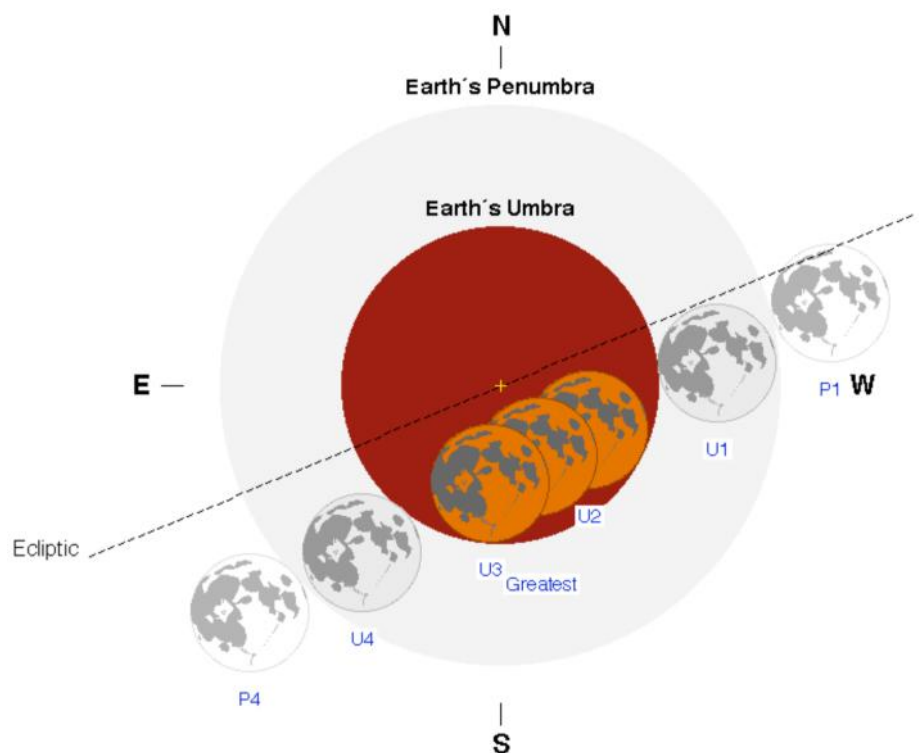
While all the stages of this month’s total eclipse occur after sunset as seen from Sydney and the rest of eastern New South Wales, the beginning of the penumbral phase will be seen against a bright evening twilight sky. Observers in western New South Wales will miss the beginning of this penumbral stage.

Key Times for 3-4 March Total Lunar Eclipse

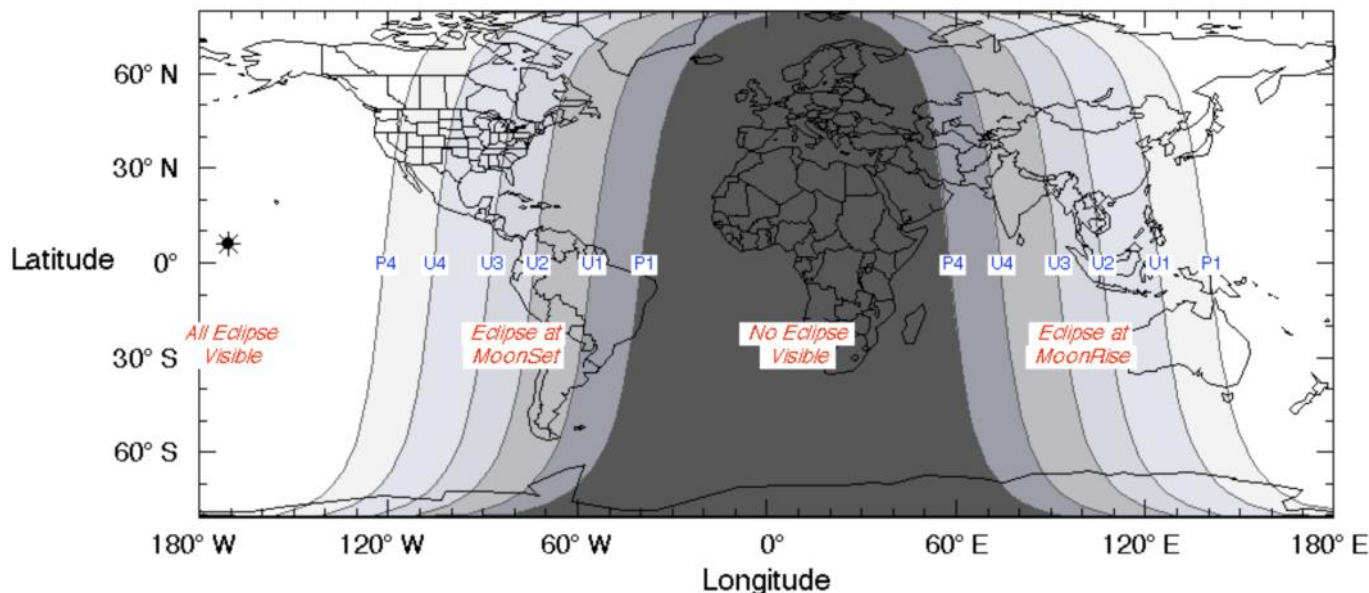
Event	Time (AEDT)	Moon Altitude (Sydney)
Moonrise	7:20pm	0°
Sunset	7:29pm	1°
Penumbral phase begins	7:43pm	4°
Civil twilight ends	7:54pm	6°
Nautical twilight ends	8:24pm	11°
Partial phase begins	8:49pm	16°
Astronomical twilight ends	8:55pm	17°
Total phase begins	10:03pm	30°
Mid-eclipse	10:33pm	35°
Total phase ends	11:02pm	39°
Partial phase ends	0:17am	47°
Penumbral phase ends	1:23am	49°

During totality, the Moon passes to the south of the centre of Earth’s shadow, so the Moon’s southern half will be brighter than the northern half. This month’s eclipse clocks in at 58 minutes of totality, the shortest since 2021.

Looking ahead, the next few total lunar eclipses visible from New South Wales are morning affairs. Not for another seven years, in October 2033, will we see another evening show, so make the most of this month’s eclipse and take the opportunity if available to watch it with others.



The path of the Moon through the Earth’s shadow. Note that the Moon passes south of the centre of the shadow. CREDIT: Fred Espenak / NASA



The global visibility of March's total lunar eclipse. New South Wales sees it in the evening sky. If you were near the Equator in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the eclipsed Moon would be overhead at midnight.

CREDIT: Fred Espenak / NASA

Meteors in March

No meteor showers of note are predicted to peak in March. For many years, the gamma-Normids were on the calendar for this month, with a zenithal hourly rate peak of around six, though there were some opinions that it seemed to be a borderline and perhaps ill-defined shower on account of it being barely above the background sporadic rate. Eventually, in mid-2023, the International Meteor Organisation dropped the gamma-Normids from the list of active visual meteor showers published in their 2024 and subsequent calendars.

The Sky Tonight

March evenings see Puppis and Canis Major overhead. Dropping lower in the west are Eridanus, Fornax and Sculptor. To the north is Orion and Gemini. Rising in the east is Hydra and Leo, and climbing high in the southern sky is Vela.

Constellation of the Month—Vela

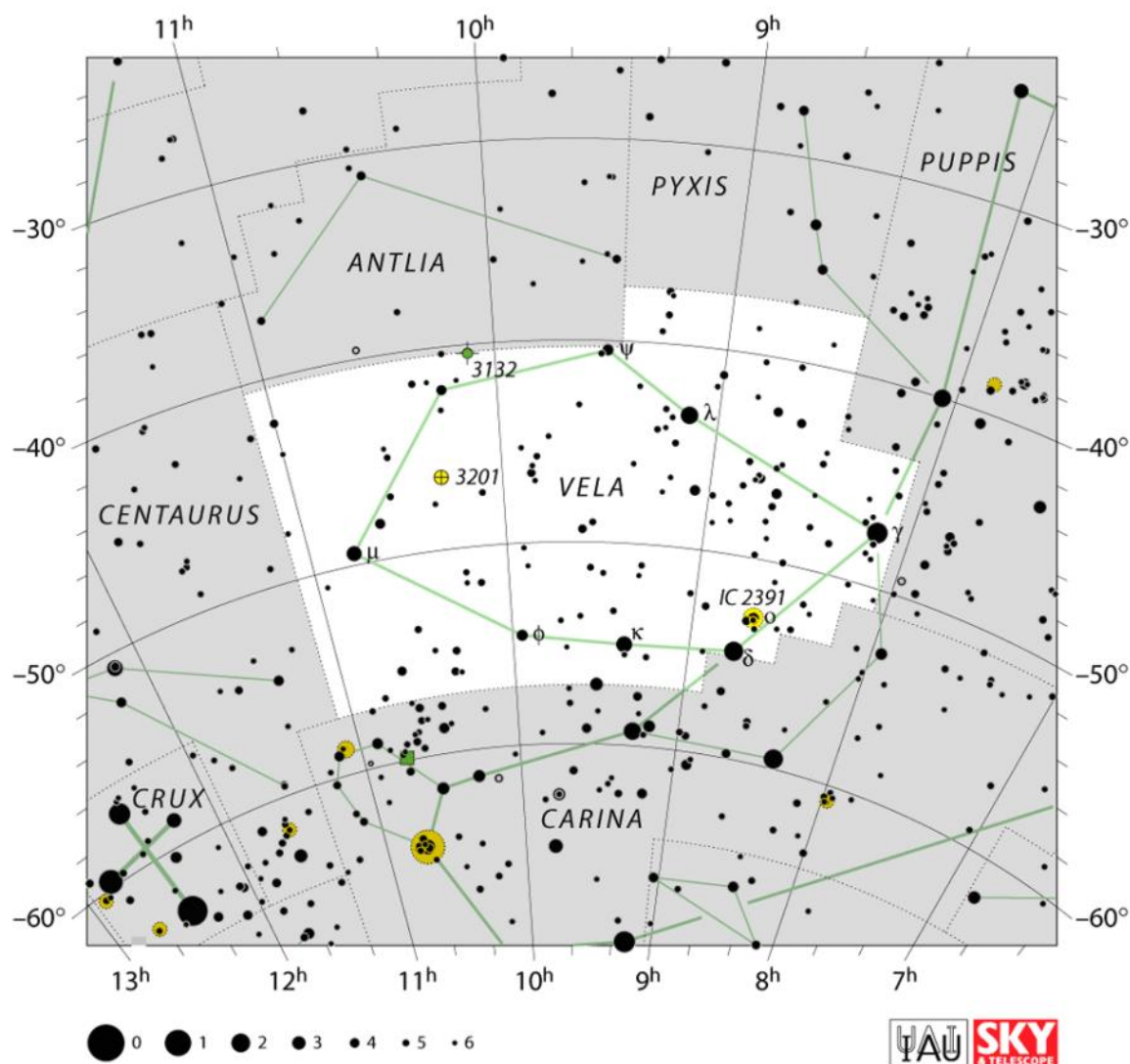
Once part of the ancient constellation Argo Navis which was chronicled by Ptolemy, the modern grouping of Vela represents the sails of Jason's mythical ship as part of the 18th century French astronomer Nicolas-Louis de Lacaille's subdivision of Argo Navis into the more practical Vela, Carina (the keel) and Puppis (the stern). Argo Navis in its original form was around 30% larger than the current largest constellation (Hydra). Of Ptolemy's original 48 constellations, Argo Navis is the only one not to survive. When Lacaille created the three new constellations, he kept what is called the "Bayer designations" of the stars from the original Argo Navis. There is no Alpha or Beta Velorum, the "Alpha" and "Beta" reside in Carina, and so the brightest stars of Vela are Gamma and Delta Velorum.

Gamma Velorum, shining at magnitude 1.8 on the western edge of Vela near its border with Puppis, makes the cut in the top 40 of brightest stars in the night sky. It's sometimes colloquially known as Regor, named by the astronaut Gus Grissom, but it doesn't have an IAU-approved formal name – the brightest star in the night sky not to have one. I've been referring to Gamma Velorum as "a" star, but it's actually a fascinating multiple system lying some 1,100 light-years from us. James Dunlop first identified it as a double, the stars of magnitude 1.8 and 4.3 separated by 43 arcseconds, and visible in a small telescope. Both stars are themselves spectroscopic binaries, with the brightest star consisting of a blue supergiant and a Wolf-Rayet, the closest such one to us.

Vela's second brightest star, 2nd magnitude **Delta Velorum**, is itself a triple star, though only two of its components are visible in amateur telescopes. However, observers often just notice Delta Velorum with the unaided eye because it, along with Kappa Velorum, Epsilon Carinae and Iota Carinae form an asterism known as the False Cross. Sometimes mistaken by first-timers looking for the real Southern Cross, which resides in Crux, the False Cross is larger but not quite as bright.

Located on the galactic plane, Vela lies in a rich part of the Milky Way, with around 200 stars visible to the unaided eye within its 500 square degrees, and six that are 3rd magnitude or brighter. Sometimes, though, an interloper appears. Since the early 1600s, four novae have been found in Vela – a small number compared to some other galactic plane constellations – but two of them have been notable. In 1999, Sydney variable star observer Peter Williams discovered a nova shining at 3rd magnitude during the course of his routine search for naked-eye novae (the nova was independently discovered in New Zealand an hour later). It would go on to peak at magnitude 2.6, the brightest nova since 1975, and none have surpassed it since.

Then, last year John Seach from Grafton found another nova in Vela, this time at magnitude 5.7 (again it was independently found, this time by Andrew Pearce in Western Australia). It brightened to 5th magnitude. I mention it not just on account of its brightness, but because two weeks earlier a nova burst on the scene in Lupus – it peaked at slightly brighter than 6th magnitude, and so for a very brief period there were two novae simultaneously visible to the unaided eye from dark skies.



Representing the sails of the legendary ship Argo Navis, Vela lies in a rich area of the Milky Way.

Credit: IAU and Sky & Telescope magazine

Deep Sky Targets in Vela

Vela's residency on the galactic plane means it is home to many open clusters and nebulae. Some 2° north-northwest of Delta Velorum is the open cluster **IC 2391**. Visible to the unaided eye, its brightest member is 3.6-magnitude Omicron Velorum, for whom the cluster is often named after. The Persian astronomer al-Sufi first noted it as a "nebulous star" in 964, but it wasn't until the 1750s that Lacaille found it was not one but many stars. Around 50 arcminutes in diameter, binoculars begin to resolve the cluster. Through the telescope, low magnification is best to appreciate the cluster's 30-odd members, of which seven are 6th magnitude or brighter. How did this cluster not get an NGC designation?

Continuing north-northwest, some 2° south of Gamma Velorum is the open cluster **NGC 2547**. At 5th magnitude, it's faintly visible to the unaided eye and spans nearly half a degree. Another of Lacaille's discoveries from the mid-18th century, through the telescope there is a distinctive arc of stars which includes a 6.5-magnitude star.



Located near the western border of Vela, the open cluster NGC 2547 is believed to be only 30 million years old. Credit: ESO / J. Perez



East of Gamma Velorum and spanning over 5° is the marvellous **Vela Supernova Remnant**. The remains of a star that exploded some 11,000 years ago, the Vela Supernova Remnant is one of the closest remnants to us, at around 800 light-years. For this you'll need a large telescope and an OIII filter to tease out the filamentary strings – and they just hint at what imaging brings out.

One of the closest of its kind, the Vela Supernova Remnant dazzles us with its intricate filaments as shockwaves from the supernova compress surrounding gas.

Credit: ESO / VPHAS

At least one part of the Vela Supernova Remnant can be seen without an OIII filter, and that's **NGC 2736** (the Pencil Nebula). Half a degree in length, and lying in the eastern part of the supernova remnant, it was first seen by John Herschel in 1835 who described it as "very very much elongated; an extraordinary long narrow ray of excessively feeble light." Sometimes it's also referred to as "Herschel's Ray". My first and most memorable view of this filament was many, many years ago at the South Pacific Star Party.



Offering various shades of colour, the Pencil Nebula was the first part of the Vela Supernova Remnant to be discovered. Credit: ESO



Around 2,000 light-years from us, and making it one of the closest planetary nebulae, NGC 3132 is shedding layers as the central star nears the end of its life. Credit: ESO

From the remains of stars that have exploded to stars that are shedding material, let's move northeast of the Vela Supernova Remnant towards Vela's border with Antlia. Around 2° northwest of the 4th magnitude star η Velorum is the planetary nebula **NGC 3132**. Popularly known as the Eight-Burst Nebula or the Southern Ring Nebula, it's listed as being discovered by John Herschel in 1835 ... and yet James Dunlop apparently recorded it a decade early, but his observations weren't published until the year that Herschel sighted it. Shining at 10th magnitude, NGC 3132 has a high surface brightness and small telescopes and high magnification will reveal its ring shape.

Back to η Velorum, and just over 4° south is the globular cluster **NGC 3201**. Around 7th magnitude in brightness, and another of Dunlop's discoveries from 1826, NGC 3201 is believed to be about 15,000 light-years from us. The globular is somewhat loosely concentrated across its nearly 20-arcminute-width, which in itself makes NGC 3201 one of the largest globulars you'll see through the eyepiece, though that's more to do with its proximity than its actual true size – Omega Centauri, lying around the same distance from us, has an apparent width three times greater.



A city of stars, the globular cluster NGC 3201 can be seen in binoculars, but a telescope will begin to resolve hundreds of its stars. Credit: ESO

Table of Objects in Vela

Object	Type	RA	Dec	Mag	Size
Gamma Vel	Dbl	8h 09.5m	-47° 20'	1.7	
NGC 2547	OC	8h 10.7m	-49° 16'	4.7	25'
Vela SNR	SNR	8h 34.2m	-45° 45'		5°
IC 2391	OC	8h 40.2m	-53° 04'	2.5	50'
Delta Vel	Dbl	8h 44.7m	-54° 43'	2.0	
NGC 2736	SNR	9h 00.3m	-45° 55'		30' x 7'
NGC 3132	PN	10h 07.7m	-40° 26'	9.7	60" x 45"
NGC 3201	GC	10h 17.6m	-46° 25'	6.8	18'



Ultimate Dark Sky Sydney Weekend

<https://www.darkskytraveller.com.au/ultimatesydney>

Fri, Apr 17 - 19 April 2026

Join astronomer Fred Watson and friends for a sunset sail aboard the historic tall ship James Craig. Enjoy Sydney Harbour at golden hour with a welcome drink, dinner onboard, and stories of navigation and the stars that guided sailors for centuries.

A unique Dark Sky Week celebration on Sydney’s beautiful waterway.

From exclusive access to leading science institutions and behind-the-scenes day tours, to sunset sailing aboard a historic tall ship and dining beneath protected urban night skies, this is a rare opportunity to experience Sydney through a new lens—after dark and in extraordinary company.

All Day Tours

Explore science, space and Sydney’s story through immersive daytime experiences designed to deepen your connection to the night sky. Do one, two, or all three days.



Palm Beach Stargazing Dinner

Dine at Palm Beach Golf Club before stepping outside for guided stargazing in Australia’s first Urban Night Sky Place.

Stay in Style—InterContinental Sydney

Extend the experience with two nights’ accommodation at the InterContinental Sydney, placing you in the heart of the weekend’s events.

Whether you join us for one experience or the entire weekend, Dark Sky Sydney promises inspiring conversation, remarkable locations and unforgettable skies.

[Book Palm Beach Stargazing Dinner](#)

[Book James Craig Tickets](#)

[Book Day Tours](#)

Bookings close 16 March and are subject to availability. Spaces are strictly limited across all events.

March Comets

By Greg Bryant

Comet C/2026 A1 (MAPS): Interest continues to build in this Kreutz sungrazer as it heads towards perihelion next month. There's still some head-scratching as to where this comet sits in the family tree of Kreutz members as its calculated orbital period is still way over 1,000 years, much longer than other known members. However, all that aside for now, by mid-February MAPS was already around two magnitudes brighter than initial conservative forecasts had predicted.

Early March, after a Moon-free window opens, should see the first visual observations of comet MAPS as it brightens to 13th magnitude. Moving from Eridanus into Cetus, the comet is setting earlier and earlier each evening as it heads towards perihelion. By the last weekend of March, MAPS may have reached 9th magnitude. As long as the comet survives its passage to perihelion in the early hours of 5 April (Easter Sunday) our time, a tail could be on display in the evening twilight in the days following, but the next few weeks will be crucial. More on this next month.

Comet C/2026 A1 (MAPS)

Date	R.A.	Dec.	Delta (au)	R (au)	Elong. (°)	Mag.
7 Mar	2 ^h 39.4 ^m	-14° 07'	1.257	1.023	53	13.1
14 Mar	2 ^h 25.4 ^m	-10° 22'	1.233	0.847	43	12.3
21 Mar	2 ^h 09.8 ^m	-6° 22'	1.196	0.651	33	11.2
28 Mar	1 ^h 48.8 ^m	-1° 48'	1.141	0.420	21	9.4
4 Apr	1 ^h 04.1 ^m	+4° 36'	1.042	0.073	3	2.3

Comet C/2024 E1 (Wierzchos): March sees comet Wierzchos expected to fade from 8th to 10th magnitude as it makes it way out of the inner solar system. Moving through Cetus, Eridanus and Taurus in the evening sky, Wierzchos is setting late in the evening.

Comet C/2024 E1 (Wierzchos)

Date	R.A.	Dec.	Delta (au)	R (au)	Elong. (°)	Mag.
7 Mar	3 ^h 12.4 ^m	-7° 56'	1.183	1.109	61	8.7
14 Mar	3 ^h 42.0 ^m	-0° 39'	1.319	1.222	62	9.3
21 Mar	4 ^h 06.5 ^m	+5° 12'	1.477	1.334	62	9.8
28 Mar	4 ^h 28.3 ^m	+9° 51'	1.649	1.445	60	10.4
4 Apr	4 ^h 45.7 ^m	+13° 33'	1.827	1.555	58	10.8

Comet 88P/Howell: American astronomer Ellen Howell discovered this comet in 1981 on images taken with the 0.46-metre Schmidt telescope at Palomar. It was quickly confirmed that this was a short-period comet orbiting the Sun every 5.5 years. Close approaches to Jupiter during last century had progressively moved the comet's perihelion distance closer and closer, from 2 au to 1.4 au. This is the 9th observed apparition of comet Howell as it heads towards perihelion on 18 March.

Rising more than two hours before sunrise in March, comet Howell is slowly moving through Capricornus and Aquarius. This is a poor apparition for Howell, being nearly 2 au from Earth around the time of perihelion, and the comet should remain around 9th magnitude throughout the month.

Comet 88P/Howell

Date	R.A.	Dec.	Delta (au)	R (au)	Elong. (°)	Mag.
7 Mar	20 ^h 49.0 ^m	-20° 02'	2.021	1.364	37	9.2
14 Mar	21 ^h 14.2 ^m	-18° 28'	2.001	1.359	38	9.2
21 Mar	21 ^h 38.7 ^m	-16° 44'	1.985	1.358	39	9.1
28 Mar	22 ^h 02.5 ^m	-14° 53'	1.974	1.362	40	9.2
4 Apr	22 ^h 25.5 ^m	-12° 54'	1.965	1.370	41	9.2



C/2024 E1 (Wierzbos) from Hazelbrook – Feb 10

By Ken Wallace.

The comet passed perihelion on January 20. At the date of the image, it was about 155 million km from Earth, making its closest approach on February 17 at around 151 million km.

Imaged with a Celestron Origin RASA (152 mm, f/2.2, 335 mm focal length), 21 x 10 sec (3.5 minutes).

Wiruna Wanderings

December 2025 - By Alessandro Spina

It's been a quiet few months on the observing front. I missed the October and November Wiruna weekends on account of moving house. The December Wiruna weekend was cloudy both nights. So, in place of observing notes, I've put together a short summary of some resources I rely on—especially aimed at members who are newer to visual observing.

The first step to figuring out what to look at is figuring out what's visible. To do that, you need a planisphere. I have a physical **Philip's Planisphere (For Latitude 35° South)** that I have carted around with me for years. Digital planispheres available via phone apps (e.g., **Stellarium**, **SkySafari**) are excellent, but in the field I still like something that doesn't care about dew, batteries, or cold fingers. If you are new to visual astronomy, the next step is being able to identify constellations. There are many books one could recommend. A favourite that I find myself referring to frequently is, **A Walk Through The Southern Sky: A**

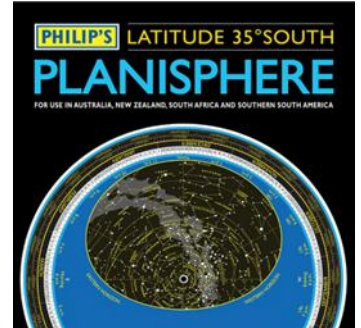


Figure 1: Philip's Planisphere (For Latitude 35° South)

guide to stars and constellations and their legends, by Heifetz and Tirion (I have the 1st edition). The directions are straightforward and encourage the kind of slow, deliberate sky familiarity that pays off later. If you are new to visual astronomy, the best way to start is to pick an easily identifiable starting point (Crux or Orion) and follow Heifetz and Tirion's directions around the sky. Even sitting in our old apartment in Sydney's light polluted skies with a pair of binoculars, I could trace out a number of constellations with a bit of patience. Digital planisphere apps with an augmented reality mode are also very handy for this.

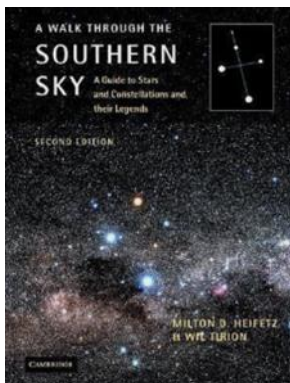


Figure 2: A Walk Through The Southern Sky (Heifetz & Tirion)

Before heading out for a night of observing at Wiruna, I try to have a rough list of deep-sky targets to observe. As a starting point I often look through my copy of **The Cambridge Star Atlas by Wil Tirion (2nd Edition)**. These charts cover stars down to 6.5th magnitude, plus 900 deep-sky objects. This gives me an idea of the brighter deep sky objects in any given constellation, and a starting point for my observing list. I also find **Hartung's Astronomical Objects for Southern Telescopes by Malin and Frew (2nd Edition)** a very useful inspiration with its detailed deep-sky object descriptions and images. For more systematic searching, I recently purchased **SkyTools 4 (Visual Edition)**. This desktop software allows you to search, filter, and generate custom object lists at the click of a button, pulling from many catalogues beyond the usual Messier/NGC/IC lists. It's particularly useful for filtering by object type, brightness, size, and optimal visibility window, and it even allows you to input your equipment and suggests appropriate eyepieces.

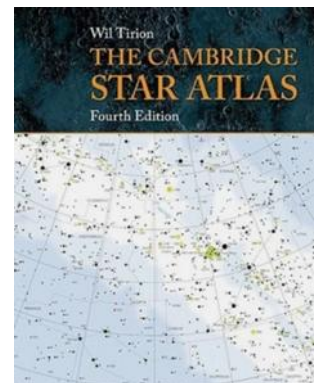


Figure 3: The Cambridge Star Atlas (Wil Tirion)

It can also generate charts that mimic what you'll see using a Telrad, finderscope, and eyepiece (although I still haven't worked out how to adjust the stellar magnitude limits on those charts—tips welcomed).

Other useful websites include **Adventures In Deep Space**, which compiles and publish observing reports from contributing amateur astronomers, providing a rich list of inspiration. And last but not least, the **Universe** newsletter's own back catalogue is a treasure trove of observing

inspiration. I have a pile of Universe newsletters from the early 2000s that I keep and flick through when I am searching for ideas.

With a list in hand, it's time to find the objects in the sky. If I am not using the Go-To function (or more likely if it's not working), a good star atlas comes in handy. At the risk of sounding (even more) like a Luddite, I don't have a laptop/phone app with digital maps that I use in the field. For objects in brighter constellations, with many nearby reference points to star-hop from, I start with **The Cambridge Star Atlas by Wil Tirion (2nd Edition)**. For a more detailed set of charts, I turn to the **Sky Atlas 2000 by Wil Tirion**. I have the field edition (black background with white stars) that I purchased at a SPSP many years ago. I had these individually laminated at Officeworks, and I can happily use these all night even on the most dew heavy nights. These charts cover stars down to 8.5th magnitude. That said, this is also where charts generated by **SkyTools** (or even **Stellarium**) can be very useful—especially for fainter targets or more complex hops that benefit from a custom field-of-view match. Note, I once asked ChatGPT to draw a set of star-hop charts for an object—let's just say I won't be replacing my physical charts anytime soon.



Figure 5: Sky Atlas 2000 (Will Tirion)

Equipment-wise I have a Meade 10inch LX200 Schmidt-Cassegrain which defies any attempt to work consistently. So much to the surprise of my wife, one brand-new telescope arrived on our doorstep over Christmas: a SkyWatcher 12-inch Go-To Dobsonian. The 12inch I can lift and move on my own comfortably, the 14-inch almost doubles in weight. The dual-encoder was also very appealing, combining the best of two worlds: the ability to manually push the scope around and use a Go-To function when you become hopelessly lost. The telescope came in two parts, the optical tube assembly (which uses a collapsible truss tube design) and the base plate, and is simple to bolt together. The first thing to go was the straight through finderscope that comes standard with these scopes. I had a Celestron RACI 9x50 finderscope that I purchased and was sitting on my LX200. Luckily the screw holes for the dovetail mount of the RACI lined up nicely with the holes of the Skywatcher finder so it was an easy swap. Next step was to add a Telrad using double-sided stick pads, giving me the option to detach and adjust its position. The standard focuser on this model, is a single speed Crayford focuser. Annoyingly, the 2-inch adapter, uses two thumbscrews for holding the eyepiece in place, while the 1.25-inch adapter uses a more reliable compression ring. Putting a heavy eyepiece with only two thumb screws to hold it against soft aluminium makes me nervous, as I have heard stories of heavy eyepiece slipping out of place.

Naturally, I brought the new scope to Wiruna in December—so the cloud was probably my fault for failing to make the proper sacrifice to the weather gods (at least we had an excellent communal dinner on Saturday night to enjoy). Instead, first light for the scope was on my back deck at our new home on the Central Coast a week later. With my 2 star-alignment completed, I keyed in my first object, the Orion Nebula (M42) and excitedly waited for the grand nebula to appear in the centre of my 35mm eyepiece. The telescope had other ideas: it slewed to a blank patch of sky 5-10 degrees off M42. Curiously, as I slewed the telescope in the azimuth direction M42 came into view, so the pointing was off in only one dimension (any readers with a SkyWatcher Dob who have had similar problems, I would be very grateful for any pointers). At least my first attempt at collimating a Dobsonian seemed to go ok, but the pointing would require some more work.



Figure 6: Waiting for the clouds to part at Wiruna.

Alas, the weather gods have not permitted me another clear night to tinker much further with the telescope. But I hope 2026 will bring some clear nights soon enough.

Until next month. Clear skies.

¹ <https://www.amazon.com.au/Philips-Planisphere-Latitude-South-Australia/dp/1849071926>

² <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/walk-through-the-southern-sky/10CF0B68ECBEFF7C2C4EBCFA692FCDF5>

³ <https://www.cambridge.org/au/universitypress/subjects/physics/amateur-and-popular-astronomy/cambridge-star-atlas-4th-edition?format=SP&isbn=9780521173636>

⁴ <https://www.mup.com.au/books/hartung-s-astronomical-objects-for-southern-telescopes/9780522845532>

⁵ <https://adventuresindeepspace.com/index.html>

⁶ <https://www.asnsw.com/index.cfm?module=DOCUMENTS>

⁷ <https://www.wil-tirion.com/wil-tirion.com/Atlases.html>

ProAm Research Opportunity

Dear all,

I think many of you know me, just in case, I'm Ángel López-Sánchez, Spanish-Australian astronomer working at Macquarie University, currently also being the "MQ Observatory Academic Lead". Among the (perhaps too many) things I try to do for astronomy research, one of my favourite topics is motivating amateur astronomers to participate in **ProAm** (Professional - Amateur) research projects (e.g., I was the Chair of the ProAm Commission of the Astronomical Society of Spain between 2016 and 2020).

Today I'm contacting you because there is a unique opportunity for NSW astronomers to participate in a quite interesting ProAm research project.

I've been approached by a research team in Spain (a really good one, José Luis Ortiz is well-known for the controversy over the discovery of Haumea, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Controversy_over_the_discovery_of_Haumea) regarding a very rare occultation of a star by Kallichore, a dwarf satellite around Jupiter, on the night of 18 March 2026, 22:35pm, and the very narrow shadow crosses NSW (see maps, includes Dubbo, Mudgee, Gosford and Woy Woy) and they are asking help of amateur astronomers to try to get some data.

The research team has asked me to please contact as many amateur astronomers / amateur associations / observatories in NSW as possible to try to get observers of this rare occultation, as it could be recorded with telescopes as small as 20cm.

Please, follow the document attached with all the detailed information.

Because of procedures, all participants should register their interest in the portal

https://opop.obspm.fr/login_user/?next=/create_report/2901/

where you can find all the details and updates regarding the exact occultation path (just for your reference, a week ago the prediction of the occultation was crossing Siding Spring Observatory and exited land between Newcastle and Taree).

The online map https://opop.obspm.fr/media/data/maps/2026/Kallichore/20260318/Kallichore_occultation_map_IAA-CSIC.html is generated from the Occultation Portal prediction and should be used as the reference for coordination.

Please, if you need more information, do not hesitate to contact the research team:

José-Luis Ortiz (PI): ortiz@iaa.es

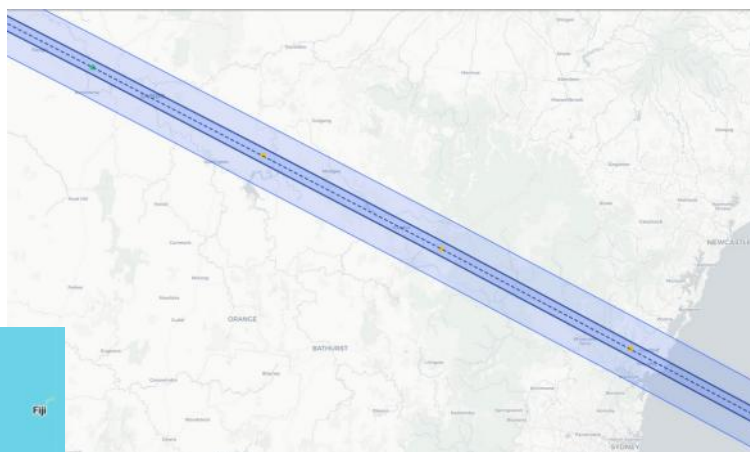
Juan Luis Rizos: jlrizos@iaa.es

Yücel Kılıç: ykilic@iaa.es

Please, also share this email with anybody interested.

Thanks, cheers,

Ángel R. angel.lopez-sanchez@mq.edu.au



Two satellite proposals threaten the night sky — the window to act is now



Reflect Orbital's plan to illuminate Earth at night

The first proposal comes from Reflect Orbital, which plans to deploy satellites fitted with in-space mirrors to beam reflected sunlight back to Earth at night. Marketed as "sunlight on demand," the company says the system could extend daylight for solar farms or be sold to cities to illuminate streets at brightness levels exceeding three times that of the full moon.

Such illumination would introduce an entirely new source of artificial light at night, with far-reaching consequences, including disruption to wildlife and ecosystems that depend on natural cycles of light and dark, as well as serious public safety concerns.

Public comment period now open

The comment period for Reflect Orbital closes on March 6, while the SpaceX proceeding does not yet have a published deadline. Because that window could close at any time, we strongly encourage submitting comments as early as possible.

While the FCC process can seem technical at first glance, we've done the hard work to make this as straightforward as possible. With the steps and templates below, you can submit a comment in as little as 15 minutes.

These proposals are being reviewed under separate FCC applications, and comments must be submitted to the correct file number to be considered.

- Reflect Orbital application file number: **SAT-LOA-20250701-00129**
- SpaceX application file number: **SAT-LOA-20260108-00016**

We encourage advocates, community partners, and members of the public to submit comments to one or both proceedings.

SpaceX's proposal to launch one million satellites into low Earth orbit

The second proposal is even more striking in its scale. SpaceX has asked the FCC for permission to launch up to one million satellites, described in its filing as orbital data centers, as part of an expansion of its artificial intelligence infrastructure.

To put that number in perspective, there are currently about 14,500 active satellites in low Earth orbit. Approving the request would increase that figure by nearly 70 times. Once deployment begins at that scale, potentially involving thousands of launches each year, the effects on the night sky, orbital congestion, and the broader environment would be extraordinarily difficult to reverse. Proposals of this magnitude warrant rigorous scrutiny, transparency, and meaningful public input before any approval is considered.

CURRENT ACTIVATION

Submit a public comment to the FCC

DarkSky International is urging the public to weigh in now, before these projects move forward without the testing, research, and environmental review such sweeping changes to the night sky and nighttime environment demand.

[Jump to instructions](#)

PSA: Please scroll down

Journey to the Centre of Archive

1. What is it? And Who Cares?

By Lesa Moore

Over time, various archivists have collected and nurtured journals, fliers, letters, newspapers and other items of paraphernalia that relate to the history of the ASNSW. In addition, magazines, books and countless library-type items have also been collected.

The first archivist that I've been able to reliably trace was Ray Monaghan, in the role from 1973 to 1976. Terry Clarke did a stint from '78 to '83, after which Joe Cauchi took over. Andrew James served most of the time between 1998 and 2005, with Les Sara doing a couple of years during that period. In September 2006, the role was taken on by John Flavin. Michelle Elliott doubled up, taking on the archive and the librarian role in 2019, and giving them both a complete overhaul. Many books were culled and the new "library" was installed at Wiruna, with lovely display cabinets for the books, handy coffee tables and comfy reading chairs. By 2023, life had other plans for Michelle and the remaining boxes in Michelle's charge were brought to my place.

Further culling and sorting of the archive took place and some library content was returned to Wiruna in 2023. The archive is now indexed and sorted and in pretty good shape, and has been moved to its new home, in a dedicated room at Wiruna – Puppis (formerly bunkroom number 3). All the documents, journal issues and other memorabilia are safely stored in plastic boxes which are, hopefully, resistant to vermin. Fingers crossed the ants won't be interested.

Files include library lists, membership lists, archive lists, six iterations of the constitution, committee lists, lists of life members, miscellaneous correspondence, and copies of the journal (*Bulletin* and *Universe*).

So, back to the question, "what is it and who cares?" It may be fair to say that this treasure-trove of ASNSW history is only familiar to those who have served as archivists! Certainly, when John Flavin held the archive, he submitted monthly articles about "The Way We Were" and "Look-Back Time" that reproduced some of the topical articles from archived issues of the journal. Some of our current members were certainly members back in the '50s and '60s when this history was being written, and would be happy to know that much of the collection is intact.

However, whilst the contents have been sorted and organised, most members would not be aware of their existence. I will strive to reveal bits and pieces of the archived material in the coming months with a short series of articles describing some of the more interesting contents. The archive IS the ASNSW's history. Stay tuned!



Part of archive with labels



Archive at Lesa's



Full archive at Wiruna

Looking After Your Health At Wiruna

By Greg Priestley

Wiruna is a wonderful dark-sky escape – but it is also a remote bush property. The nearest towns with medical services are Rylston, Mudgee, Bathurst and Lithgow, each up to an hour away. Over the years there have been medical incidents on site requiring an ambulance to be called, members to be driven to hospital, or first aid applied. That distance and experience mean that every member has a personal responsibility to think ahead about their health and how they would be assisted in an emergency.

This article outlines simple steps you can take before and during your visit, so that if something does go wrong, help can be summoned quickly and responders have the information they need.

You are responsible for your own health.

When you come to Wiruna, please keep the following in mind:

- You are responsible for managing your own health conditions, medications and risks.
- You should bring an adequate supply of your regular medications, plus any equipment you rely on (e.g. inhalers, glucose monitoring, EpiPen).
- If you have a condition that may deteriorate suddenly (e.g. severe asthma, cardiac history, epilepsy, significant allergies, diabetes), think carefully about whether you are well enough to attend on that particular trip.
- If you start to feel unwell on site, do not “wait it out” indefinitely – seek help early from other members and be prepared to leave for medical care if needed.

Remember, at Wiruna there is no on-site medical service. In an emergency, the best we can do is call an ambulance, provide first aid within members’ skills, and guide responders to the site.

Setting up emergency information on your phone.

In a medical emergency, the most useful things for paramedics are:

- Your name and date of birth
- Any major medical conditions
- Your regular medications and allergies
- Your emergency contacts

Modern smartphones allow some of this information to be accessed from the lock screen. This can be invaluable if you are found unresponsive or unable to speak.

iPhone (recent iOS versions)

On recent iPhones, this is done through the Health app and “Medical ID”:

- Open the Health app, tap your profile picture, then tap “Medical ID”.
- Add key medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, asthma, diabetes), allergies, and regular medications.
- Add one or more emergency contacts, with their phone numbers.
- Turn on “Show When Locked” so that emergency services can view this without your passcode.
- Ensure your name and date of birth are correct.

You may also wish to enable “Emergency SOS” so that holding the side button (and a volume button on some models) can quickly call emergency services and notify your emergency contacts.

Android (recent versions)

On many recent Android phones, you can add emergency information via “Safety” or “Emergency information” in your settings:

- Open Settings and look for “Safety & emergency”, “Security & emergency” or “Emergency information” (wording varies by manufacturer).
- Enter your medical information: key conditions, allergies, medications and any other critical notes.
- Add emergency contacts who can be called from the lock screen.
- Enable any options that allow this information to be shown in an emergency without unlocking the phone.

Because Android phones differ across brands, it is worth checking your manufacturer’s support page for exact steps and confirming, with the screen locked, how an emergency responder would access your details.

Updating your emergency contact in Member Jungle

Our membership system and integrated website, Member Jungle, allows us to store emergency contact details so that committee members can quickly reach someone on your behalf.

Using a web browser

- Go to www.asnsw.com
- Sign in to Member Jungle via the Login option top right.
- From the dropdown beside your name in the top right corner, select “My Account”.
- Select “Review and edit my details” (at the top).
- Enter your emergency contact name and phone number in the appropriate fields.
- Scroll to the bottom of that screen and select “Save and close”.

Using the Member Jungle app

- Sign in to the Member Jungle app.
- Tap your name in the top right corner; this immediately displays “My Account”.
- Enter your emergency contact name and phone number in the appropriate fields.

Please check these details at least once a year, and whenever your emergency contact or their number changes.

If you have chronic health issues: consider a “buddy”

If you live with chronic or potentially serious medical conditions, we strongly recommend having a “buddy” at Wiruna:

- Your buddy should know, in general terms, what conditions you have and what to look out for.
- They should know where you keep your medications and what to do in an emergency (for example, help you use an inhaler, give you glucose, assist with an EpiPen, or call 000 immediately).
- Agree in advance what you want them to tell paramedics if you are unable to speak.

This does not have to be a medical professional – just someone you trust who is also on site and understands what to do if you become unwell.

Providing sealed medical information if you do not have a “buddy”

Some members may have underlying medical issues but attend Wiruna alone or without a suitable buddy. If that applies to you, and you are comfortable doing so, you may:

- Prepare a brief written summary of your medical history: name, date of birth, major diagnoses, medications, allergies, treating specialists, Medicare number, and emergency contacts.
- Place this summary in a sealed envelope with your name clearly written on the front.
- Give the sealed envelope to the Vice President – Wiruna for safekeeping during your stay.

We will not open this envelope except in a genuine medical emergency, for the sole purpose of providing essential information to ambulance staff or hospital clinicians. At the end of your stay, you can collect the envelope.

Final thoughts

Wiruna is one of the Society’s greatest assets, and we want all members to enjoy it safely. By preparing your health information, setting up your phone’s emergency features, keeping your Member Jungle details current, and considering a buddy or sealed medical summary if you have significant conditions, you greatly improve your chances of getting timely, appropriate care if something goes wrong.

If you have questions please feel free to contact me.



Comino's Comment



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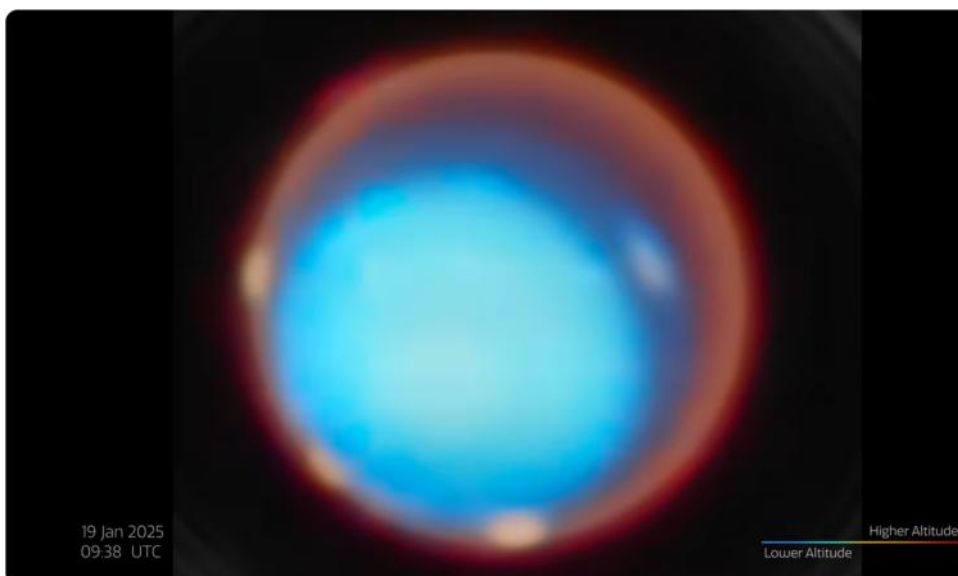
Crux Quiz

The Questions:

1. Place the following in order from youngest to oldest: Eta Carina (star), the last common ancestor between humans and chimps, the Pleiades and sharks.
2. What was the star Sanduleak –69 202 (Sk –69 202) famous for?
3. How big is the observable Universe?
4. True or false: one of the probes cosmologists use to measure the structure of the early universe relies on sound waves.
5. Which of the following constellations does not cross the equator? Pisces, Equuleus, Orion or Virgo
6. Which Solar System bodies are known to have earthquakes?
7. Which two planets have no magnetic field?
8. True or false: Antarctica is a good place to look for meteorites.
9. What shape is the orbit of an unbound interstellar visitor (such as 'oumuamua)?
10. Which astronomer lost part of his nose in a drunken duel and wore a brass prosthetic for the rest of his life?

With thanks to Markus Stone, Astronomical Society of Victoria

Questions, comments and corrections can be directed to astroquiz@markusstone.com.



Uranus time-lapse rotation with aurorae
(January 2025, annotated)
YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kewx7pAR2Y>

supplied by Lesa Moore.

Credit: ESA/Webb, NASA, CSA, STScI, P. Tiranti, H. Melin, M. Zamani (ESA/Webb)

March Sky Events

By Kendra Melson

Date GMT	Time GMT	Date Sydney	Time Sydney	Event
2	12:00	2	11:00pm 23:00	Regulus 0.4°S of Moon
3	4:35	3	3:35pm 15:35	Moon at Descending Node
3	11:34	3	10:34pm 22:34	Total Lunar Eclipse ; mag=1.151
3	11:38	3	10:38pm 22:38	FULL MOON
6	17:24	7	4:24am 4:24	Spica 1.8°N of Moon
7	11:00	7	10:00am 22:00	Mercury at Inferior Conjunction
10	11:32	10	10:32pm 22:32	Antares 0.7°N of Moon
10	13:43	11	12:43am 0:43	Moon at Apogee: 404385 km
11	9:39	11	8:39pm 20:39	LAST QUARTER MOON
15	19:00	16	6:00am 6:00	Mercury 3.4°N of Mars
17	14:07	18	1:07am 1:07	Mercury 2.0°N of Moon
17	15:22	18	2:22am 2:22	Moon at Ascending Node
17	21:51	18	8:51am 8:51	Mars 1.5°S of Moon
19	1:23	19	12:23pm 12:23	NEW MOON
20	12:39	20	11:39pm 23:39	Venus 4.6°S of Moon
20	14:46	21	1:46am 1:46	Vernal Equinox
22	10:00	22	9:00pm 0:00	Neptune in Conjunction with Sun
23	8:32	23	7:32pm 19:32	Pleiades 1.1°S of Moon
25	8:00	25	7:00pm 19:00	Saturn in Conjunction with Sun
25	19:18	26	6:18am 6:18	FIRST QUARTER MOON
26	7:00	26	6:00pm 18:00	Mars at Perihelion: 1.38126 AU
26	12:13	26	11:13pm 23:13	Jupiter 3.9°S of Moon
27	3:18	27	2:18pm 14:18	Pollux 3.0°N of Moon
29	19:00	30	6:00am 6:00	Regulus 0.4°S of Moon
30	11:34	30	10:34pm 22:34	Moon at Descending Node

Adapted from Astropixels.com - 2026 Sky Event Almanac page
<http://astropixels.com/almanac/almanac21/almanac2026gmt.html>

Meetings & Dates

ASNSW Events

Recordings from Ordinary Meetings link: <https://www.asnsw.com/ordinary>

Astroimaging ZOOM Meetings: 4 Mar, 8 Apr, 6 May, 3 Jun, 1 Jul, 29 Jul, 26 Aug, 30 Sep, 23 Oct, 25 Nov, 23 Dec

Ordinary Meetings—Epping:

13 Mar Guest Speaker: **Geraint Lewis** (University of Sydney) presents **The Tension in Cosmology**, **Abstract:** tba. **Biography:** Professor Geraint F. Lewis FRSN FLSW FAIP, Professor of Astrophysics in the Sydney Institute for Astrophysics in the School of Physics of the University of Sydney. Born in Old South Wales, Geraint is an outstanding researcher who focuses on cosmological mysteries. Through exquisite and extensive observations with the world's largest telescopes, coupled with synthetic universes generated on immense supercomputers, he hunts for the dark side — the dark matter and dark energy that shape the cosmos. He has published extensively in international journals with significant discoveries that confront our ideas on the formation and evolution of galaxies. His passion for cosmology and physics is reflected in his teaching and student supervision and an extensive outreach program that brings the mysteries of the universe to diverse international audiences. In 2021, Geraint was awarded the Astronomical Society of Australia's "David Allen Prize" for exceptional achievement in astronomy communication.

10 Apr, 8 May, 31 Jul, 25 Sep, 23 Oct, 27 Nov

Committee Meetings: 11 Mar, 1 Apr, 29 Apr, 27 May, 27 Jun, 5 Aug, 2 Sep, 23 Sep, 21 Oct, 18 Nov

Wiruna Weekends: 20 Mar, 17 Apr, 15 May, 12 Jun, 10 Jul, 14 Aug, 11 Sep, 6 Nov, 11 Dec

For Wiruna bookings and enquiries contact Greg Priestley on m. 0414 300 885 or e. vp_wiruna@asnsw.com

Mudgee Caravan Hire has opened on the corner of Sofala Road and Castlereagh Highway, just 8 kms from Wiruna. Greg Priestley (Wiruna Vice President) has spoken to the owner and he offers small, medium and large caravans at \$50 / \$75 / \$100 per night respectively. He can tow a caravan to and from Wiruna on request giving you the convenience of staying onsite in a private caravan, without needing to own a caravan or managing the logistics.

If this appeals to you, please contact Warren Cramond m: 0417029047 e: hot_spud2006@yahoo.com.au for more information. Note this is an independent business and the ASNSW will not be involved in your commercial arrangement with this business. The normal Wiruna camping fees would remain payable to the ASNSW. As this is a new business and no one has utilised them so far, we're keen for any feedback from anyone who utilises this service.



Wiruna Fees—Context, Value & Recent Changes

By Greg Priestley

Over the last month the committee has received a few comments about the “doubling” of the Wiruna camping fees and that this change was not given the prominence it deserved. The communications definitely should have been better, including a dedicated email and an article like this in the December/January edition.

It’s worth stepping back and looking at the history, the reasons for the increase, and the value Wiruna represents.

A very long period of very low fees

Wiruna’s nightly camping fee has been remarkably low for a very long time. It sat at \$5 per night from at least 2000 through to 2019, and then at \$7 per night from 2020 to 2025. Over that quarter of a century, everything else has increased significantly, but the Wiruna rate barely moved.

From 2026 the fee has been increased to \$15 per person per night. Looked at only as a percentage, this is “more than double”, which understandably attracts attention. But when the starting point is as low as \$5–\$7, any sensible adjustment will always look like a large percentage increase. Even a move to \$10 per night would have attracted the same “big jump” comments.

Why the increase was necessary

Wiruna needs to be broadly self-sustaining. The camping and site-use fees are intended to cover the ongoing costs of owning and operating the property. In addition to routine maintenance, repairs and improvements to buildings and infrastructure, in recent years those costs have included significant expenses associated with the development application process, including external consultants, required simply to keep the site operational and on a sound legal footing.

Relying heavily on general club membership fees to subsidise Wiruna is not fair on the many members who rarely or never use the site. Nor is it sustainable to draw down bequests that were never intended to underwrite day-to-day running costs. Most of us want Wiruna not only to survive but to continue to improve, and that requires a realistic, sustainable fee structure that actually matches the costs.

Putting the fee in context of a weekend away

It’s important to see the camping fee in the context of what most people spend to get to and use Wiruna.

For a member travelling from Sydney:

- Fuel for the return trip is typically in the order of \$60–\$80, depending on the vehicle.
- Road tolls can add another significant amount, depending on the route and where they live.
- Food, drink and often a bit of alcohol for a weekend away almost always cost more than the camping fee itself.

On top of that, astronomy is not a cheap hobby. Many members have thousands, if not tens of thousands, of dollars’ worth of equipment that they bring to and use at Wiruna. In recent times, some attendees have also hired caravans from a local business for use on site and have happily paid around \$50, \$75 or even \$100 per night for the caravan alone – on top of the Wiruna camping fees.

Against this backdrop, the camping fees, despite having increased from \$7 to \$15 per night, are one of the smaller components of the overall cost of the trip – despite being the reason for the trip!

What Wiruna actually offers

It's easy to lose sight of what Wiruna provides. A night at Wiruna gives you:

- A dedicated dark-sky astronomical site around three hours from Sydney.
- The security of a private property where members and their guests are comfortable leaving equipment set up over multiple nights.
- Flushing toilets and hot showers.
- Power for recharging batteries and running equipment.
- A well-equipped bush kitchen with BBQ, gas burners, pizza oven and communal pots, pans, plates and cutlery.
- The bush lounge with fireplace for socialising and warming up between sessions.
- Provision of water, firewood and gas.
- 4G mobile coverage on site.
- Access to club telescope facilities, either on organised sky tours or via certification for independent use.
- Most importantly, a community of like-minded amateur astronomers who are generous with their time, knowledge and assistance.

Taken together, Wiruna remains exceptional value for what it provides, and I look forward to welcoming you to the site to experience its unique facilities.

The committee will continue to monitor site usage, costs and member feedback as we work to ensure that Wiruna remains both financially sustainable and a vibrant, welcoming home for observational astronomy for many years to come.



ASNSW Member News

By Lesa Moore

Since last issue, seven new members have joined the ASNSW. The society welcomes Alexander Spencer-Smith, Luis Jimenez, Sanjay Sengupta, Malcolm Yeoman, David King, Len Lucas and Michael Wood.

These members celebrate the following significant anniversaries (5, 10, 15, 20+ yrs): Congratulations to these members!

Memberships

Current membership stands at 355 financial members and 65 grace members.

Membership Renewals Now Overdue

It is easy to renew online, and you can choose to pay by credit card or direct transfer in your online banking. If you do choose the latter, please DON'T FORGET TO MAKE THE ACTUAL PAYMENT!

There is a help page here: <https://www.asnsw.com/renew> that shows you how to navigate to the right part of the website and do the renewal. **Note that we no longer accept cheques.**

Meeting Schedule

Guest speakers have been secured for our first two meetings of 2026. Anwesha Sahu will be speaking on white dwarf pulsars via ZOOM in February. In March, we are having our first joint meeting with the NSAS at our usual meeting venue at Epping. Prof. Geraint Lewis will be the guest speaker for this meeting.

Macquarie University Observatory – Free Observing Nights for ASNSW Members

Take advantage of these great opportunities to do some observing without driving all the way to Wiruna. As these nights are only available to our members (and their families), you must log in to the website to book. Log in and check the website “Events Schedule and Bookings” page for the next available evening. Bookings essential as numbers are limited to 40 people per session.

2026 Calendar

Next year’s calendar is available on the website as a one-page PDF here: <https://www.asnsw.com/calendar> (look for the link near the top of the page). Events are now all uploaded to the website and the calendar feed is also fully updated.

Attracting Younger Members

It is always a challenge to involve children and youths in society activities. In the past, the Star Party was an opportunity to interact with kids and younger members. At the current time, this is not possible. The committee is seeking anyone with an interest in running any sort of youth programs for the ASNSW – a youth club could be established for student members.

A “youth coordinator” might be able to organise meetings at the ECC (the Secretary could arrange the bookings), or the project could take the form of ZOOM meetings. This, or any other format, would be open to the preference of the youth coordinator if enough interest is shown.

It would also be good to hear from people with families, where the children (nieces, nephews, grandchildren) might be the target audience for such a proposal.

If you are interested in potentially becoming a youth coordinator, or if you are keen to see such a project go ahead for the benefit of young people you know, please email Matt at putneyobservatory@gmail.com to express your interest.

Glenn	Mayall	42
Greg	Bryant	39
Surjit	Wadhwa	38
David	Lee	26
Richard	Cowan	25
Chris	Douglass	25
Tadeusz	Bak	24
Alen	Varsek	24
Grant	Robinson	22
Michael	Samerski	22
Karen	Whittingham	20
Kym	Haines	10
Jim	Kuburlis	10
Robert	Milne	5

