NAA Northants Amateur Astronomers

www.naastronomy.com

In Focus

No. 267

April - June 2017

What to look out for during the April - June period

7 April - Jupiter The planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and brighter than at any other time of the year. It will be visible throughout the night and this is the best time for photographing the planet and its moons. A medium-sized telescope should allow some of the details in the planet's cloud bands to be seen and a good pair of binoculars should pick up the planet's four largest moons, appearing as bright dots on either side of the planet.

11 April - Full Moon and Jupiter Native American tribes called this Moon the Full Pink Moon because it marked the appearance of the 'moss pink' (wild ground phlox), which is one of the first spring flowers. Jupiter will be paired with the main star of the constellation Virgo, Spica, all year long and it will pair up with the full moon. On this night, both objects will rise together in the east, just after the sun sets in the west.

12 April - Virginid Meteor Shower The Virginid meteor shower will reach its maximum rate of activity, approximately 5 meteors per hour, visible from a dark location above the southern horizon. The Moon will be 23 days old at this time and so will present minimal interference.

22, 23 April - Lyrid Meteor Shower The Lyrids shower usually produces around 20 meteors per hour at its peak. The shower is produced by dust particles left behind by comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher. The shower runs from 16th-25th April but peaks on the night of the 22nd and morning of the 23rd. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Lyra but may appear anywhere in the sky.

26 April - Venus The planet is at its greatest brightness and this is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.

29 April - International Astronomy Day

6 May - η (Eta) Aquarids Meteor Shower This shower is capable of producing about 30 meteors per hour in the Northern Hemisphere. It is produced by dust particles left behind by comet Halley. The shower runs until 28th May but peaks this year on the night of 6th May and morning of 7th May. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius but can appear anywhere in the sky.

7 May - Moon and Jupiter These 2 bodies will be in close approach.

10 May - Full Moon The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth to the Sun and will be fully illuminated. This occurs at 21:42 UTC. Native American tribes called this the Full Flower Moon because it was the time of year when spring flowers appeared in abundance.

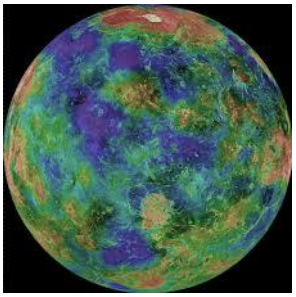
15 May - Alpha-Scorpiid Meteor Shower You may be lucky and see this meteor shower, producing around 5 meteors per hour.

17 May - Mercury This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky. You will find the planet low in the eastern sky, just before sunrise.

20 May - Moon and Neptune These 2 bodies will be in close approach but moonlight may interfere with a clear view.

22 May - Moon and Venus These will be in close approach and visible in the dawn sky.

25 May - New Moon There is no moonlight to interfere with skywatching and so objects such as galaxies and star clusters may be visible.



4 June - Moon and Jupiter The pair will be in close approach and become visible at around 21:35 UTC, above the southern horizon. They are too widely separated to fit within the field of view of a telescope but visible to the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars.

9 June - Full Moon The Full Moon is at apogee, the farthest point from Earth and so is known as a micromoon. This occurs at 13:10 UTC.

10 June - Ophiuchid Meteor Shower This meteor shower, producing around 5 meteors per hour, may be visible.

15 June - Saturn at Opposition Saturn will be at its closest approach to Earth and fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than at any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Saturn and its moons. A medium to large telescope will allow you to see the planet's rings and a few of its brightest moons.

20 June - Moon and Venus These 2 bodies are in close approach and you may see the Ophiuchid meteor shower as moonlight shouldn't interfere with your view.

21 June - June Solstice This occurs at 04:24 UTC. This is the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Southern Hemisphere. Mercury is at its greatest brightness.

24 June - New Moon There is no moonlight to interfere with skywatching and so objects such as galaxies and star clusters may be visible.

Forthcoming Club Events

Meetings are held at Newton Field Centre, near Geddington, Kettering NN14 1BW

Please visit **www.naastronomy.com** to check meeting information and to access contact details

Tuesday 4 April 2017

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Jerry Workman** will be giving a talk

Tuesday 11 April

Committee meeting at The Piper, Windmill Avenue, Kettering at 7.30pm

Tuesday 18 April

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - 'What's up' and constellation of the month

Tuesday 2 May

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - 'What's up' and constellation of the month

Tuesday 9 May

Committee meeting at The Piper, Windmill Avenue, Kettering at 7.30pm

Tuesday 16 May

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Dave Eagle** will be giving us a talk on Tim Peake

Tuesday 6 June

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre, 7.00pm onwards - 'What's up', constellation of the month and Solar Watching

Tuesday 13 June

Committee meeting at The Piper, Windmill Avenue, Kettering at 7.30pm

Tuesday 20 June

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Martin Braddock** will be giving a talk

Meetings with guest speakers: £3 (£4 for non-members)
General meetings: £2 (£3 for non-members)
Full membership: £30 (Concessions £19)

Maps to show what you can see in the sky each month: Skymaps.com

Other useful websites:

https://www.timeanddate.com/astronomy/sights-to-see.html

http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy-calendar-current.html useful for calendars/celestialevents

https://in-the-sky.org/newscal.php?year=2017&month=4&maxdiff=7