

In Focus

No. 268

July - September 2017



What to look out for during the July-September period

July to August - The Milky Way This can be seen above the southern horizon. The core of the galaxy (which is what we actually see) is located in the constellation Sagittarius, with dust lanes, nebulae and star clusters concentrated in this area.

9 July - Full Moon This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Buck Moon because this is the time of year when male buck deer would begin to grow their new antlers.

20 July - The Moon and Venus in close approach Although difficult to observe, as they will appear just above the horizon, the Moon and Venus may be visible to the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars, in the eastern dawn sky.

23 July - Galaxies and star clusters The New Moon will not be visible in the night sky and so this is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters, as moonlight will not interfere.



29, 30 July - Delta (δ) Aquarids Meteor Shower The Delta Aquarids can produce up to 20 meteors per hour. The meteors are derived from comets Marsden and Kracht. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight, with meteors radiating from the constellation Aquarius.

30 July - Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation This is the best time to view Mercury. Look for the planet low in the western sky, just after sunset.

2 August - Alpha (α) Capricornid meteor shower The shower will reach its maximum rate of activity around 2 August but some shooting stars associated with it are expected to be visible each night from 15 July to 20 August.

The maximum rate of meteors expected to be visible is around 5 per hour, in a perfectly dark sky.

7 August - Full Moon The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth to the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This phase occurs at 18:11. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Sturgeon Moon because the large sturgeon fish of the Great Lakes were more easily caught at this time of year. This moon has also been known as the Green Corn Moon and the Grain Moon.

7/8 August- Partial Lunar Eclipse and Pleiades

The partial lunar eclipse on 7-8 August may be visible at around 20:35 in the UK. You could also look out for the Pleiades star cluster rising above the horizon in the north east.

11/12/13 August - Perseid meteor shower The maximum Perseid activity is expected during the night of the 12 August although it should be visible from mid-July. This is the brightest meteor shower of the year, with up to 80 meteors per hour visible. The Perseids are made of tiny space debris from the comet Swift-Tuttle and named after the constellation Perseus because this is the direction from which the shower appears to emanate in the north-eastern part of the sky.

Join us at the NAAS Perseid Meteor evening on Friday, 11 August, when we will be observing the shower, weather permitting.

19 August - Moon and Venus in close approach The pair will be visible in the dawn sky, rising at 02:41 in the east, before fading from view at around 05:30. The pair will be too far apart to fit within the field of view of a telescope but will be visible to the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars.



21 August - Total Solar Eclipse The total solar eclipse on 21 August (the 'Great American Eclipse') will be visible across the United States from the East Coast to the West Coast. <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/>



5 September - Neptune at Opposition The blue giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than at any other time of the year and will be visible throughout the night.

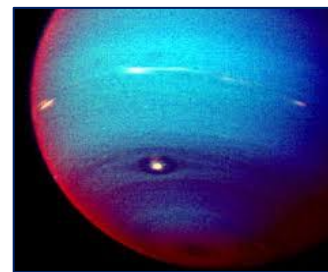
6 September - Full Moon The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth to the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Corn Moon because the corn is harvested at this time.

12 September - Mercury This is the best time to view Mercury as it will be at its highest

point above the horizon in the morning sky. Look for the planet low in the eastern sky, just before sunrise.

22 September - September Equinox The first day of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere and the start of spring in the Southern Hemisphere.

Throughout September - other things to see throughout the month are the Andromeda Galaxy, in Andromeda (2.5 million light years from Earth) and the Piscid meteor shower, at a maximum rate of 10 meteors per hour.



Forthcoming Club Events

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

Please visit www.naastronomy.com to check meeting information. Visit the NAAS Facebook pages for discussion, photos and events.



Tuesday 4 July 2017

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Hayley Cavanaugh** will be giving a talk on how she became interested in astronomy and you can share how you developed your own interest.

Tuesday 11 July

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

Saturday 15 July

Visit to the Mullard Radio Observatory, Cambridge, at 11.00am

Tuesday 18 July

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

Tuesday 1 August

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - Ian Page will be giving a talk entitled 'A never-ending learning experience of Astrophotography'

Tuesday 8 August

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

Friday 11 August

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Perseid evening**

We will be observing the meteor shower and having some refreshments too! Please see the website for details.

Tuesday 15 August

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - Martin Braddock will be giving a talk on 'Enceladus, Europa & the TRAPPIST-1 System as potential sources for life'.

Tuesday 5 September

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

Tuesday 12 September

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

Tuesday 19 September

Meeting up at Newton Field Centre at 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **Eleanor Patrick** will be giving a talk on her life in the Women's Royal Naval Service (The 'Wrens')

Meetings with guest speakers: £3 (£4 for non-members) General meetings: £2 (£3 for non-members)

Full membership: £30 (Concessions £19)

Club contact details:

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Jane Napier Tel: 07960 262401, Anne Douglas email: adouglas2@sky.com

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

Other useful websites:

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

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



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