NAA

Northants Amateur Astronomers

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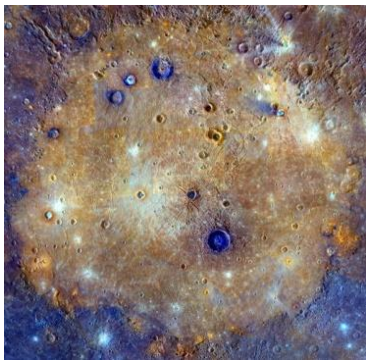
In Focus

No. 269

October-November 2017

What to look out for during the October-November period

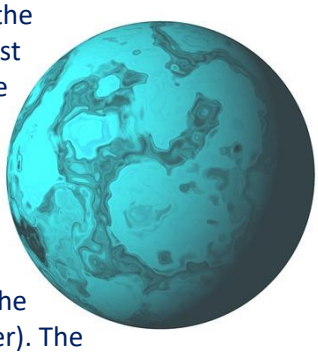


5 October - **Full Moon** This moon is known as the Harvest Moon. The Harvest Moon is the full moon that occurs closest to the September equinox each year.

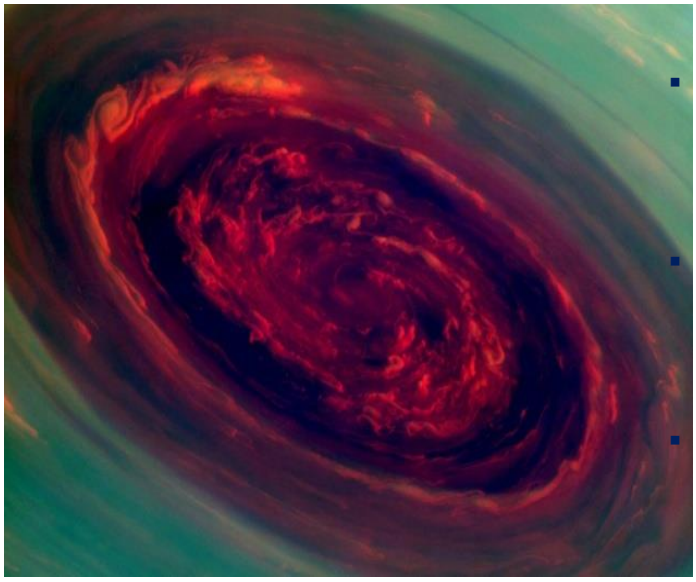
8 October - **Draconids Meteor Shower** The Draconids is a minor meteor shower producing only about 10 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet 21P Giacobini-Zinner, which was first discovered in 1900. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Draco but might appear anywhere in the sky. **Mercury** will be at its greatest brightness. The NASA image to the right shows ***Mercury's Caloris Basin*** (the largest known crater in the solar system).

13 October - M44 and the Moon in Close Approach The pair will be visible in the dawn sky above the south eastern horizon, in the constellation Cancer.

19 October - **Uranus at Opposition** The blue-green planet will be at its closest approach to Earth, almost directly opposite the sun, in the constellation Pisces. Its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun and should be visible all night long. This is the best time to view Uranus as it is at its brightest but will only appear as a tiny blue-green dot in all but the most powerful telescopes. The picture to the right is a stylised image of ***Uranus.*** **New Moon** The Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and, therefore, will not be visible in the night sky. This means that it is a good time to see faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because moonlight will not interfere.



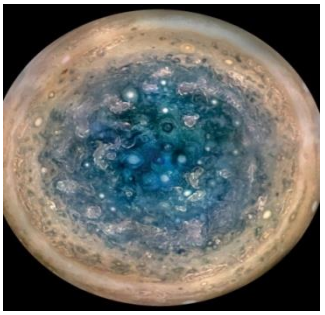
21-22 October - **Orionids Meteor Shower** The Orionids is a shower producing a maximum of 25 meteors per hour at its peak, produced by dust grains left behind by comet Halley. It peaks on the night of 21 October and the morning of 22 October (although may be visible throughout October). The crescent moon will set early in the evening so there should be good skies for viewing. The meteors will be low in the sky, radiating from the constellation Orion but can appear anywhere in the sky.



24 October - **Saturn and Moon in Close Approach** These two bodies will be low over the south western horizon, visible to the naked eye or through binoculars. The picture to the left shows ***Saturn's hexagon storm,*** taken by Cassini.

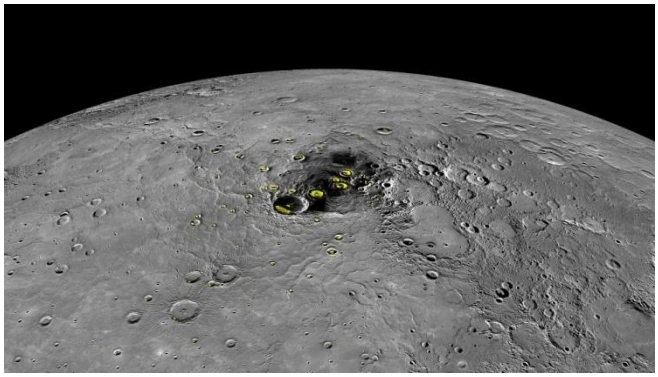
4 November - **Full Moon** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Beaver Moon because this was the time of year to set the beaver traps before the swamps and rivers froze. It has also been known as the Frosty Moon and Hunter's Moon.

Taurids Meteor Shower The Taurids produce only about 5-10 meteors per hour. It is unusual in that the shower consists of two separate streams, the first produced by dust grains left behind by Asteroid 2004 TG10 and the second by debris left behind by Comet 2P Encke. Best viewing will be just after midnight but you will have to be patient, due to the moon's brightness.



13 November - Venus and Jupiter in Conjunction The two planets will be visible in the low eastern sky, just before sunrise. The picture to the right shows ***Jupiter's southern storms***.

15 November - Moon and Mars in Close Approach The two bodies will be visible to the naked eye or through binoculars, in the dawn sky (3:40 - 6:50 BST), both in the constellation Virgo.
17-18 November - Leonids Meteor Shower The Leonids produce up to 20 meteors per hour. The shower is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Tempel-Tuttle, which was discovered in 1865. The shower runs annually from 6-30 November but peaks on 17/18 November. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Leo, at a low radiant in the north eastern sky, best seen after midnight.



New Moon This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters as there is no moonlight to interfere.
24 November - **Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation** This is the best time to view Mercury because it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look low in the western sky, just after sunset. The picture on the left shows ***Water ice on Mercury***.

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 3 October
Meeting up at Newton Field Centre, 7.30pm for 7.45pm - What's Up and Constellation of the month. If the skies are clear, bring along your telescopes and binoculars
Tuesday 10 October
Committee meeting at The Piper, Windmill Avenue, Kettering, 7.30pm
Tuesday 17 October
Meeting up at Newton Field Centre, 7.30pm for 7.45pm **- Jerry Workman** will be giving a talk on Mars and his trip to see the August 2017 eclipse
Friday 27 October
STAR PARTY at Newton Field Centre, 7.45pm
Please see the website for details

Tuesday 7 November
Meeting up at Newton Field Centre, 7.30pm for 7.45pm - What's Up and Constellation of the month.
Tuesday 14 November
Committee meeting at The Piper, Windmill Avenue, Kettering, 7.30pm
Tuesday 21 November - Meeting up at Newton Field Centre, 7.30pm for 7.45pm - **David Shayler** 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)

Supernova remnant of Cassiopeia A

Club contact details:

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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
https://www.stargazing.me.uk/astronomy-calendar-2017/