

Observing Newsletter - May 2010 - Updated



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Observing

The RASC offers observing certificates to encourage exploration of the sky.

Members are encouraged to explore the sky in their own time, keeping a log of objects seen and their impression of them. These logs can then be submitted for one of the observing certificates available. The RASC observing committee advise there is no rule about keeping technically accurate observing logs, rather the intention is for members to record what they see and their impressions.

The link below is to the RASC Observing Certificate Programs
<http://www.rasc.ca/certificates/index.shtml>

Time Lapse Photography

You may have noticed lately an increasing number of amazing time lapse photography movies online.

In the past this required the use of an intervalometer with an SLR (Single Lens Reflex) camera or using a similar technique with a movie camera.

However, some of the latest digital SLR's now include built in Intervalometers to allow time lapse photography. Some even allow the creation of 'Stop Action Movies' on the camera itself without the need for a computer.

If you saw the 'Astro-Cafe' video on the club's You-Tube Channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/Coastastronomy>

then you saw several stop-action movies made in this way (the fast moving sections near the end). These were made in-camera using a Nikon D5000 DSLR.

Dear James

Welcome

Welcome to The Sunshine Coast Astronomy Club's May Observing Newsletter. Through the newsletter we hope to raise interest in star The Sunshine Coast.

I encourage you to forward the newsletter to friends and family who interest in stargazing. They can then subscribe by following the link bottom of the page.

If you do not wish to receive further newsletters, you can opt-out by Unsubscribe button at the bottom of the email, or by sending a request here: James@Starchasers.ca

Clear Skies,

James MacWilliam
 Director - RASC Sunshine Coast Centre
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Astro-Cafe

Every 3rd Friday of the month the club meets at Davis Bay's Pier-17 Astro-Cafe. Meet at 8.30pm for coffee/tea and chat followed by star gazing by the seawall (South end of Davis Bay) if skies are clear is welcome - bring your friends! Bring your astro toys (books, magazines, optical gear, electronic gizmos, etc), your telescope (the one you had cupboard from last Christmas) or just yourself.

Friday May 21st saw our best Astro-Cafe ever with members setting telescopes at The Davis Bay Seawall under stunning clear skies to view of Venus, Mars, Saturn and a first quarter Moon.



Astro-Cafe - Friday, 21st May

Coast Astronomy & YouTube

Hopefully by now you have visited the club's YouTube Channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/Coastastronomy>

The idea is to show fun movie clips of club events and other astronomy related media clips and at the same time to raise awareness of our club.

I was astonished to find recently that a video clip on my own YouTube Channel demonstrating how to setup a polar scope had over 10,000 views and attracted 14 subscribers (why on earth would they subscribe to me?). This just shows the power of YouTube to reach a mass audience.

We hope to emulate this success for the Astronomy Club by adding fun and inspiring video on a regular basis. Why not subscribe to our channel so you don't miss out on the fun.

The Moon and stars, the ocean and the lights of Nanaimo all added to the atmosphere of the Astro-Cafe.

Deep Sky Stacking

M81 - Galaxy in Ursa Major

There are two ways to take long exposure images of deep sky objects. The hard way - with highly accurate and expensive mounts. You simply take long (and often chilly) exposures of the object.

Or

The easy way - with inexpensive mounts and many short exposures. You use software to stack these images together resulting in an image that shows similar detail to a much longer exposure.

The image below showing the spiral arms of M81 were captured with 18 one minute exposures. The resulting image resembles a 4 minute exposure.

The images were stacked using Free Software: DeepSkyStacker.



M81 - Stack of 18

(photo: James MacWilliam - May 2010)

About Starchasers

Starchasers promotes observing on The Sunshine Coast and hosts images from club members. Starchasers is a privately owned website affiliated with The Sunshine Coast Astronomy Club.

