



Galloway Forest Astronomical Society

Newsletter #8, October 2014

Moon switches Saturn off!

A rare occultation of Saturn takes place on Saturday 25th October when a 3% waxing crescent Moon passes in front of Saturn. Saturn will begin to be occulted at 16:59 BST (a bit later here in the west) and pass behind the unlit Moon's disk.

We were hoping to meet to try to observe this rare event on Saturday 25th, but it looks as if the weather will not be suitable here in Newton Stewart. If any of our members or friends has a shot at it, please let us know you you get on.

It will take 80 seconds for the disk and rings to pass behind the Moon. Saturn will reappear at the lower right of the sunlit edge of the moon at ~18:03, some 64 minutes later. Sunlight and the Moon's low elevation will mean that this will be a challenging observation. Please remember, if attempting this one yourself, to keep well away from the Sun's position for fear of damaging your eyesight. Sunset on Saturday is at 17:55.



Lunar occultation of Saturn, 2nd March 2007. From astrosnaps.co.uk

GFAS AGM 2014

We have survived the AGM, held on Saturday 11th October, and a draft minute is available for consideration next year. The Management Committee was re-elected unchanged and a minor alteration to the constitution was approved. It was agreed to accept Dr Robin Bellerby's generous offer for the shell of the observatory, so we no longer have to face the costs involved in moving it and we also have a bit more cash in the kitty to start fundraising for building a new one. We reviewed the membership classes and decided on: Juniors up to 16 years FREE; Students 16 – 22 years £10.00; adults £15.00 and Family membership £25.00. If you haven't paid your subs for 2014/2015 yet, please do. We'll post the updated constitution on the website in due course.

Day of the Region: New Galloway

Our stand at the Day of the Region weekend in New Galloway was set up and manned during the day on Saturday 20th September with information about the society. We also had on display our Coronado solar telescope and visitors were able to use it to view sunspot activity. We had a steady stream of visitors all day.



NGC-281 Brian Leighton August 2014

Images from Brian

The two images shown are taken from a big collection of pictures given to us by Brian Leighton, a member who lives in Newcastle but holidays in Galloway and makes his observations near the Three Lochs, about 5 miles west of the west edge of the Galloway Forest Dark Sky Park. NGC-281 is sometimes called the "Pac-man" nebula, in Cassiopeia.



Brian Leighton 2014

