

Forthcoming CAWAS Meetings		
Friday 14th February	Dr David Brown	A Brief History of Exoplanets
Friday 13th March	Colin Stuart	Rebel Star: The Sun's Great Mystery
Friday 10th April	Dr Nick Hewitt	Neighbours: The Local Group

BAA	
Sat 7th March	Back to Basics Workshop The Civic Hall 1, Market Green, Cottingham. HU16 5QT.
Sat 14th March	Deep Sky Section Annual Meeting The Diamond, University of Sheffield, 32 Leavygreave Rd., Sheffield. S3 7RD.

Observing Sessions with RADAS at Barby Cricket Club at 19:00 clock time.
In general two dates are given, the one to be used will be notified the day before.
February 21/22, **March** 13/14, 27/28

<u>February</u>	<u>Event</u>	
Saturday	15th Moon - last quarter	☾
Tuesday	18th Moon near Mars	
Wednesday	19th Moon near Jupiter	
Thursday	20th Moon near Saturn	
Sunday	23rd Moon - new	●
Wednesday	26th Mercury inferior conjunction	
Thursday	27th Moon near Venus	
Saturday	29th Mars near M22	
<u>March</u>		
Monday	2nd Moon - first quarter	☽
Friday	6th Moon near M44	
Sunday	8th Venus near Uranus, Neptune conjunction	
Monday	9th Moon - full	☉

Coventry and Warwickshire Astronomical Society
The society usually meets on the second Friday in the month, at Earlsdon Methodist Church Hall. The meetings begin at 19:15 and end at 21:30.

Web Site: <http://www.covastro.org.uk>
Mailing list
Join the CAWAS mailing list and receive irregular information of astronomical events and CAWAS news.
To subscribe just send an empty email to: covworksastro-subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk
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Chairman
John 07762 061518 johndavis744@tiscali.co.uk
Mira editor
Ivor 024 76319519 ivorclarke@btinternet.com

Secretary
Geoffrey 01926 335399 gjohnstone@btinternet.com

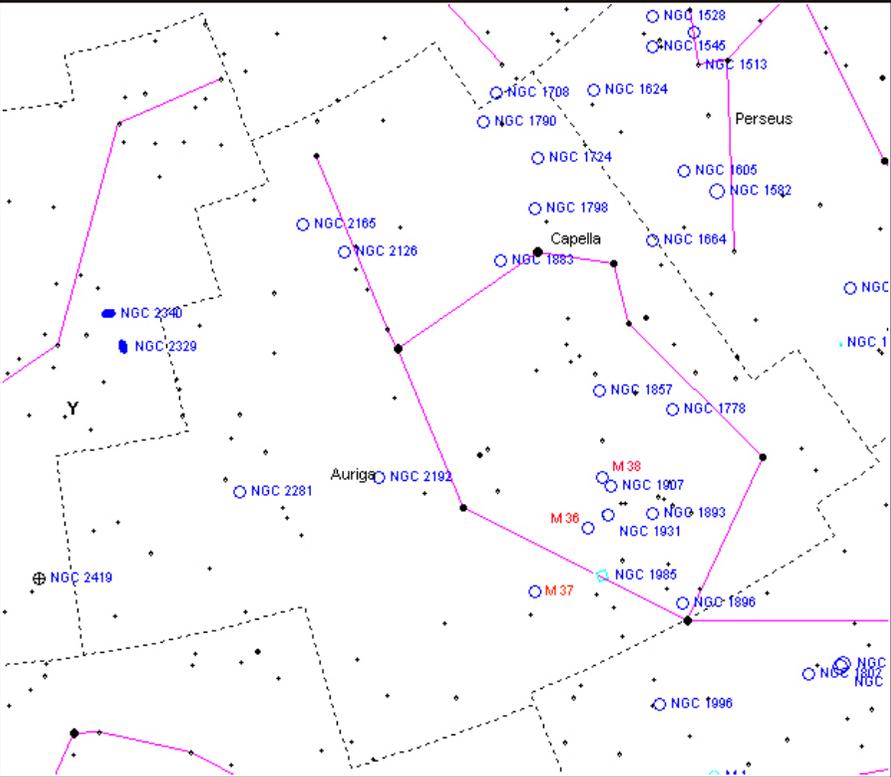
Vice Chairman
Alan 024 76270169 alandocwho@yahoo.co.uk
Skynotes
Mark 024 76543689 mark@covastro.plus.com

Treasurer
Vaughan 01926 402414

Coventry and Warwickshire Astronomical Society

Sky Notes

February 14th to March 13th 2020 No. 269



Auriga—The Charioteer

As the Milky Way passes through Auriga it is home to many magnificent open clusters of stars, the brightest of which are M36 (diameter 10' magnitude +6.3), M37 (24' +6.2) and M38 (21' +7.4). In the adjacent constellation of Lynx, the semiregular variable star Y Lyncis is worthy of study as its brightness varies between mag. +6.8 and +8.9 in a complex way, as periods of 133, 214, 595 and 1190 days have been found.

Time given in these skynotes is Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) known as GMT here in the UK.

Sun moves north from Capricornus, through Aquarius into Pisces.

February 14th	Rise 07:25	Set 17:16	Dec $-13^{\circ} 05'$
March 13th	Rise 06:24	Set 18:08	Dec $-2^{\circ} 36'$

Mercury (+0.1 8.0" to +0.6 8.9") lies in Aquarius, except for March 8 - 10 when it briefly visits Capricornus. It might be glimpsed low down in the WSW just before sunset at the beginning of the month as it heads towards inferior conjunction on Feb 26, after which it is not visible.

Venus ($-4.2 16.7''$ to $-4.4 21.0''$) moves from Pisces into Aries and shines brightly in the WSW for about 4 hours after sunset. On Feb 27 the crescent Moon lies 6° to the south and like its encounter with Neptune last month, on March 8 Venus passes 2° to the north of Uranus.

Earth has a tropical year of 365.24219 days so everyone has to work an extra day this year to keep the calendar in step with the seasons!

Mars (+1.3 5.1" to +1.0 5.8") lies in Sagittarius and is visible low in the SSE just above the "Teapot" for an hour or so before dawn. Throughout the month it moves to the east gradually drawing closer to Jupiter which it passes next month. On Feb 18 the crescent Moon lies 3° to the west and on Feb 29 Mars passes just 23' to the north of the bright globular cluster M22 (mag. +5.1).

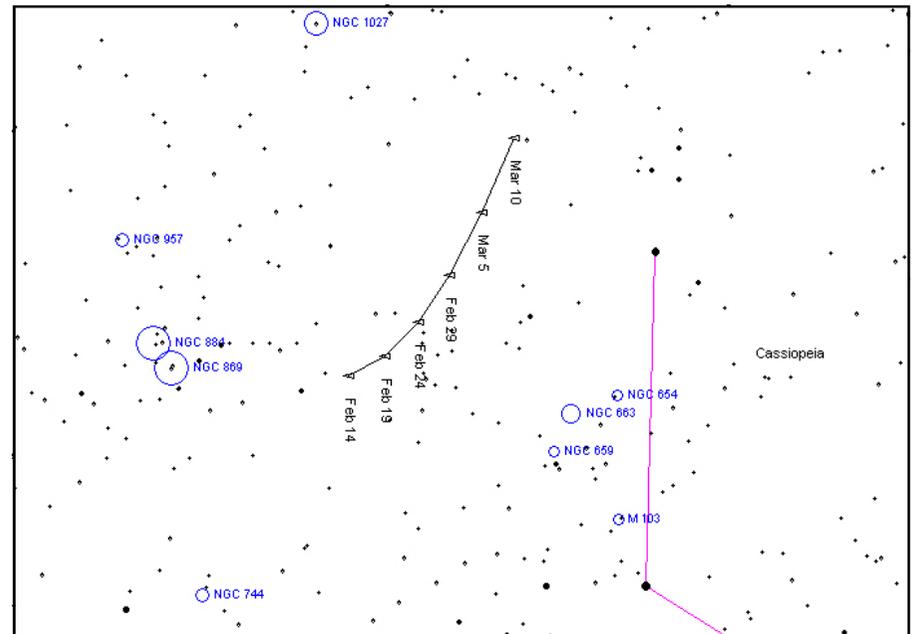
Jupiter ($-1.9 33.1''$ to $-2.0 35.2''$) lies in Sagittarius and is gradually drawing away from the Sun making it visible low down in the SE for an hour before dawn at the beginning of the month and two at the end. On Feb 19 the crescent Moon lies 6° to the west.

Saturn (+0.6 15.2" to +0.6 15.6") lies in Sagittarius about 10° to the east of Jupiter making it visible very low down in the SE just before sunrise. On Feb 20 the crescent Moon lies 4° to the west.

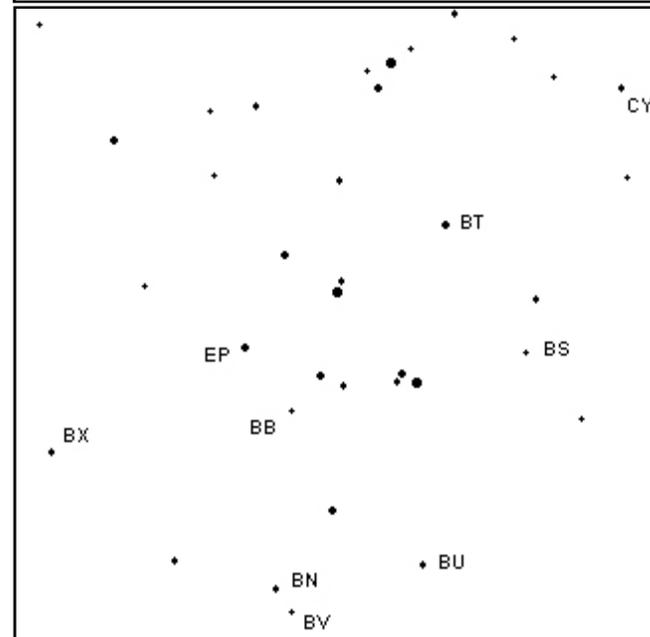
Uranus (+5.9 3.5" to +5.9 3.4") lies in Aries and is visible in the SW for the first half of the night, setting at 23:30 at the beginning of the month and 22:00 at the end.

Neptune (+7.8 2.2") lies in Aquarius and as it passes through conjunction on March 8 is not visible this month.

Moon passes in front of M1 at sunset on March 3. Although it will not be visible visually, such occultations at radio wavelengths have been important in determining its structure. Then on March 6 around 22:00 the Moon will be about 1° to the north of the Beehive Cluster (M44) in Cancer. However as the Moon is just 3 days before full, its light will tend to drown out any view of the cluster itself.



Comet C/2017 T7 PanSTARRS continues to brighten to around mag. +8.5 as it continues its journey between the Double Cluster in Perseus and the 'W' of Cassiopeia, as shown in the chart above



Beehive Cluster, M44 lies at the heart of the constellation of Cancer. At mag. +3.7 it is visible to the naked eye and is a superb sight in binoculars. Many of the stars in the cluster are variable, the brightest of which are shown in the chart. Although difficult to see visually comparison photographs should show their subtle changes.