

Forthcoming CAWAS Meetings at 7:15 pm clock time.

March's meeting will be at the Old Clarence Pub, Earlsdon Avenue North. CV5 6GN.

Friday 11th March	Ian Morison	Our Island Universe - The Milky Way
From April meetings will be back in Earlsdon Methodist Church Hall		
Friday 8th April	Pauline Norris	Ancient Egyptians and their Astronomy
Friday 13th May	Mark Edwards	Jodrell Bank Observatory - An early history




Observing sessions with RADAS at Barby Cricket Club at 19:00 UTC

In general two dates are given, the one to be used will be notified the day before.

March 25/26 April 1/2

ISS is visible near overhead in the evening at the following times:-

March 20 20:34, 21 19:46, 22 20:34, 23 19:46, 24 20:35, 25 19:46, 26 20:35, 27 19:47, 28 20:35, 29 19:47, 31 19:47

<u>March</u>	<u>Event</u>	
Sunday	13th	Neptune conjunction
Wednesday	16th	Venus near Mars
Friday	18th	Moon - full 
Sunday	20th	Vernal equinox, Venus greatest elongation
Friday	25th	Moon - last quarter 
Monday	28th	Moon near Venus, Mars and Saturn
Tuesday	29th	Venus near Saturn
April		
Friday	1st	Moon - new 
Saturday	2nd	Mercury superior conjunction
Sunday	3rd	Moon near Uranus
Tuesday	5th	Saturn near Mars

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.

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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

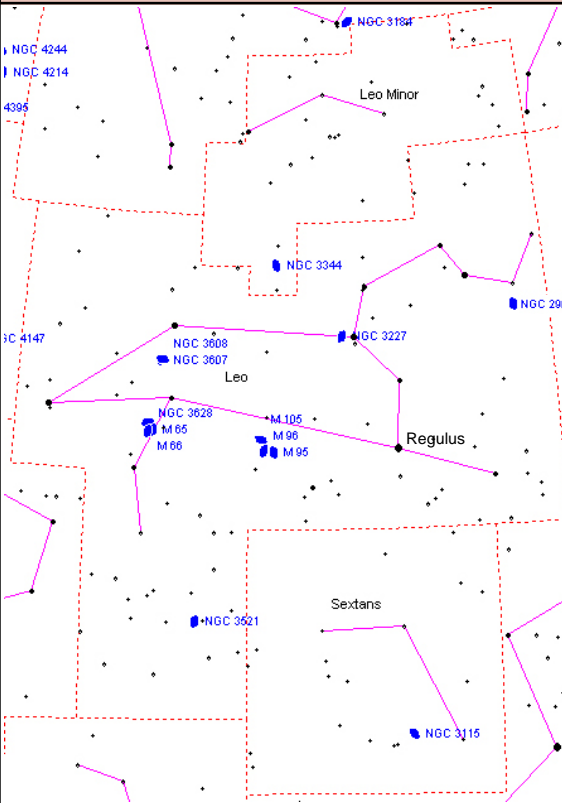
Vice Chairman
 Alan 024 76270169 alandocwho@yahoo.co.uk **Skynotes**
 Mark 024 76543689 mark@covastro.plus.com

Treasurer
 Vaughan 01926 402414

Coventry and Warwickshire Astronomical Society

Sky Notes

March 11th to April 8th 2022 No. 294



Two Lions and a Sextant

Lying away from the plane of the Milky Way, Leo is in the world of the galaxies. The brightest are shown in the chart, amongst which are the well known M65 and M95 groups, but there are number of others that should not be overlooked.

NGC2903 is an isolated bright (mag +9.0) barred spiral galaxy.

NGC3227 (+11.1) is a spiral galaxy, with an active nucleus, interacting with NGC3226 (+12.3), a dwarf elliptical galaxy.

To the north of Leo, the faint constellation of Leo Minor was created by Johannes Hevelius in 1687 and its brightest star, 46 Leonis Minoris, is only magnitude +3.83. It does though contain a bright (mag. +10.5) face-on barred spiral galaxy, NGC3344.
 To the south, the constellation of Sextans, also introduced by Hevelius, has an even fainter brightest star, α Sextantis, at mag. +4.49. Its only bright (+9.9) galaxy is the Spindle Galaxy NGC3115, a lenticular galaxy with an active X-ray source at its centre.

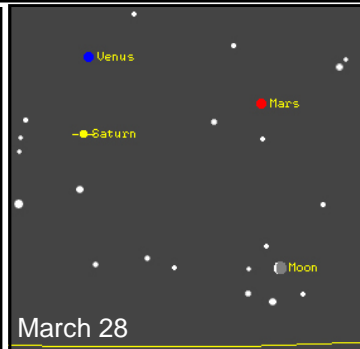
Time given in these skynotes is Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) known as GMT here in the UK. British Summer Time (BST) starts at 01:00 GMT on March 27, from that time onwards add one hour to get clock time.

Sun moves north from Aquarius into Pisces this month crossing the Celestial Equator at 15:33 on March 20, the Vernal Equinox.

March 11th Rise 06:30 Set 18:03 Dec $-3^{\circ} 45'$
 April 8th Rise 05:24 Set 18:52 Dec $+7^{\circ} 10'$

Planets, except for Uranus, all lie close to the east or SE horizon at sunrise and go through a number of close encounters, in particular a close grouping of Venus, Mars and Saturn towards the end of the month.

The trio is also joined by the thin crescent Moon on March 28, as shown in the picture.



Mercury ($-0.3 5.3''$ 85.2% to $-1.7 5.2''$ 97%) moves from Aquarius, through Pisces into Cetus and back into Pisces. It lies too close to the Sun to be visible this month as it passes through superior conjunction on April 2.

Venus ($-4.5 27.5''$ 44.5% to $-4.2 20.2''$ 59%) moves from Capricornus, into Aquarius then back into Capricornus, finally ending up in Aquarius again, passing 4° north of Mars on March 16 and 2° north of Saturn on March 29. Reaching its greatest western elongation of 46.6° on March 20, Venus is visible very low down in the SE for a couple of hours before sunrise at the beginning of the month and one hour at the end.

Mars ($+1.2 4.8''$ to $+1.0 5.3''$) lies in Capricornus and will be a difficult object to observe very low down in the SE just before dawn. Locating it might be helped by the close passage ($19'$) of Saturn to the north on April 5.

Jupiter ($-2.0 33.0''$ to $-2.1 33.6''$) lies in Aquarius and after its conjunction last month gradually draws away from the Sun meaning that by the end of the month it can be glimpsed very low down in the east just before sunrise.

Saturn ($+0.8 15.4''$ to $+0.9 15.9''$) lies in Capricornus and might be seen very low down in the SE just before dawn. Its close encounters with Venus and Mars might help in locating it.

Uranus ($+5.8 3.4''$ to $+5.9 3.4''$) lies in Aries and is visible in the west in the early evening, setting at 22:50 at the beginning of the month and 21:10 at the end, at which time it is gradually lost in the evening twilight. On Apr 3 the two-day-old crescent Moon passes just $42'$ to the south.

Neptune ($+8.0 2.2''$) lies in Aquarius and is too close to the Sun to be observed this month as it passes through conjunction on March 13.

Meteors are thin on the ground at this time of year with the only activity throughout March and April coming from various streams with radiants in Virgo. There are two main radiants; one near Spica, the other near Kappa Virginis, but even then they only produce one or two meteors per hour, slowly moving and sometimes bright with long trails.

There are three relatively bright **comets** visible this month, but they are all only around 10th magnitude. 19P/Borrelly is visible in the evening sky as it moves through Perseus, C/2019 L3(ATLAS) is also visible in the evening in Gemini and C/2017 K2 (PanSTARRS) is visible in the early hours in Aquila, gradually brightening as it heads towards perihelion in December.

Galaxy classification. When J.L.E. Dreyer formed his New General Catalogue of Nebulae and Clusters of Stars (NGC) in 1888, galaxies were given an abbreviated description of how they appeared visually through a telescope. An example of this is the entry for M65; B,vL, mE, gbMBN (bright, very large, much extended, gradually brighter in the middle, bright nucleus). With the introduction of photography this was replaced with a classification based on the structure of the galaxies and resulted in Hubble's 'tuning fork' diagram in 1926. This separated galaxies into three basic classes; elliptical, spiral (barred and unbarred) and lenticular (a mixture of the two), together with a fourth class for irregular galaxies.

