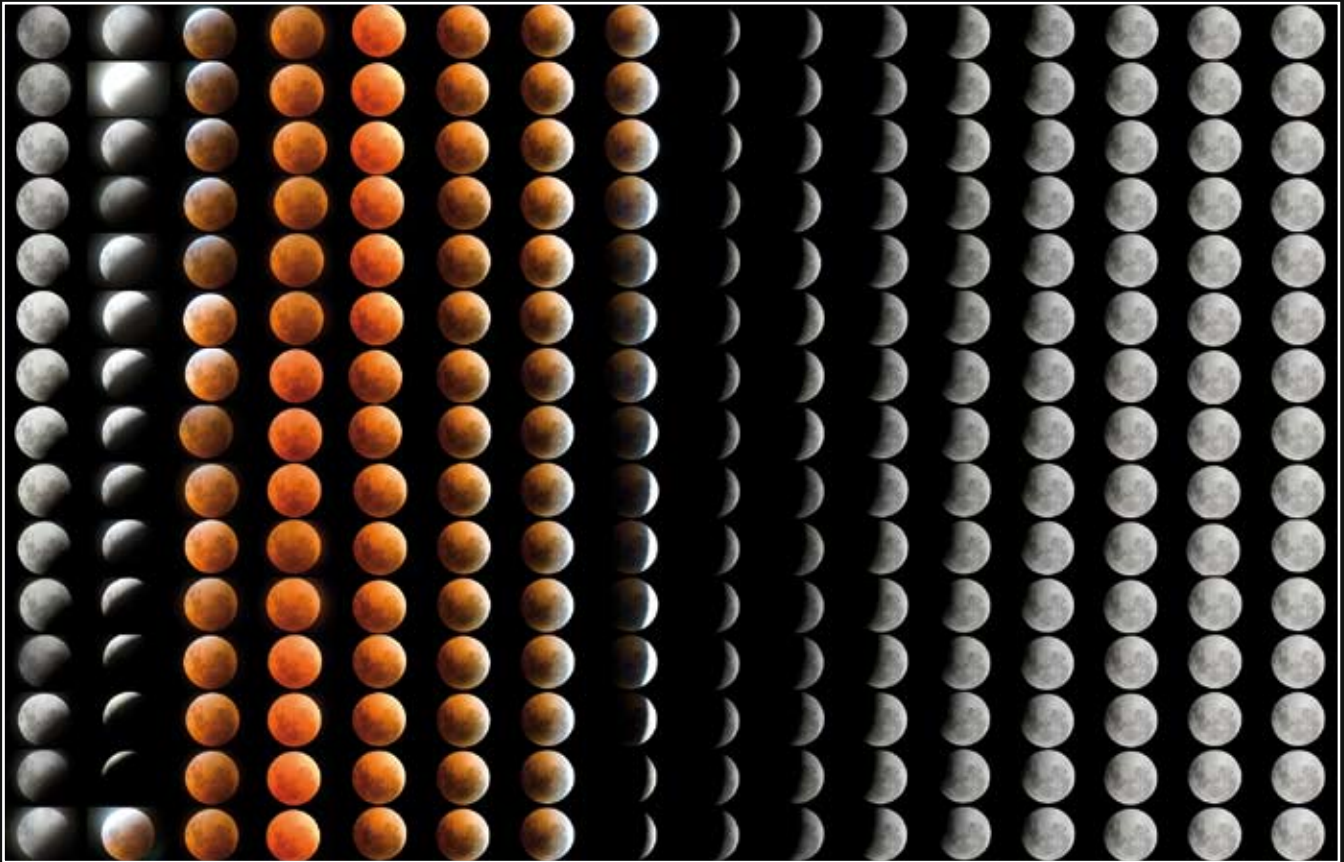




For this issue, our usual Sky Shots column has been wholly devoted to this Total Lunar Eclipse Special. Our thanks to readers as we have been inundated with amazing eclipse images. Apologies to those people whose pictures (both eclipse and non-eclipse) haven't been featured this time around but please keep sending in your photographs as we are keen to show a wide cross section of imagery.



David Hough from Newcastle NSW had a busy eclipse night with operating three cameras and two mounts. Also, he didn't have full polar alignment and the scope drifted. However, he still managed to capture some fine images and David recounts his eclipse night:

"The evening of the eclipse started out to be a nightmare. Both high and low thick cloud obscured any views of the Moon until the beginning of first contact. From then I managed to shoot an image about every five minutes, on average, until the Moon fully passed into totality. The imaging rate was slightly increased as the cloud cover abated and this revealed a total eclipse amongst the lower part of the Milky Way.

"Images were continued until last contact. This was completed with my Meade 10" LX200R on a Losmandy G11 tracking in lunar mode with my Pentax K10D at

prime focus. Polar alignment would have been nice but I had to continually nudge the scope around to keep the image centred. An f/6.3 Celestron focal reducer was used to get the Moon full-frame in the camera. A sample can be seen in the large image (left).

"The composite image (above) is a file made up of 240 Pentax K10D Raw image files (DNG) processed automatically in Photoshop to convert to jpg files. These files were in turn added to form the composite image shown above. This was achieved through a process of creating a custom contact sheet file and a black background was added. The file size of the completed PSD image was well over 0.5GB – all processed on a Compaq V2000 Sempron 3000 laptop with 1GB of memory. You can pick the images with the cloud in it. The exposures varied from 1/750 to 30 seconds for totality."

### How to submit your images for Sky Shots

**Specs for Images** – High resolution jpeg files, each file to be as large as possible within reason; or colour prints (no negatives) are accepted.

**Image Details** – full details for each image to include time, date and location. Equipment used, eg full details on scope, lens and mount – all by type and model. Any other relevant info as applicable, eg film, filters, timings, software processing. Note: each 'File Name' and 'Image Details' to be clearly named and specified.

**Post material to** – *Sky and Space*, attn: Sky Shots, PO Box 1690, Bondi Junction NSW 1355. Send PC disc and/or colour prints.

**Email material to** – [SkyShots@SkyandSpace.com.au](mailto:SkyShots@SkyandSpace.com.au)

**FTP Server Facility** – Large files can be sent via our FTP. In the first instance, email a lo-res version. On request, we will email you a User Name/Password, together with a free FTP Program and Instructions for easy uploading.





▶ **Matt Cook** from Wauchope NSW took this shot at 8.43pm on 28 August from his home. Camera used was a Pentax digital SLR, tripod mounted and set on manual. Focal length 300mm. Exposure was 2 secs at f/6.7.

▶ **Phillip Holmes** from Rockhampton QLD took 200 eclipse photos from his backyard observatory. Phillip used a Canon 30D and an NP101mm refractor riding on a G11 mount and then made up this composite.



▶ **Rob Keskull** of Lakemba NSW shares this amazing shot with you – Rob was imaging the eclipse when an aircraft flew straight across the Moon. Now, what are the chances of an aircraft crossing the Moon, during an eclipse, and then having the presence of mind to capture all this at just the right moment? 'I think I've used up my quota of good luck for the year,' Rob said.

Shutter speed was 1/1600s, so the plane is frozen in flight. Rob took the shot at 18:47 AEST. There is a small amount of motion blur on the props. The hot engine exhaust causes some optical distortion on the limb at about the eleven o'clock position. Telescope used was an Orion ED80 on an EQ4 mount using a Canon EOS 400d in prime focus, ISO400.

▶ **Sue Halliwell** from Dandenong VIC had a great birthday present – a total lunar eclipse! Sue says she has been a devotee of our magazine for years but completely new to astrophotography. In fact, this is her first ever image. Sue assembled (with an elastic band!) her Panasonic F25 'piggy-back' style on top of her 6" reflector and used x48 digital zoom.

We look forward to more images from Sue and from other readers who are just getting into the astrophotography caper – we are keen to encourage newcomers to 'experiment' as Sue has termed her photo.



▶ **Carl Rainer** from Allans Flat VIC used a Sky-Watcher 80 ED and a Canon EOS 350 DSLR, captured with DSLR Focus to create in Photoshop this montage of eclipse sequence. Exposures range from 3 secs to 1/640. 400 ISO.

**Chris Wyatt** from Walcha NSW imaged the Moon, almost at totality, as a star was about to be occulted on the eastern limb (inset below). Chris used an 8" Celestron Ultima PEC and Canon 400D prime focus at f/6.3.

