

Hi all

Here is a report of the viewing night at Patrick's.

Sky was initially partly cloudy but cleared up at times, then more cloud then clearing again and so on.

There were two big scopes there. Ron Williams brought his 12 inch Dob. David Roberts brought the Society's 12 inch Lightbridge.

Before we started viewing there was a stellar occultation by the moon, a bright star covered by the moon. Time to put my star finding to the test. 1st object on the agenda was Comet Boattini C2007 W1, now moving from Pyxis to Puppis and getting lower in the western sky after dark. Comet is fairly diffuse without a really bright central condensation, but overall quite bright, like an unresolved globular cluster. No tail as yet.

Then on to Corvus with the Lightbridge to locate the planetary nebula NGC 4361. I pointed the scope at a small group of faint stars in the centre of Corvus and had a look, 5 seconds later I had the planetary nebula. Very easy to see, greyish with perhaps just a hint of green.

On to Leo for the "Leo Triplet" galaxies. I used Star Atlas pro on my Notebook pc to locate them. Soon I had 2 faint fuzzy blobs in view, after some looking I found the fainter 3rd one, just visible against the sky background, could fit them all in one field of view, then after consulting Star Atlas pro again a 4th one ngc 3593. The brightest of the group is known as m66..

Back to Corvus for galaxy M104 the Sombrero Galaxy. Much brighter and very easy to see. Then on to Scorpius, where I found the Bug nebula, a bipolar planetary nebula. Then much fainter planetary NGC 6337 nearby, I could only just see that one. On the other side of Scorpius's tail I located NGC 6153, a smaller brighter planetary. We had a look at some old favourites like Omega Centauri and Eta Carina nebula, as well as some open clusters. Ron found one that looked like an arrow pointing down. Sadly cloud finally came in again and we packed up after enjoying some delicious apple pie and ice cream from Patrick, who also had a BBQ going before observing started.

All in all a very successful night, its been a long time since I've done so much visual observing in one night.

Scott Alder NAS committee member
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Some images from the viewing night.



