

Astronomical Events, Anniversaries and Opportunities

Events on Earth

Walsall Astronomical Society meets every Thursday at 8pm at Rushall Olympic Football Club.

2nd: Guest speaker: Andy Green's talk *Aurora*. 20:00pm onwards at Rushall Olympic Football Club.

4th: Walsall Arboretum's 150th anniversary celebration. 12pm-7pm.

9th, 16th, 23rd: W.A.S meetings, observing if clear.

30th: *What's Up?* Presentation at at Rushall Olympic Football Club.

TV and Radio Events

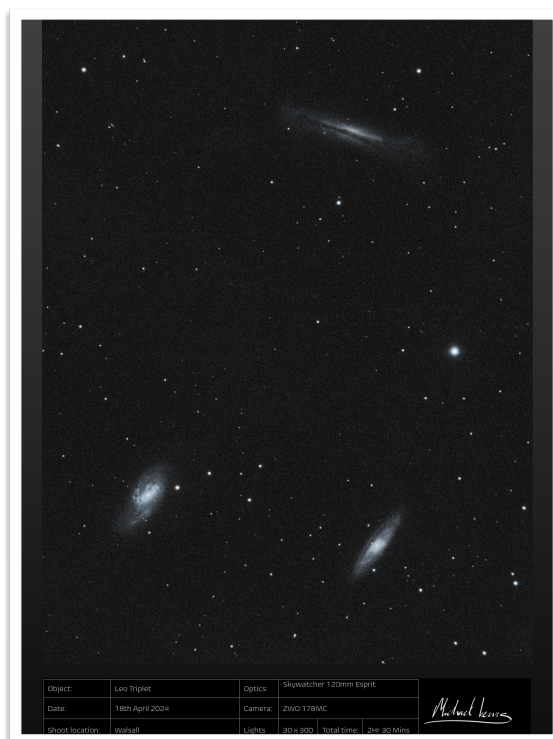
Radio Astronomy: A podcast by Sky At Night Magazine is available on Spotify.

This Month In History

5th May 1961 - Alan Shepard became the first American in space. He piloted the spacecraft *Freedom 7* on a 15 minute flight 116miles above the Earth. This success occurred 23 days after Russians launched the first ever human in space, Yuri Gagarin.

May Overview

Despite all the cold and rain, summer will soon be upon us, bringing lighter nights and a shorter window for stargazing. This month we can look forward to the Eta Aquarius which peak around the 5th and 6th.



Feature of the Month

The Leo Triplet

Photo Credit: Mike Lewis (club chairman)

The Leo Triplet is a cluster of small galaxies in the constellation of Leo. They are around 35 million light-years from Earth and consist of M65, M66 and NGC3628 (also known as the Hamburger Galaxy). These three spiral galaxies have a gravitational affect on each other; This is most clearly seen in the elongated arms of M66, which experience a high rate of star-forming activity.



Moving Targets

Comets: No bright comets are forecast.

Asteroids: Asteroid 2 Pallas is at opposition in Hercules on the 19th.

Meteors: The Eta Aquarids peak (ZHR 40 max) on the night of the 5th and 6th. Due to a new moon at this point, there will be a dark enough night to enjoy.



The Planets

The planets of our solar system are difficult to view this month. Most are lost in the dawn twilight, with Jupiter in solar conjunction on the 18th.

Mars and Neptune are potentially visible around 4am and Saturn is also a morning object at around 3am.



The Sun

The sun is now approaching sunspot maximum. If you do not have a solar scope, watch using SOHO or SDO.

Never look at the sun with a telescope, at worst you might blind yourself, at best you'll melt your telescope! If you are interested in Solar viewing, speak to our members, we have special equipment to help you!



The Moon

JAN	3		11		17		25	
FEB	2		9		16		24	
MAR	3		10		17		25	
APR	1		8		15		23	
MAY	1		7		15		23	
JUN	6		14		21		28	

JUL	5		13		21		27	
AUG	4		12		19		26	
SEP	2		11		17		24	
OCT	2		10		17		24	
NOV	1		9		15		22	
DEC	1		8		15		22	
							30	



Deep Sky

New to astronomy?

The best instrument for beginners is a pair of 7x50 binoculars. A good, cheaper alternative is a pair of 10x50. Both of these will be more useful than a small telescope.

This month, it is not truly dark until 1am (better get that coffee going!)

M5 is a globular cluster in the constellation Serpens. It is an easy target for beginners and those looking to photograph a beautiful cluster.

M13 is one of the largest globular clusters with an estimated 300,000 stars. It is found in the constellation of Hercules.

The Coma Berenices cluster is also easily visible, even to the naked eye if you find a dark enough spot.

Markarian's Chain is a stretch of galaxies that forms part of the Virgo cluster that can be viewed well with a telescope this month.

M92 is a globular cluster of stars in the constellation of Hercules alongside M13.

Get Involved!

For more information about Walsall Astronomical Society or to get involved in any of the events shown:

Visit our website: www.wallsastronomy.co.uk

Visit our Facebook page: [Walsall Astronomical Society](https://www.facebook.com/WalsallAstronomicalSociety)