



Astronomical Events, Anniversaries and Opportunities

Events on Earth

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

1st: Monthly Speaker: Keith Townsend - The Top 10 Space Missions - 19:30pm onwards at Rushall Olympic Football Club.

8th: Club Annual General Meeting

29th: What's Up meeting slide show.

Upcoming in March: 2nd & 3rd February, European AstroFest, Kensington Conference Center, London

TV, Radio and Podcasts

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

This Month In History

11 Years Ago: 16th February, the Chelyabinsk meteor landed in the Ural Mountains

63 Years Ago: 12th February, the first interplanetary probe, Venera, was launched by the USSR

94 Years Ago: 18th February, Pluto was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh

February Overview

February is a reasonably quiet month for astronomical events, however remains a dark month, so make the most of any clear nights! Highlights of this month continue to be the great Orion Nebula. European AstroFest is also taking place on the 2nd and 3rd in London.



Feature of the Month

Axiom 3 Mission

Photo Credit: SpaceX

On January 18th, Space X's Falcon 9 rocket launched the Axiom 3 crew to the International Space Station, where they will spend 2 weeks orbiting Earth, conducting over 30 scientific experiments focused on human physiology and technological industrial advancements.

The Axiom 3 launch marks the 291st Falcon 9 launch, and the booster successfully landed again at Kennedy Space Center



Moving Targets

Comets: Comet 62P Tsuchinshan is in Virgo at magnitude 8

Meteors: No meteor showers this month



The Planets

Mercury: At solar conjunction on the 27th so is not visible

Venus: Bright in the sunrise, magnitude -3.9, and gets lower towards the end of the month

Mars: Near solar conjunction with Mercury and Venus

Jupiter: Magnitude -0.2, starting to set earlier each night

Saturn: Moving closer to the sunset and becoming more difficult to see

Uranus: Visible in the evening between Jupiter and Pleiades

Neptune: Low in the sky (15 degrees) in the west and sets around 8pm



The Sun

From January to October this year, the Sun is at Solar Maximum - a period of strong solar activity that occurs around every 11 years. Due to this, we should see an increase in regularity, strength and spread of the Aurora Borealis.

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	

Get Involved!

For more information about Walsall Astronomical Society or to get involved in any of the events shown: Visit our website: www.walsallastronomy.co.uk

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



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.

With 7x50 wide angle binoculars, the great Orion Nebula is the brightest nebula in the sky. You will also be able to enjoy Hyades and Pleiades, both are naked-eye open clusters.

In the West before they set you can see M77 and M74 a pair of spiral galaxies. M33 the Triangulum Galaxy and M31 the Andromeda galaxy

Looking South you will be able to see M41, M46, M47, M50 and M93, and of course M42!

In the North, you can see M63, the Sunflower galaxy, and M101, the Pinwheel galaxy.

Lastly, in the East the following objects will be rising, M48, M67 and M44, the Beehive cluster. Later in the night you can expect to see M51, Whirlpool galaxy and M64 the Black Eye galaxy.