



# Ashton Observatory Public Nights 2026

Presented by The Des Moines Astronomical Society, Inc.

Ashton Observatory is open to the public for weekend programs, followed by stargazing – Saturday evenings, April through October.



Date	Time	Presentation Subject	Presenter	days	Moon
Apr. 04	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		17.1	
11	8:00 p.m.	Preview of the coming 2026 season.....	Derryl Barr, Greg Woolever	24.0	
18	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		1.6	
25	8:00 p.m.	Astrophotography with a DSLR/Mirrorless Camera .....	Heather Johnson	8.6	
May 02	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		15.6	
09	8:00 p.m.	Types of Objects in the Universe.....	Paul Caligiuri	22.6	
16	8:00 p.m.	Ashton Observatory closed: NCRA conference in Cedar Rapids....		0.3	
23	8:00 p.m.	Stars & S'mores: The Perfect Camping Combination. ....	Jim McGraw	7.3	
30	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		14.3	
Jun. 06	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		21.3	
13	8:00 p.m.	Starry, Starry Night.....	JoAnn Cogil	28.3	
20	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		6.0	
27	8:00 p.m.	Inspiring Astronomer: Hebert Howe .....	Jim VandeBerg	13.0	
Jul. 04	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		20.0	
11	8:00 p.m.	Finding Distances to Stars and Objects.....	Paul Caligiuri	27.0	
18	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		4.7	
25	8:00 p.m.	Protecting our Dark Skies .....	JR Paulson	11.7	
Aug. 01	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		18.7	
08	8:00 p.m.	Our Address in the Universe.....	JR Paulson	25.7	
15	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		3.4	
22	8:00 p.m.	Astronomy Fun Facts.....	Jim VandeBerg	10.4	
29	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		17.4	
Sep. 05	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		24.4	
12	8:00 p.m.	Journey to the Edge of the Universe .....	Jim VandeBerg	1.9	
19	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		8.9	
26	8:00 p.m.	History of Apollo, Part 2 .....	Wade Johnson	15.9	
Oct. 03	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		22.9	
10	8:00 p.m.	Hidden in Plane Sight: Looking at Saturn Edge-On.....	Derrick Bennett	0.4	
17	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		7.4	
24	8:00 p.m.	Once Upon an Eclipse.....	Derryl Barr	14.4	
31	8:00 p.m.	Stargazing .....		21.4	

Donations are tax-deductible to the Des Moines Astronomical Society, a 501(c)(3) corporation. Ashton Observatory is located in Ashton Wildwood County Park, Jasper County, IA, 8755 W. 122nd Street, Mingo, IA 50168. Location coordinates: 41.813371; -93.288447  
 website: [www.dmastronomy.com](http://www.dmastronomy.com)  
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 DMAS founded 1970. Ashton Observatory built 1983. Classroom added 2002.  
 Classroom programs are created by individual presenters, and do not necessarily reflect the views of DMAS or its members.

