

The April Sky

The constellation Leo is perfectly placed to observe in the spring, immediately after dusk. Five degrees west of its brightest star, Regulus, is the star *R Leonis*. *R Leo* is a red giant star that changes its brightness with a period of ~310 days. If it were placed where the Sun is today, Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars would all be inside the star. At minimum brightness a 3" telescope is required to see it. At maximum, it is a faint naked-eye star. The exact date of maximum and the maximum brightness cannot be predicted with great accuracy. The next maximum will occur sometime in mid-May when it is still high in the western sky after dark. The maxima of *R Leo* advance in our calendar by about 2 months each year, so not every maximum is observable from Earth. *This* spring is the perfect time to seek *R Leo* for yourself. Binoculars are all you will need. You will find three finder charts for this [wonderful star here](#).

Come and see the sky through many different telescopes at one of the [Blue Grass Amateur Astronomy Club's](#) outings at [Raven Run](#). The remaining (Saturday) dates in 2017 are:

April 22 at 8:30pm	August 19 at 8:30pm
May 27 at 9:00pm	September 16 at 8:00pm
June 24 at 9:15pm	October 21 at 7:00pm.
July 22 at 9:00pm	

Call Raven Run an hour before the event to verify that the weather will be sufficiently clear.

You will find an [all-sky finder chart](#) and the PDF of this flyer at [our web site](#).

UK MacAdam STUDENT OBSERVATORY

UK's MacAdam Student Observatory, designed and built in 2007, was officially opened in 2008. The Observatory is located atop Parking Structure #2 between the W.T. Young Library and the Chemistry-Physics Building, and its dome houses a high-quality 20-inch reflecting telescope plus a variety of state-of-the-art optical instruments. The Observatory is dedicated to serving UK students as well as astronomy enthusiasts of every age and experience level throughout Kentucky.

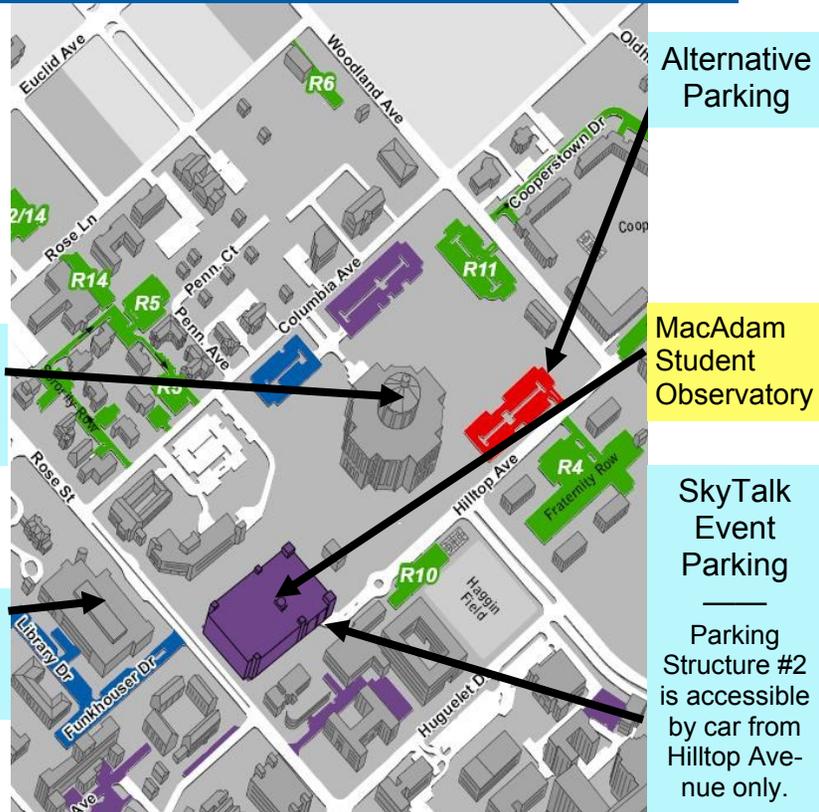
Are you interested in informal talks on astronomy and astrophysics? Are you curious about telescope design and operation? Would you care to take a look through the eyepiece?

The Department of Physics & Astronomy in UK's College of Arts & Sciences welcomes you! Join us to experience the excitement of stargazing through a powerful telescope. An up-to-date calendar of events can be found on our website:

<https://pa.as.uky.edu/observatory>



How to find the MacAdam Student Observatory



W.T. Young Library

Chemistry/ Physics Building

Alternative Parking

MacAdam Student Observatory

SkyTalk Event Parking

Parking Structure #2 is accessible by car from Hilltop Avenue only.

Monthly Meetings

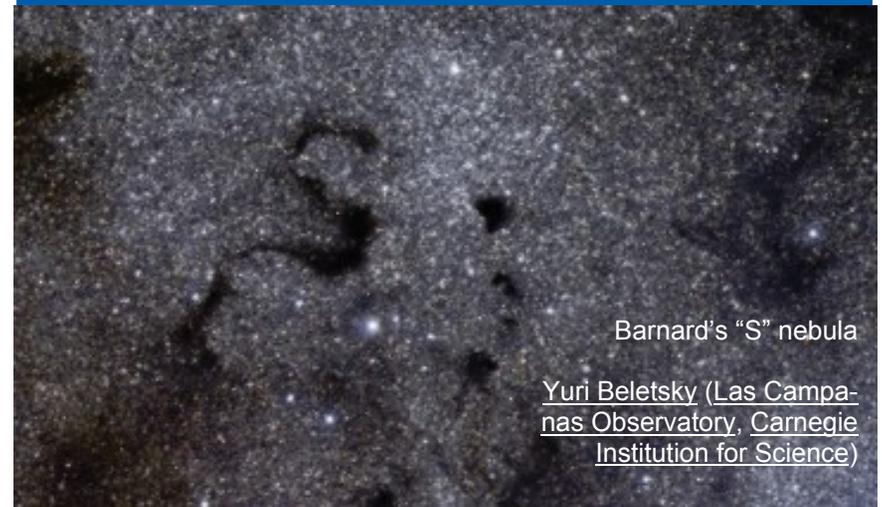
The MSO hosts monthly public-observing sessions, each with a kick-off 40 minute presentation in the Chemistry-Physics Building. The presentations will take place even on cloudy nights. If the sky is clear, the observatory will open after the talk! Can't make the SkyTalk? Then come after!

Next month:

Gemunu Ekanayake

May 11, 2017 - **8:00 PM** - Chem-Phys Room 155

Kentucky SkyTalk



Barnard's "S" nebula

Yuri Beletsky (Las Campanas Observatory, Carnegie Institution for Science)

Tim Knauer— University of Kentucky

Thursday - April 13, 2017 8:00 PM

Chemistry-Physics Building Room 155

Dark Clouds Don't Always Mean Stormy Weather

In fact, clouds of dust are essential to the formation of stars, planets, and people. Virtually everything you've ever seen or touched is made from recycled star dust. Yet, we've only been aware of stuff between the stars for about a century. The convincing visual evidence was provided by an elementary school drop-out, portrait photographer's assistant. In this SkyTalk we will focus on galactic dust and the life of E. E. Barnard.

Tonight's *Kentucky SkyTalk* is part of an ongoing series. These are presented by the UK Department of Physics and Astronomy, and the MacAdam Student Observatory. Held every 2nd Thursday of the month, they are always free and open to the public.