The August Sky

The brightest object in the south after sunset is Mars. It hasn't been this close to Earth since August 2003. Unfortunately for northern observers, Mars is always closest to Earth when it is farthest to the south, never getting very high to avoid the worst turbulence of Earth's atmosphere. At the time of this writing, you can't see much on Mars anyway. Mars is undergoing a global dust storm. If you can't see in, you also can't see out. The aged Mars rover Opportunity has shut down, perhaps permanently, from lack of solar energy.

The center of the Milky Way galaxy, your home, can't be seen from Earth at visible wavelengths; there's too much dust in the plane of the galaxy's disk. Only about one photon in a trillion (10^{12}) completes the ~26,000 light-year journey. But looking in that general direction, a little above or below the plane is a visual thrill. Sweeping the region with binoculars will begin to show distinct clusters of stars, glowing gas, and opaque dust clouds. A map of the region with links to more information is here.

Thirty degrees to the right of Mars is Saturn. Let them be your guide to the galactic center and the dozens of objects visible from a dark site with a pair of binoculars or small telescope.

———————————————————————————

Come and see the night sky through many different telescopes at the Blue Grass Amateur Astronomy Club's outings at Raven Run. The remaining (Saturday) dates in 2018 are:

August 11, September 8, October 6, and, November 3. Call Raven Run an hour before sunset 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.

Kentucky SkyTalk

———————————————————————————

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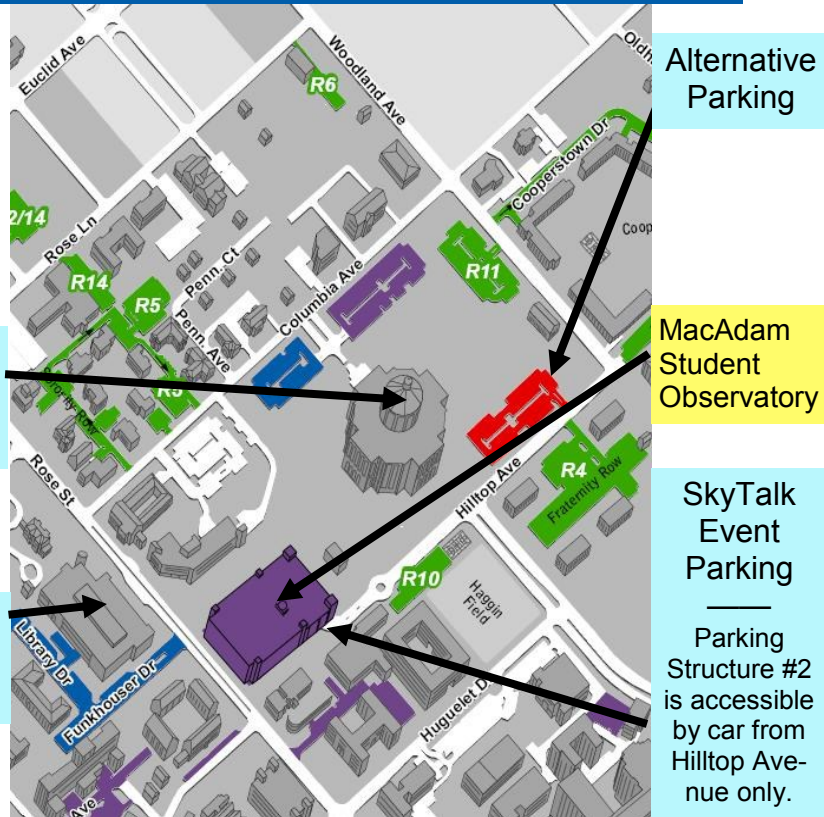
Are you interested in informal talks on astronomy and astrophysics? Are you curious about telescope design and operation? Would you care to take a look through the eyepiece?

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

Alternative Parking

W.T. Young Library

MacAdam Student Observatory

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

Chemistry/ Physics Building

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:

September 13, 2018 - **8:00 PM** - Chem-Phys Room 155

Kentucky SkyTalk

Contact, Warner Bros, 1997

Angela Collier — University of Kentucky
Thursday - August 9, 2018 8:00 PM
Chemistry-Physics Building Room 155
So you want to be an astronomer?

If you like visiting tropical locations, making scientific discoveries, and doing a lot of math ---astronomy might be the vocation for you! Astronomy is the oldest of the natural sciences. By 7th century B.C.E. the Greeks had used the night sky to form a worldview of the universe. More than 2000 years later, in 1609, Galileo Galilei is credited as the first person to look through a telescope and make a scientific discovery. In the year 2018 there are about 10,000 professional astronomers, but we do so much more than look through telescopes!

During this talk I will offer a guide on how to join the ranks of professional astronomers.

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.