

As is becoming traditional, September's meeting was our annual observing evening. September fits in that "sweet spot" of being dark enough for the meeting and being warm enough not to freeze everyone's bits off. This year, however, we had to contend with the Harvest Moon which rose just after sunset. This followed the partial eclipse early on Wednesday morning.

Before getting down to the serious observing, though, we had our annual Gadgets & Gizmos "Show and Tell" session. This session tries to limit the preparation required, so "no slides" presentations are encouraged. Terry showed his Sky Adventurer tracking mount which he uses mainly on his trips to Australia. This fits onto an ordinary camera tripod and moves an attached camera to track the stars. It has a North – South switch and can be run off AA batteries or with a Mini-USB 5V charging plug.

Ian had a mysterious little box which contained his measuring reticule. He uses this to measure the position angle and separation of the double stars that he observes. It's a very useful little accessory and can be used for accurate positioning as well as measurement.

Terry then ran through the upcoming events in the sky and at CADAS (see below) followed by some images of the morning's (teeny-tiny) lunar eclipse, Mars's movement away from Jupiter, and some images from Australia of the Horsehead and Flame.

After a break, we moved out onto the field where 5 telescopes were set up. They ranged from a small reflector, a larger Dobsonian mounted reflector, a 140mm refractor, an SCT, and a larger reflector on an equatorial mount. These last two were equipped with cameras so that images could be displayed on laptops.

The just after full moon did rather live up to its "annoying bright thing" epithet and Saturn disappeared behind a large tree by the time we were set up properly. However lots of the late summer "lollipops" were viewed, including Albireo, M57, Polaris and the Double Cluster. Even the moon was observed though it needed a neutral density filter to reduce its brightness. It looked surprisingly nice through the "live view" camera on the large reflector and even showed some nice features on the terminator including a detached central peak with the rest of the crater in shadow.

All this was accompanied by (relatively) warm temperatures for mid September. This is encouraging some of us to consider trying to have more of these observing sessions after meetings over the winter (weather very much permitting!).

# Upcoming Events

## Planets

Venus continues to be very low at evening twilight but might be visible with a clear western horizon. It will continue to be very low until mid November.

Mercury is still (just) visible at around 6:30 am. You would need a very clear horizon and it will disappear in a couple of days.

Saturn was at opposition on September 8<sup>th</sup> so visible all night

Mars has moved away from Jupiter (which is in Taurus) and is now in Gemini. It will continue to move west and be near Castor & Pollux by early October

Uranus near the Pleiades

Neptune west of Saturn in Pisces

## Comets

Comet 2023 A3 (Tsuchinshan-ATLAS) hiding near the sun (but just visible in the southern hemisphere) and goes through perihelion late September after which it could be visible in the evening from mid October

## Upcoming Meetings

Oct 16 Adrian Dening Portable Astroimaging

Nov 20 Brian Fraser Unmanned Lunar Landings

Dec 18 Christmas Social and members' short talks