

2011 NZ Almanac

More than just a calendar: each month includes the phases of the moon, rise and set times of the Sun and Moon. Planetary phenomena, meteor activity, solstices and equinoxes, historical astronomical events and much more. 2011 Price \$20.00

For details & pricing for NZ Societies, please contact Kay Leather.

Email: Hellfa@xtra.co.nz

Web: www.astronomynz.org.nz



New Zealand Astronomical Yearbook 2011

The 2011 NZ Astronomical Yearbook is at the printers and ready for sale. Please order your copies now by contacting Jasmine. The recommended retail price for this book is \$20.00. However all NZ Astronomical Societies can purchase their copies at a discounted rate.

For further details and orders to Stardome Observatory

Phone: (09) 624-1246.

Email: info@stardome.org.nz

Upcoming Events

- **Stardate South Island - February 04 to 07, 2011**

Registrations for Stardate South Island are under way. The event will be held at Staveley with the hope of clear skies due to a possible strong La Nina effect. This year's Stardate South Island will feature Phil Barker's new 17" Dobsonian, among numerous others. Euan Mason plans to hold a hands-on session on solar viewing and Sunspot counts, followed by a guided tour of Peel Forest. If you are interested in attending please make sure you register by visiting Stardate South Island URL below or by contacting the convener:

Contact: cstars@xtra.co.nz Web: www.treesandstars.com/stardate



- **'What on Earth' - February 17, 2011 Wellington**

The Royal Society of New Zealand, in collaboration with the European Space Agency and Venture Southland, is hosting an international event exploring the opportunities for using satellite imagery and improved data and image access.

Contact: Robin McNeil robin@venturesouthland.co.nz

- **Global Astronomy Month - Throughout April, 2011**

The annual event, organised by Astronomers Without Borders, celebrates the Universe in the spirit of the International Year of Astronomy 2009 cornerstone project "100 Hours of Astronomy." Register your events again this year – further details will follow next month.

Contact: Thilina Heenatigala - thilina@astronomerswithoutborders.org Web: www.gam-awb.org

- **RASNZ Conference Napier - May 27 to 30, 2011**

We have been promised by Gary Sparks, President of the Hawkes Bay Astronomical Society that this year's RASNZ conference is sure to be an exciting event. With a Sci Fi theme and a nice new observatory complex, this conference promises to be something special and certainly not to be missed. Guest speakers will be David Malin and Fred Watson. For further information and registration details

Contact: Gary Sparks - ghsparks@xtra.co.nz Web: www.rasnz.org.nz/Conference/2011Conference.htm



Pukerangi Observatory, Napier

2011 NZ Astronomical Yearbook 'Moon Table' Corrections

ERROR

Due to a printing error, the Moonrise/set tables in the 2011 New Zealand Astronomical Yearbook pages 88 to 90 are incorrect. The 2010 tables were repeated. The corrected Moon tables can be downloaded from the Stardome website at www.stardome.org.nz/discover-more/Moon%20Rise-Set%20Chart or printed copies can be obtained from the Stardome Observatory by phoning Stardome Reception. Phone: (09) 624 1246

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RASNZ



This issue

"What on Earth"

Upcoming Events

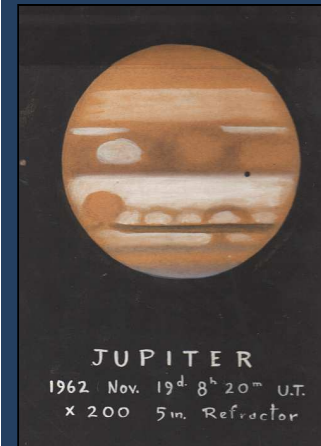
Workshop on Starlight Reserves

Galaxy Garden

Peter Read Exhibition

Jupiter

Peter Read, 1962



JUPITER
1962 Nov. 19^d 8^h 20^m U.T.
x 200 5in. Refractor

Courtesy Auckland Astronomical Society. Painting on display at Carter Observatory

"What on Earth?"

Free Colloquium Wellington, Thursday 17 February, 2011

"What on Earth: An International Colloquium Exploring Science & Policy Implications of Earth Observation in New Zealand" "

The Royal Society of New Zealand, in collaboration with the European Space Agency and Venture Southland, is hosting an international event exploring the opportunities for using satellite imagery and improved data and image access. Presentations will be given by organisations including: European Space Agency, German Space Agency, Italian Space Agency, Swedish Space Corporation and Telespazio.

Background:

The launch of the European Space Agency's Automated Transfer Vehicle "Johannes Kepler" on 15 February 2011, which will be tracked at Awarua Station near Invercargill, and the upcoming joint bid by Australia and New Zealand for the €2B Square Kilometre Array deep space radio telescope, together with considerable interest expressed by European state space agencies makes this symposium timely and underlines the significance to New Zealand of satellite remote sensing data collection and management

This event is free to attend, Register by February 1st. For further details of the programme including registration available visit or contact;

Web: www.royalsociety.org.nz/2011/01/11/what-on-earth

Contact: Robin McNeil robin@venturesouthland.co.nz

Venue:

Lecture Theatre
Science House
11 Turnbull Street
Thorndon
WELLINGTON



European Space Agency



NZ Meteor All-Sky Cameras

John Burt from the Gisborne Astronomical Society would like to know if there are any meteor cameras in operation in New Zealand?

If you know of any in operation, please contact John.

Email: darthjohnnyb@gmail.com



Global Astronomy Month April, 2011

April will again be a busy month for amateur and professional astronomers, educators and astronomy enthusiasts as Global Astronomy Month (GAM) returns for its second edition. The annual event, organized by Astronomers Without Borders, celebrates the Universe in the spirit of the International Year of Astronomy 2009 cornerstone project "100 Hours of Astronomy."

Astronomy clubs, science centers, schools, educators, & other astronomy enthusiasts worldwide are invited to reserve dates in April 2011 for public outreach, hands-on activities, & observing sessions while sharing the enthusiasm with others across the globe. Everyone is invited to join the global programs or initiate their own activities during April 2011. More Details to come

Web: www.gam-awb.org

Proposal for an International Workshop on the concept of Starlight Reserves

Steve Butler Reports – Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand Dark Skies Group

Recently a document entitled "HERITAGE SITES OF ASTRONOMY AND ARCHAEOASTRONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION: a Thematic Study" was produced under the aegis of the IAU (International Astronomical Union) and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), with Clive Ruggles and Michel Cotte as editors and presented to the World Heritage Convention in Brasilia in July 2010. See www.astronomicalheritage.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=28&Itemid=33

The Thematic Study made the case for astronomical sites to be recognized by the World Heritage Committee, and included both archaeological sites of outstanding universal value and also sites that offer 'Windows to the universe'-starlight reserves, dark sky areas and observatory sites. The WHC meeting in Brasilia received and approved the Thematic Study, which included a number of case studies for possible Starlight Reserve sites in different countries, including a case study for the Tekapo and Aoraki-Mt Cook regions in New Zealand's South Island. This opens the ways for potential submissions for nominating Starlight Reserves as World Heritage sites in the next few years, possibly by 2014.

Much work would have to be done before a particular site could be proposed for a tentative list of new World Heritage sites, including support from government agencies such as DOC and the Mackenzie District Council in the case of the proposed Tekapo-Aoraki/Mt Cook site. Before any such nomination could be proposed, a clearer idea of what a Starlight Reserve entails and aims to achieve needs to be developed.

It is accordingly proposed to hold an international workshop on the role of Starlight Reserves and their benefits. In addition, several radio astronomers have pointed out that the issues of radio-frequency interference have much in common with issues of light pollution. It would therefore be appropriate to expand the topics under discussion to RFI and the development of radio-astronomy in New Zealand, especially the selection of radio-quiet sites.

Contact: Steve Butler - s_butler@xtra.co.nz



Top Ten Astronomy Pictures for 2010 becomes Fourteen

Phil Platt from Bad Astronomy has chosen his top 10 astronomy pictures for 2010. He states he started with 10, but there were so many great images he just couldn't decide so increased it to 14.

Copy and paste this link below and see if you agree.

<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/badastronomy/2010/12/14/the-top-14-astronomy-pictures-of-2010>

The comments on this site about the top picks are worth a look too.



Telescopes as Works of Art

Brian Hurren from the Rotorua Astronomical Society would like to organise an Art Display for the Rotorua Astronomical Society's 25th Anniversary Celebration.

Brian writes;

"I would like to know if there is interest in setting up a display of homemade telescopes in an art gallery in Rotorua? I want to do this as part of the Rotorua Astronomical Society's 25th anniversary. We haven't enough homemade telescopes here so I was hoping others maybe interested in contributing. The more bizarre your telescope design, the better."

If you are interested in offering an on-loan telescope for the display please make contact with Brian

Contact: Brian Hurren

Email: brianhurren@yahoo.com

Fancy A Galaxy Garden in your City?

Jon Lomber's Galaxy Garden

Looking for an interesting and educational outdoor scale model of the Milky Way Galaxy for your city or town? This could be your next society's community project and very worthwhile too.

The Galaxy Garden is a 31 meter diameter outdoor scale model of the Milky Way, mapped in living plants and flowers and based on current astrophysical data. Artist Jon Lomberg conceived and designed the garden to encourage scientific education about our place in the Universe.

On a recent visit to Auckland, Jon gave a wonderful talk about his design. This talk motivated Professor Phil Yock from the University of Auckland and Dr Grant Christie from the Auckland Astronomical Society, to take a close look at the possibility of planting a replica scale model somewhere in Auckland. We will keep you all posted as to the outcome.

For more information on the Galaxy Garden www.galaxygarden.net

Check also Jon's website www.jonlomberg.com



Jon's Galaxy Garden in Hawaii

Comet Tempel 1 Now in StardustNeXt's Field of Veiw

The Stardust spacecraft is on its way to a Valentine's Day rendezvous with Comet Tempel 1. This image was taken on January 19 from a distance of 25.4 million kilometers. On February 14, Stardust will fly within 200 kilometers of the comet's nucleus and for the first time, astronomers will get a second close-up look at Tempel 1. This will be a golden opportunity to revisit a comet on a second pass near the sun. The first time was in 2005 with the Deep Impact Spacecraft. This encounter will provide important information about how the surface of comets change with each passage near the sun and whether the changes in the comet are global or just specific to certain areas on the surface. Article from 'The Universe Today'



Editorial – Feedback – Have your Say - Advertise

I would like to encourage Astronomical societies, groups and clubs around New Zealand to have their say regarding astronomy issues affecting them, feedback regarding the information in these newsletters, or any other item you would like to voice.

I have plenty of space to advertise your upcoming events etc, so please forward them on.

Please send your editorial comments or feedback to Jennie McCormick: farmcoveobs@xtra.co.nz



Carter Observatory

Peter Read

The Peoples Astronomer

Carter Observatory has created an exhibit in celebrating the life and achievements of Peter Read (1923 – 1981). Peter was well known for his pioneering show "The Night Sky" that showcased astronomy from a New Zealand viewpoint. Peter toured many of the observatories around New Zealand interviewing local and international astronomers. Peter also had a keen interest in space exploration and was known as the 'voice of Apollo' in New Zealand.

The exhibit includes two of his telescopes that have been restored by Gordon Hudson, a number of his artworks, memorabilia, display panels on his life, interviews with people who knew him and a 15 minute screening of "10 years of the Night Sky" featuring Apollo astronauts, an Apollo launch and a behind the scenes look at the making of the show.

The exhibit has brought back a lot of memories from those who either knew Peter or remembered his show. The exhibit will feature at Carter until July when it becomes a touring exhibit.

If your society has a friendly Art Centre which maybe interested in hosting this exhibition, please contact John Field or Gordon Hudson.

Contact: John Field or Gordon Hudson

Email: john.field@paradise.net.nz

Email: gordon@kpo.org.nz



Venus 1954

Courtesy Auckland Astronomical Society. One of many paintings on display at Carter Observatory as part of The Peter Read Exhibit