

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 26, No. 6 **June 2022**

Officers: President, **Sean Neckel**; Vice President, **Aaron Calhoun**; Secretary / ALCOR **Mark Grizzaffi**; Treasurer, **Steve Hollander**; Board of Directors: **Dwight Harness, Felix Luciano, and George Ruff**; Program/Observing Coordinator: **Sean Neckel**; Facebook Coordinator: **Aaron Calhoun**; Webmaster: **Tom Moore**; Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**; NASA Contact: **Felix Luciano**

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting: Thursday, June 9, 7:30pm on Zoom only.

Ryan Hannahoe, executive director of the Montana Learning Center in Helena, MT will join us to discuss the MLC and its astronomy program, deep space photography, and image processing tips and tricks.

Look for the invite in your email during the second week in June.

Public Observing Events:

Friday, June 10, 8:30pm. Fayette County Rec Department public observing at Lake Horton in Fayetteville. Weather date is Saturday, June 11.

FRAC Observing Events:

Friday and Saturday, June 24-25
From sunset until whenever at Joe Kurz Wildlife Management Area.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

FRAC Shirts:

A reminder that shirts will be in stock at the supplier this month. If you are interested in buying a FRAC T-shirt, please fill out the [FRAC T-Shirt Form](#) online. More info on pricing to come. Here is the concept for the shirts:



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President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,
Whew!

That was a busy month of May for FRAC. 3 public observing events, a lunar eclipse viewing, and a 3-day holiday weekend for our club observing. All of these came off pretty successful, even if the Lake Horton event was a cloudy mess. At least the moon peeked out from behind the clouds for a few minutes that night.

I just wanted to express my appreciation to everyone who came out to support the club this past month. I can tell you that the guests at these events, and the organizers who invite us to their locations truly appreciate your time and effort as well.

Again, thank you for participating, and for bringing the stars to the public!

Thanks,
Sean

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Astronomy Trivia:

1. What is the most common type of star in the Milky Way?
2. How does a meteor become a meteorite?
3. The black hole at the center of the Milky Way was imaged for the first time recently. What is the name of that black hole?
4. What is the visible part of the sun called?
5. Approximately how many miles are in a light year?

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Previous Meetings/Activities:

May Events:

FRAC Meeting -May 12, 2022 - 7:30pm at the UGA Garden and on Zoom.

- 9 club members joined in person, and 9 on Zoom: In person at the UGA Gardens were Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Alfred McClure, Dwight Harness, Tom Moore, Steve, Mercy, and Ben Parker, and George Ruff. Mark Grizzaffi, Alan Pryor, Steve Hollander, Katie Nagy, Scott Hasson, Nelson Stephenson, Wade Simmons, David Stone, and Felix Luciano participated on Zoom.
- George Ruff discussed with the group the idea of a permanent solar system model at the UGA Gardens. Ben Fields (UGA Groundskeeper) made mention of this at Springfest.
- Mark Grizzaffi will purchase club T-shirts and members will pay on delivery. Expected to be in stock in June.
- Sean gave an overview of the AL observing programs and encouraged everyone to get involved. All links from the presentation have been shared with the club.

New Members:

I would like to say welcome to the newest members of FRAC: Nelson Stephenson, Kevin and Aiden Powell, and the Parker family, Steve, Mercy, and Ben. Also welcome back to some returning members, Stephen Bentley, and Larry Higgins. Glad you all have joined us, and I hope to see you at one of our upcoming events!

FRAC Observings:

Friday May 27, 2022: Bill Honea, Doyne Tallman, and Carlos Flores were at Joe Kurz.

Saturday May 28, 2022: Sean Neckel, David and Rosanne Stone, Nelson and Kathy Stephenson, and Scott Hasson had clear skies for most of the night, and a good look at the ISS.

Sunday May 29, 2022: David Stone, and Steve, Mercy, and Ben Parker attended.

Public Observing Events:

May 1, 2022. Springfest at the Garden, Griffin, GA
9 members attended the solar observing at the UGA Gardens, Mark Grizzaffi, George Ruff, Sean and Chelsea Neckel, David and Rosanne Stone, Nelson Stephenson, Wade Simmons, and Kelly Mallard. The clouds finally dissipated during the last hour, and we observed some sunspots. The solar system scale model was a great success, and we may discuss a permanent model with UGA soon.

May 7, 2022. Public Observing at Lake Horton, Fayetteville, GA

Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Bill Honea, Mark Grizzaffi, Scott Hasson, and Wade Simmons all held out hope to the last moment for clear skies. However, none were to be found that night and the event ended with little to no observing.

May 15, 2022. Lunar eclipse viewing at Truman Boyle's house, Barnesville, GA

Alfred McClure, Truman Boyle, Sean, Chelsea, and Gianna Neckel waited patiently for clear skies on the night of the lunar eclipse. While it was never clear, it was clear enough to observe the eclipse deep into the umbra.

May 20, 2022. Public Observing at Indian Springs State Park, Flovilla, GA

Sean Neckel, David and Rosanne Stone, and George Ruff made the long drive to Indian Springs. Clouds early on threatened to close down the event, but the skies parted right at dusk and stayed clear all night.

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Solar System Observing – June 2022

Mercury may be visible at dawn very low on the horizon around mid-June. It will appear no more than 7° above the horizon before dawn.

Venus is visible in the morning sky at 4:30am until sunrise at around 6:00am.

Earth is right there. Just a little more to the right. Yes, there!

Mars is visible in the morning sky, rising around 2:45am, and staying visible until sunrise.

Jupiter is visible starting around 2:15am, visible until sunrise.

Saturn is visible at 1:20am, fading from view as dawn breaks.

Uranus is close to the sun and not observable.

Neptune is visible in a telescope starting around 1:45am.

Moon: FQ: 6/7 Full: 6/14 LQ: 6/20 New: 6/28

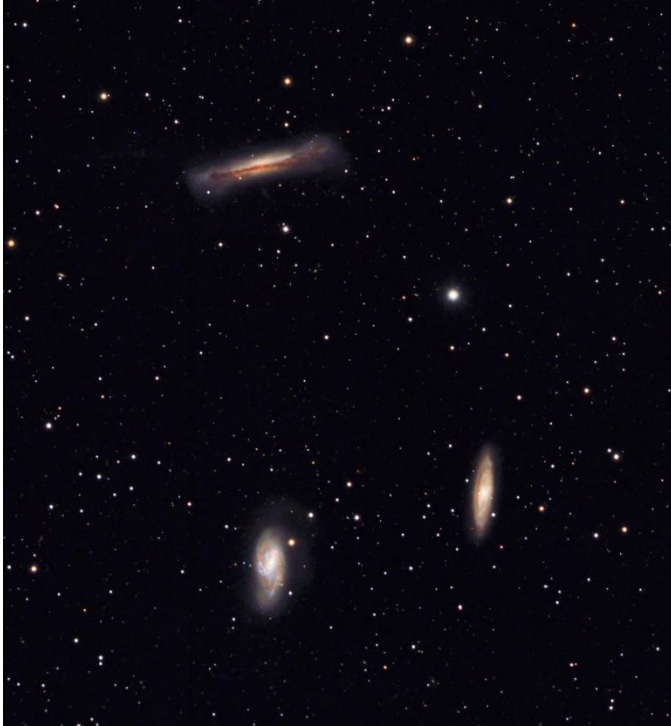
<https://in-the-sky.org/>

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Classified:

If you have something you would like to buy, sell, or trade, email the specifics, including your contact information to stnekel@gmail.com

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Leo Triplet, Courtesy of Alan Pryor

The Leo Triplet is a group of galaxies in the constellation of Leo. The group consists of Messier 65 and 66 plus NGC 3628. The brightness of these galaxies is in the magnitude range of 9.4 to 10.3 while the distance is about 35 million light years.

NGC 3628 is an edge on spiral galaxy with a dust lane down the middle. Due to the dust lane, it is often called the Hamburger Galaxy. There are also a number of quasars that appear alongside of it, but probably not visible in this photo.

M65 is a smaller spiral galaxy with some dust lanes. M66 is also a spiral galaxy with even more dust lanes. It shows some blue regions and a faint halo around it. 5 supernovae have been observed in M66. M65 and M66 can be seen with binoculars although 4-to-6-inch scopes are better. NGC 3628 will require at least a 6-inch scope, but as always 10 inch and bigger will yield more detail.

The Leo Triplet can be found halfway between Leo's hip star (Chertan) and Leo's rear knee star (Tsze Tseang). The photo consists of 4.33 hours of exposure with an FLI 16803 camera using a 5" Takahashi refractor.

The full-size image can be seen here:
[Leo Triplet](#)

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Trivia Answers:

1. Red dwarf stars.
2. It strikes the Earth's surface.
3. Sagittarius A*.
4. The photosphere.
5. 5.9 trillion.

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