

# THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT  
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

**Vol. 26, No. 8** **August 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, August 11 on Zoom and in person at the Garden. Carlos Flores will be giving a presentation on astrophotography using a DSLR camera.

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

## Public Observing Events:

No events planned for August.

## FRAC Observing Events:

Friday and Saturday, August 26-27, from sunset until whenever at Joe Kurz Wildlife Management Area.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

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## President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank a couple of our members who have recently volunteered to take on some projects for the club.

First, I'd like to recognize Wade Simmons. Wade has been mowing our observing field at Joe Kurz the past couple months. And even though it's been too rainy and cloudy to observe, I just wanted to personally say that I appreciate that Wade is taking the time to ready the field for us.

I would also like to thank Richard Thomas, who recently volunteered to help at my daughter Gianna's school, The Foundry, in Fayetteville. The Foundry is a charter school, grades 9-12, and they are doing an astronomy project this fall. They will be learning about astronomy and building a telescope. Richard has taken the reins on this and will be helping in their classroom on Fridays this fall. Thank you, Richard!!

Thanks,  
Sean

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## Club Projects:

### Starry Skies South

Dr. Michelle Wooten was generous enough to spend time with us during our July meeting, explaining how to identify, measure, and mitigate light pollution. [Starry Skies South](#) is a proposed chapter of the International Dark Sky Association (IDSA). FRAC is one of the first astronomy clubs in the region to show an interest in participating in the effort to mitigate light pollution. I encourage you to participate, even if it is just to sit in on the meetings. Starry Skies South meets on Zoom on the first Thursday of each month. Here is a link to the meeting on Thursday, August 4 at 8pm EDT. <https://uab.zoom.us/j/5674103642>

### The Foundry School

[The Foundry School](#) in Fayetteville is having an astronomy project / class this fall. They will be building a telescope and learning about astronomy. Some of their students may be joining us in the field at Joe Kurz and Lake Horton, and I would encourage you to help them learn the sky. If you would like to help in the classroom, please contact [Sean](#) and I will get you in touch with the school. Classroom project days are Fridays from about 9am-2pm through December.

Students and teachers will be attending our September meeting. I would like to do a telescope demo for them, so if you would be willing to bring your scope to the Garden and set it up, either indoor or outside, please let me know!!

### Solar System Model

No updates on the permanent solar system model.

## FRAC T-Shirts

T-shirts are still delayed. Delivery TBD.

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## Astronomy Trivia:

1. What is the densest planet in the solar system?
2. What are Saturn's rings composed of?
3. What is the most common type of star in the Milky Way?
4. What are the 3 types of light pollution?
5. What is the most common element in the Sun?

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## Previous Meetings/Activities:

### July Events:

FRAC Meeting - July 14, 2022 - 7:30pm on Zoom.

- 18 club members participated on Zoom: Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Richard Thomas, Bill Evans, Carlos Flores, Mark Grizzaffi, John Cruickshank, David and Rosanne Stone, Alan Pryor, Wade Simmons, Ben Barker, Kelly Witte, Elaine Stachowiak, Dawn Chappell, Mark Sutton, King Davis, and Felix Luciano.
- Our guest speaker, Dr. Michelle Wooten from the University of Alabama at Birmingham gave a fantastic presentation on preserving our southern starry skies. Dr. Wooten is an International Dark Sky Delegate and is leading efforts to address light pollution throughout the southeastern United States. See info above!

### FRAC Observings:

The July observing events on 7/29 and 7/30 were a rainy and cloudy mess. Again.

### Public Observing Events:

**July 8-9, 2022:** Stargazing at Lake Horton, Fayette County Rec Department. Both nights were canceled due to clouds.

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## Solar System Observing – August 2022

**Mercury** is close to the sun and not visible.

**Venus** is visible in the morning sky at 5:00am until sunrise at around 6:30am.

**Earth** needs some maintenance work.

**Mars** is visible in the morning sky, rising around 1:15am, and staying visible until sunrise.

**Jupiter** is visible starting around midnight, visible until sunrise.

**Saturn** is visible around 10:15pm, fading from view as dawn breaks.

**Uranus** is visible with a telescope at around 1:00am.

**Neptune** is visible in a telescope starting around 12:30am.

**Moon:** FQ: 8/5 Full: 8/11 LQ: 8/19 New: 8/27

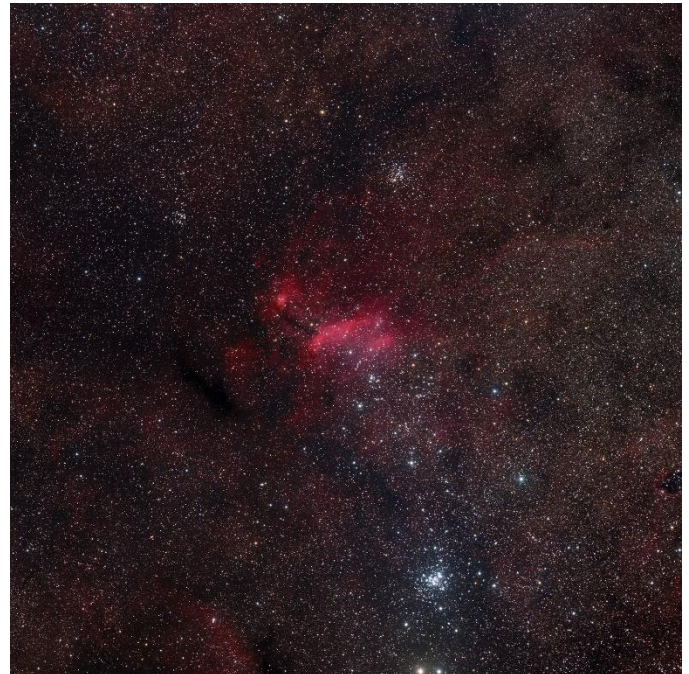
<https://in-the-sky.org/>

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### Classifieds:

If you have something you would like to buy, sell, or trade, email the specifics, including your contact information to [stneckel@gmail.com](mailto:stneckel@gmail.com)

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IC 4628, Courtesy of Alan Pryor

To find IC 4628 you should count bright stars down the back of Scorpius. Start with Antares as star 0. Go to the second and third stars from Antares, and IC 4628 will be between them. It is pretty much in the center of the Milky Way's plane. It is also known as the Prawn Nebula, and it is about 6000 light-years away. In the center you see the emission nebula. You also see the bright open cluster of stars, NGC 6231. A little to the left you see the dark nebula, and the background consists of the stars of the Milky Way. In much of the background the population of dimmer stars of the Milky Way is so dense that they almost look like clouds themselves.

A full size photo of IC 4628 can be found at [IC 4628](#).



NGC 3432, Courtesy of Felix Luciano

AP130GT @ FL 819mm  
ST8300M, LRGB Filters  
LUM 12 subs X 600sec  
RGB 7 subs X 300sec

From Wikipedia:

NGC 3432 is a spiral galaxy that can be found in the constellation Leo Minor. It is seen edge-on and with its current interaction with UGC 5983, a nearby dwarf galaxy, it features tidal filaments and intense star formation, which is why it was listed in Halton Arp's Atlas of Peculiar Galaxies. [Wikipedia](#)

A full size image can be found here: [NGC 3432](#)

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### Trivia Answers:

1. Earth. The average density of Earth is 5.52 grams per cubic centimeter (g/cm<sup>3</sup>)
2. Mostly ice and rock.
3. Red dwarf stars may make up as much as 75% of the Milky Way. Not one is visible from Earth with the naked eye, even though 50 of the 60 closest stars to Earth are red dwarfs.
4. Skyglow, glare, and light trespass.
5. Hydrogen accounts for almost 75% of the Sun's mass.

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