

# THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT  
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

**Vol. 27, No. 9** September 2023

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

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## Club Calendar:

**FRAC Meeting:** Thursday, September 14, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Wade Simmons has a recording from Alan Shepard's first flight into space that will be shared. For those of you interested in hearing this, I would definitely recommend attending in person as Zoom sometimes does not do well with shared media.

## Public Observing Events:

We have two public events scheduled for September. On Friday, September 1st we have a public observing at Lake Horton in Fayetteville with a weather make-up date on Saturday, September 2nd. (This event was canceled due to weather)

On Friday, September 8th we have a public event scheduled for Indian Springs with a weather make-up date on Saturday, September 9th, both at 8pm.

## FRAC Observing Events:

On Friday, September 15th and Saturday, September 16th we have our private observing event at Joe Kurz wildlife management area from Sunset until whenever.

Remember if you are the last to leave and the gate was locked when you arrived, lock our combination lock to the other lock on the chain when you go.

The lock code is 9321.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

## President's Message:

Hello FRAC Members,  
Sorry for the lateness of the newsletter again. Between the holiday weekend and work it has been a very busy time for me. I will endeavor to get these out in a more timely fashion.

Sean

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## Club Projects:

### Globe at Night

This month's campaign is September 5-14, and will use the constellation [Cygnum](#).

Details of the process are here:

<https://globeatnight.org/6-steps.php>

### FRAC T-Shirts

T-shirts are still available. They are \$20 at all future FRAC gatherings.

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## Previous Meetings/Activities:

### August Events:

FRAC Meeting - August 10, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

10 members attended in person: Sean Neckel, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Alfred McClure, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Larry and Twila Dove, George Ruff, and Ben Barker.

11 Members attended the meeting on Zoom: Mark Grizzaffi, Dave Mandell, King Davis, Alan Pryor, Chelsea Neckel, Jonathan and Caleigh Thiessen,

Scott Hasson, Mark Sutton, John Cruickshank, and Richard Schmude.

- Sean indicated anyone interested in restoring a 10" DOB donated to the club to contact him by email at [stneckel@gmail.com](mailto:stneckel@gmail.com).

- Mark Sutton suggested club funds are available to purchase an overhead projector for club use at meetings.

- Mark Sutton said there is a need to add a couple of signers to the new club checking account. He suggested Mark Grizzaffi. Sean will coordinate in the next month or two.

- Reminder to checkout new website designed by Chelsea.

- George mentioned he has taken the scaled model Solar System around various places in middle Georgia. Still working on setting up the model in the Gardens.

- Tabled the 2024 Solar Eclipse club attendance discussion until Aaron is available.

- Sean did a presentation on vintage Voyager photos.

- Dr. Schmude mentioned the upcoming partial solar eclipse on 10/14/2023.

### Welcome New Members!

FRAC would like to welcome our newest members, Jonathan and Caleigh Thiessen, and Carlie and Eric Heckman. Welcome to FRAC!

### FRAC Observings:

No information about the club observings on August 11th and 12th.

### Public Observing Events:

On August 5th we had a public observation at Lake Horton in Fayetteville, Ga. The skies were perfect. We had around 36 guests and we had four scopes set up by Wade Simmons, George Ruff, Rosanne Stone and David Stone. The showstopper was at the end of the evening when Saturn made an appearance.

On August 18th we had a public observation at Indian Springs State Park in Flovilla. Alfred McClure, Sean Neckel, George Ruff, Ray Goodfellow, Clayton Wilson, Wade Simmons, and David and Rosanne Stone all showed up to share the night sky with the public. Unfortunately, just as we were ready to start observing, clouds took over the night sky. It was frustrating because the predicted forecast was for clear skies all night.

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### Solar System Observing - September 2023

**Mercury** is very close to the sun and not easily observable.

**Venus** is approaching inferior conjunction with the sun and is not observable.

**Earth** is taking another lap.

**Mars** is close to the sun and not easily observable.

**Jupiter** is visible in the morning sky around 1am until dawn.

**Saturn** is becoming visible around 11pm until dawn.

**Uranus** is visible in a telescope starting around 1:30am.

**Neptune** is visible in a telescope starting around midnight.

**Moon:** LQ: 9/6 New: 9/14 FQ: 9/22 Full: 9/29  
<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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Cocoon Nebula, taken 8/31/22. Courtesy of Alan Pryor.

This is a photo of the Cocoon Nebula. It is also known as Caldwell 19 or IC 5146. It is surrounded by the dark nebula, Barnard 168. The dark nebula extends farther out and is best seen in the full-sized photo which can be found at [CocoonFullSize](#). The Milky Way stars form the background, and it is noticeable that the Cocoon and the dark nebula are blocking out many stars of the Milky Way background. The Cocoon is a very faint emission nebula with dark lanes going through it. It is also a star forming region. It will take at least a 14" telescope to see it. The Cocoon is in the constellation of Cygnus. It is about 12 degrees northeast of Deneb. That is about twice the distance between Deneb and Sadir.

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