

# THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT  
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 27, No. 10                      October 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: **Chelsea Neckel**; Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**; NASA Contact: **Felix Luciano**

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## Club Calendar:

**FRAC Meeting:** Thursday, October 12, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. No program scheduled as of this time.

## Public Observing Events:

On Friday, October 6th at 7:30pm we have a public observation at Lake Horton in Fayetteville with a weather make-up date for Saturday, October 7th.

On Friday, October 20th at 7:30pm we have a public observation at Indian Springs in Flovilla with a weather make-up date for Saturday, October 21st.

## FRAC Observing Events:

On the weekend of October 13th and October 14th we have our club observation at Joe Kurz in Gay, Ga.

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,

I'd like to extend a special thank you to Wade Simmons for putting together a fantastic FRAC scarecrow. Please take a look at his handiwork below, and if you have a chance, visit the UGA Gardens on Saturday, October 21 from 11am to 3pm for 'Scarecrow Saturday'.



\*\* Editor's note – Thank you Wade. That is an awesome FRAC scarecrow. Cute and unique. \*\*

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## Club Projects:

### Globe at Night

This month's campaign is October 4-13, and will use the constellations [Pegasus](#) and [Cygnus](#).

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:

### September Events:

FRAC Meeting - September 14, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

9 members attended in person: Sean Neckel, Carlos Flores, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Ben and Mercy Barker, and Mark Grizzaffi.

7 Members attended the meeting on Zoom: Aaron Calhoun, Clayton Wilson, Elaine Stachowiak, Brian Kennedy, John Cruickshank, George Ruff, and Felix Luciano.

- A couple of members were interested in the 10" DOB needing work. Extended the invitation to repair to anyone else interested. Anyone interested should contact Sean at [stneckel@gmail.com](mailto:stneckel@gmail.com)
- Aaron - Gave a review of current NASA/Space news items.
- George - Update on Solar System model showings. One was at Indian Springs.
- Brief discussion on whether there was any interest in a group viewing of the upcoming solar eclipse in 2024. A couple of members mentioned their own plans but no interest in a group plan.
- Wade presented an audio of Alan Shepherd's 15-minute flight in 1961. Sean will get a copy to the members.

### Welcome New Members!

FRAC would like to welcome our newest members, Dan Ross and Justin Faulkner. Welcome to FRAC!

### FRAC Observings:

The September observing nights were rainy and cloudy.

## Public Observing Events:

The public observing event at Lake Horton scheduled for September 1-2 was canceled due to clouds.

On September 8th, we had an observation at Indian Springs. We all had a good time showing the night sky to about twenty-five guests. Club members who participated were Bill Evans, Craig Helf, Addie Helf, John Cruickshank, Wade Simmons, Carmen Simmons, David Stone and Rosanne Stone.

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## Solar System Observing - October 2023

**Mercury** is observable starting about an hour before dawn.

**Venus** is visible from around 4am until dawn.

**Earth** can be a bit much sometimes.

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

**Jupiter** is visible starting around 9:30 pm until dawn.

**Saturn** is visible around 8:45 pm until 3:30am.

**Uranus** is visible in a telescope from 11pm until dawn.

**Neptune** is visible in a telescope starting at 8:30 pm until 4:45 am.

**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)

For sale:

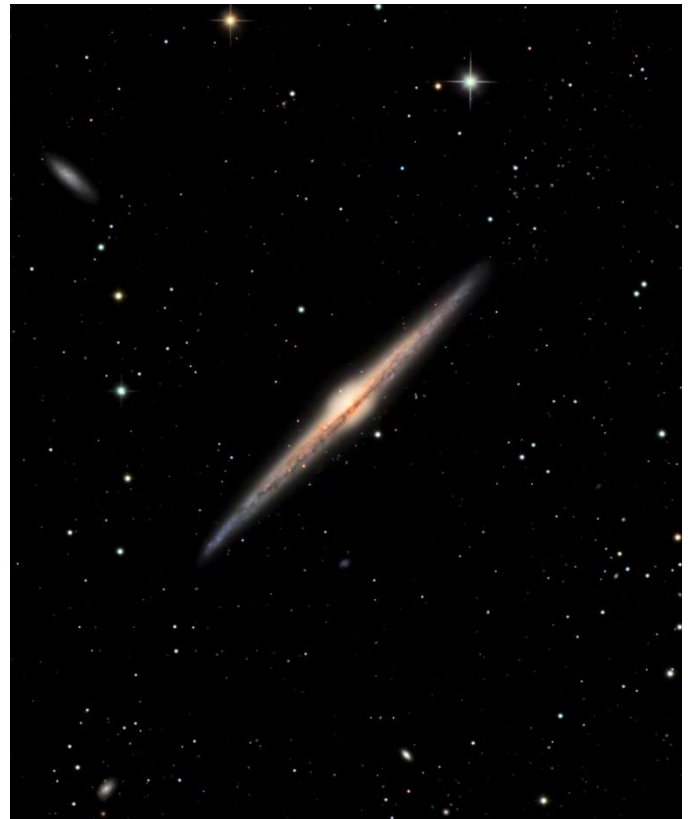
iOptron SkyGuider Pro  
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iOptron Tall Tripod with 1.5" legs  
Hard case

\$475.00

Brian Kennedy

770-490-1339

[briankennedymail@gmail.com](mailto:briankennedymail@gmail.com)



NGC 4565, The Needle Galaxy. Courtesy of Alan Pryor.

NGC 4565 or the Needle Galaxy is in the constellation of Coma Berenices. It is one of the best edge-on galaxies. Its distance is not known accurately, but it is thought to be between 40 and 50 million light-years from Earth. It is thought to be a barred spiral galaxy from data from the Hubble telescope. Note the dust lane that goes down the middle of it. 240 globular clusters have been identified in this galaxy by space-based telescopes. There are two satellite galaxies around this galaxy. I widened the field of view to show 4 other faint galaxies. This galaxy is part of another galaxy cluster. The exposure was 4 hours with a 14-inch telescope.

A full size image can be seen at [NGC 4565](#).

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## **Exploring the Moon with Robert Reeves**

Observing and Understanding our Natural satellite

Written and illustrated by *Robert Reeves*

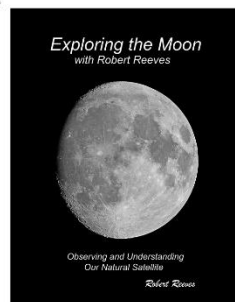
The Moon is a perfect urban backyard target for your telescope, visible most of the month and unaffected by light pollution. Through dozens of issues of *Amateur Astronomy Magazine*, Robert Reeves showed us that a look at the Moon through a telescope is much an exercise in cosmic art as it is science.

In his new book *Exploring the Moon with Robert Reeves*, Robert helps the reader appreciate the Moon's beauty as well as the science of the Moon. Robert helps us see the Moon as both a mysterious world puzzled over in the past and a world full of promise for future exploration. Robert explains the nuances of the Moon and its varied geology to bring context to its face and give the Moon a personality, and making the Moon a valued nighttime friend.

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