

THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 28, No. 3 **March 2024**

Officers: President, **Sean Neckel**; Vice President, **Alfred McClure**; Secretary / ALCOR **Mark Grizzaffi**; Treasurer, **Mark Sutton**; Board of Directors: **Aaron Calhoun, Bill Evans, 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, March 14, 2023, 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Sean Neckel will give a brief overview about how a GO-TO scope works, how to get it set up, and setting up aiming devices like finder scopes and Telrad finders.

Public Observing Events:

We have a public event scheduled for Friday, March 15th with a weather make-up date for Saturday, March 16th at Indian Springs State Park from 7:30 till 10:00.

FRAC Observing Events:

Our club event for March is scheduled for March 8th and 9th at Joe Kurz wildlife management area from sunset till 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,

Our club roster now lists 66 members as of this writing - the most we've ever had during my time with FRAC. We have definitely been doing something right to have gotten the attention of so many new members in the past year. So, to all of you who have contributed to getting our name out there, I just wanted to say THANK YOU!!

And to all of our newest members, welcome to FRAC!

A reminder that we are currently collecting dues for 2024. You can send dues from your phone using the Venmo app using the account @fracmoney24. Be sure to search for a business account. You can also scan the QR code below with your phone. This is the preferred method of payment for your dues.



If you still prefer cash or check, you can pay at the next meeting, or send to:

Mark Sutton
107 Pintail Way
Locust Grove, GA 30248

Checks need to be made out to Flint River Astronomy Club.

Sean

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Club Projects:

Globe at Night

This month's campaign is March 1 to March 10, and will use the constellations [Orion](#) and [Gemini](#).

Details of the process are here:

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

This will be the second year we are participating in the Globe at Night project. Keep those observations coming, and help us show the effects of increasing light pollution year to year.

FRAC T-Shirts

More T-shirts are in!! They are \$20 at all FRAC gatherings.

Amateur Astronomy Series by the Kalamazoo Astronomy Society

The next amateur astronomy lecture will be "Introduction to Astrophotography" on March 9 from 1-3pm.

Full details on the series and how to register can be found on the Introduction to Amateur Astronomy web page:

<https://www.kasonline.org/amastro.html>

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February Events:

FRAC meeting - February 8, 2023 - 7:30pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

18 FRAC members attended our monthly meeting in person: Sean Neckel, Mark and Terri Sutton, Alfred McClure, Carlos Flores, Carmen and Wade Simmons, Nelson and Kathy Stephenson, Tom Moore, George Ruff, Alan Pryor, Bill Evans, Rosanne and Dave Stone, Brian Kennedy, Ben Barker, and Steve Hyde.

7 Members joined us on Zoom: Dave Mandell, Elaine Stachowiak, Erika Martinez, Mark Grizzaffi, Kevin Yang, George Ruff, and Aaron Calhoun.

- Officers for 2024 were confirmed: Sean Neckel, President; Alfred McClure, Vice President, Mark Grizzaffi, Secretary; Mark Sutton, Treasurer.
- Board members for 2024 were confirmed: Bill Evans, George Ruff, and Aaron Calhoun.

- AL outreach awards were presented to Carmen Simmons, Bill Evans, Kathy Stephenson, and Nelson Stephenson. Stellar outreach awards were presented to Alan Pryor and George Ruff.
- Mark Sutton gave a fantastic presentation on getting started in astronomy. His presentation can be found [at this link](#).
- George Ruff gave a status on the club Solar System Model. He is still attempting to get written permission from UGA to install a permanent exhibit in the Gardens.
- Sean Neckel gave a presentation on safety and use of solar filters. Links for solar filter reference materials can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

FRAC Observings:

February FRAC observing nights were a cloudy mess.

Public Observing Events:

February events at Lake Horton in Fayetteville on February 29 and March 1 were canceled because of the cold and wind.

Welcome New Members!

Doug Griffith, Vicky and Shawn Saylor, and Susan Crawford joined FRAC in February. Welcome to FRAC!!

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Astronomy Trivia – Equinox Edition

1. On what days of the year are night and day approximately equal length?
2. Which equinox occurs in the southern hemisphere in March?
3. True or false: Equinoxes occur on the same day every year.
4. Which 2 places on Earth see daylight at the same time *only on the equinox*?
5. How often do equinoxes occur on Saturn?

Solar System Observing – March 2024

Mercury is very close to the sun and not observable.

Venus is visible from around 6am until dawn.

Earth is just about to Spring into action!

Mars just passed behind the sun and is not observable.

Jupiter is visible from about 6:50pm until around 11pm.

Saturn is very close to the sun and is not observable.

Uranus is visible in a telescope from 7:30pm until midnight.

Neptune is close to the sun and not observable.

Moon: LQ: 3/3 New: 3/10 FQ: 3/17 Full: 3/25

<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

For Sale:

iOptron Skyguider Pro

Williams Optics High Latitude Vixen all metal base

iOptron Tall Tripod with 1.5" legs

Pelican style hard case

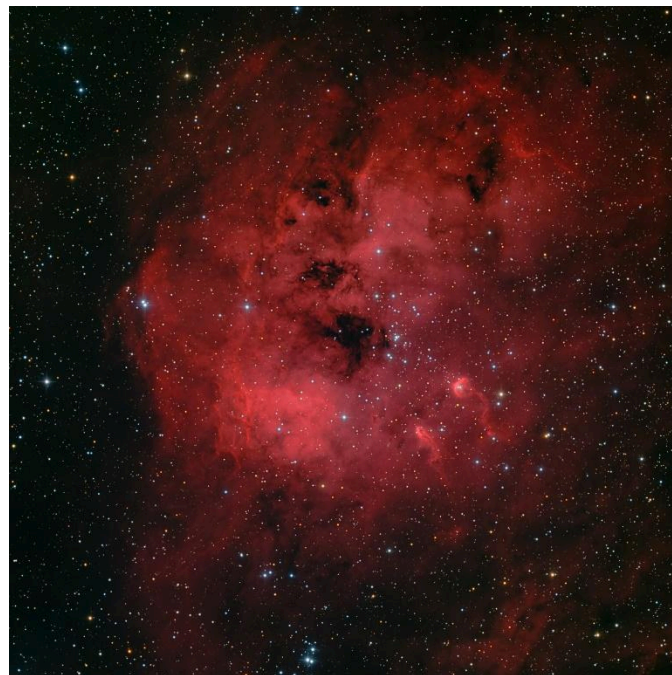
Asking \$400.00

Brian Kennedy

770-490-1339



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The Tadpole Nebula (IC410). Courtesy of Alan Pryor. Taken 2/2/2024

The Tadpole Nebula, or IC410 is an emission nebula in the constellation of Auriga. It is a star forming region about 12,000 light-years away. The nebula is about 100 light-years in diameter, and the part that looks like a tadpole is about 10 light-years long.

If you draw a line from Capella (0.08 magnitude star in Auriga) to Elnath (1.65 magnitude star in Taurus) then the Tadpole Nebula is 2/3's of the way from Capella to Elnath. You will need a 12" scope and an O-III filter to get a good look at this nebula. The photo was taken with a 14" scope with a total exposure of 3.5 hours.

A full-size image can be seen at [Tadpole Nebula](#).

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Answers:

1. The vernal and autumnal equinox (March 20 and September 22, 2024)
2. The autumnal equinox.
3. False.
4. The north and south poles.
5. Every 14.7 years (next is May 6, 2025)

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