

# THE FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT  
RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

**Vol. 28, No. 4** April 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: **Carmen Simmons**;  
Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**;  
NASA Contact: Felix Luciano

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## **Club Calendar:**

### **FRAC Meeting:**

Thursday, April 11, 2023, 7:30pm will be on ZOOM ONLY! Due to the eclipse and travel, there really is not any kind of program planned. Please attend on Zoom and if you have them, share your eclipse stories and pictures.

### **Public Observing Events:**

We have our first public event on April 19th with a weather make up date on April 20th at Lake Horton from 8:00 to 10:30.

We have our second public event on April 26th with a weather make up date on April 27th from 8:00 to 10:30 at Sprewell Bluff in Upson County.

### **FRAC Observing Events:**

We have our club event at Joe Kurz on April 5th and 6th. Quite a few members are traveling that weekend for the eclipse. If you do attend the Joe Kurz nights, someone please take attendance and

forward the list of members to me after at [stneckel@gmail.com](mailto:stneckel@gmail.com)

The gate is now locked, so please be sure to lock our combination lock on to the other keyed lock on the chain when the last person leaves for the night.

The lock code is 9321.

Please keep checking your email for updates regarding club events.

### **President's Message:**

Hello FRAC Members,

Just a couple items this month. Our April meeting will be Zoom only - no in-person meeting. Please attend on Zoom, and share your eclipse stories and pictures.

If you are traveling for the eclipse, drive safely, observe safely, and remember that any members of the public you interact with regarding astronomy counts as outreach hours for AL awards. Be sure to let me know if you have any to report at [stneckel@gmail.com](mailto:stneckel@gmail.com)

If you have not paid your dues as of this writing, you are late. Please remit your dues on Venmo using the business profile [@fracmoney24](https://www.venmo.com/@fracmoney24), or send a check or cash to the address below.

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 31 to April 9, and will use the constellation [Leo](#).

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.

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### **March Events:**

FRAC meeting - March 14, 2024 - 7pm at the UGA Gardens and on Zoom.

19 FRAC members attended our monthly meeting in person: Sean and Chelsea Neckel, Wade and Carmen Simmons, Larry and Twila Dove, George Ruff, Alfred McClure, Dave and Jocelyn Mandell, Susan Crawford, Steve Hyde, Dave and Rosanne Stone, Ronda Dyer, Brian Kennedy, Tom Moore, Dwight Harness, and Ben Barker.

4 Members joined us on Zoom: Mark Grizzaffi, Carlos Flores, Brent Summers, and Kevin Yang.

- Mark G submitted club info to AL for new AL website
- Carmen Simmons now has control of the club website from Chelsea.
- George is waiting on written permission from UGA to install a club solar system model in the Gardens.
- Larry Dove gave a presentation on French Polynesian skies, especially the Southern Cross.
- Those members attending the meeting at the Gardens, assembled outside with their telescopes for some nighttime viewing.

### **FRAC Observings:**

March FRAC observing nights were a cloudy mess once again.

### **Public Observing Events:**

The March event at Lake Horton in Fayetteville on March 1 was canceled because of clouds.

Our club event at Indian Springs on March 16 was a huge success. It started off cloudy but as the night progressed the clouds gave way to the stars and we had a great night. The club members who showed and shared the night sky were George Ruff, Brian Kennedy, Rosanne Stone and David Stone. About twenty guests showed up and everybody had a great time.

### **Welcome New Members!**

Mark Austin and Jan Lamoreaux joined the club in March. Welcome to FRAC!!

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### **Solar System Observing – April 2024**

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

**Venus** is close to the sun and not observable.

**Earth** is 92.912 million miles from the sun and readily observable.

**Mars** just passed behind the sun and is not observable.

**Jupiter** is visible from about 8:20pm until around 10:40pm.

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

**Uranus** is visible in a telescope from 9pm until 11pm.

**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](mailto: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



The photo is a full disk image of the sun. You can see the grainy structure of the surface quite vividly. It helps to zoom in a lot. There are solar prominences around the edge of the sun. In the middle you have a system of sunspots with really hot areas around the sunspot. There are some strong magnetic fields since you can see the grains have been elongated in that area, and the elongation points to that active region. The dark strands are also solar prominences, but this is how they look when they are not on the edge of the sun.

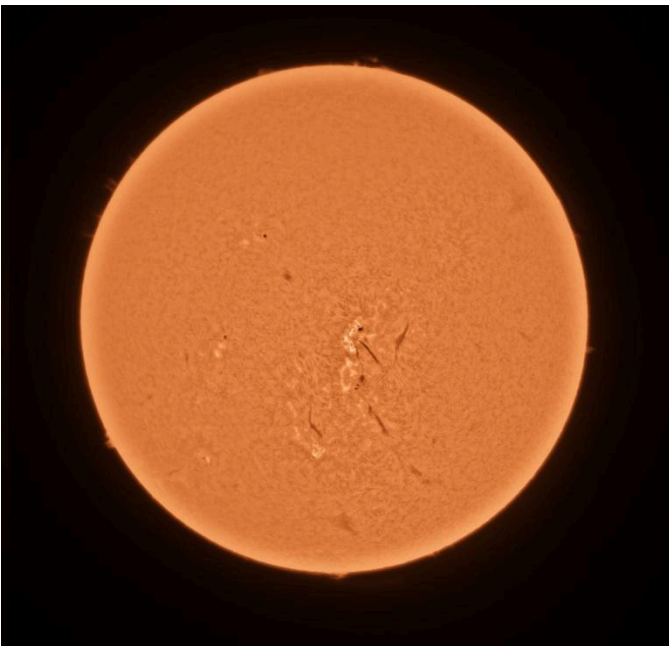
The orange color is false color that I added. My camera is monochrome so it shows up as black and white. However, the interferometer in the telescope only allows one band of light through. That band is actually about this color.

A full size photo can be seen at [the Sun](#).

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Solar Photo, Courtesy of Alan Pryor

***Ed. note: Never look directly at the sun without solar glasses, and never point your scope or binoculars at the sun without a properly installed solar filter. You will damage your eyes and destroy your scope's optics.***

March 8,2024, I, Alan Pryor, took a picture of the sun since there is heightened interest due to the solar eclipse.