THE

FLINT RIVER OBSERVER

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLINT RIVER ASTRONOMY CLUB

An Affiliate of the Astronomical League

Vol. 29, No. 6 June 2025

Officers: President, **Alfred McClure**;
Vice President, **Sean Neckel**;
Secretary / ALCOR **Terri Sutton**;
Treasurer, **Mark Sutton**;
Board of Directors: **Aaron Calhoun, Bill Evans, and George Ruff**; Program/Observing Coordinator: **Dave and Rosanne Stone**;
Social Media Coordinator: **Tom Partin**;
Webmaster: **Sean Neckel**;
Newsletter Editor: **Dawn Chappell**;
NASA Contact: **Felix Luciano**

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Club Calendar:

FRAC Meeting:

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 7:30 pm on Ellis Rd @ the UGA Gardens in Griffin and on Zoom. Carlos Flores will be giving a program on AP Photo Processing Techniques, using free software.

Public Observing Events:

· 6/13/2025 8:15pm — Indian Springs State Park Public Observing Event, Flovilla, GA
· (In case of clouds, the event will be held the following evening)
· 6/20/2025, 6/21/2025 — FRAC observing weekend at JKWMA

The gate is now locked so make sure to lock our combination lock on to the other keyed lock on the chain (NOT INTO THE CHAIN) when the last person leaves for the night.

The lock combination is 9321.

Reminder, you must have a hunting or fishing license to participate on a WMA, and they do check from time to time.

Please continue to check your email and the FRAC Facebook group https://www.facebook.com/groups/2002160466558902 for news updates.

FRAC Observing Events:

We had two public events in May, and both were cancelled due to clouds/weather.

We had our club event at Joe Kurz on the weekend of May 23rd. Friday night was perfect. Club members who attended were Tom Partin, Wade Simmons, Roger Kuter, Alfred McClure, Rosanne Stone, and David Stone.

I am not sure if anybody went on Saturday night so if you attended, please let either Terri Sutton, David Stone or Alfred McClure know so we can make sure to get your credit.

In June, we have one public event and one club event.

Our public event will be on Friday, June 13th and if we must cancel Friday we will try and have the event on Saturday, June 14th. The scheduled time is from 8:30 to 10:30 pm.

Our club event will be on Friday and Saturday night June 20th and 21st from dusk to whenever.

President's Message:

As some of you may know I am involved with a number of different things, and I should probably cut some of those out. One thing that I have noticed common is that most of the groups are dominated by gray hair. We do not seem to be able to reach the younger generation and make them feel welcome in our clubs, how do we overcome that to make everyone welcome?
One thing that I know is that in so many groups no one has an introduction, apprentice program or a mentor program. As an example, I have been involved in blacksmithing for over 25 years. A few years back there was a TV program that came on

the air called Forged in Fire. There were a lot of people attracted to this program and after watching one or two on TV they had the dream of jumping in the fire and making a sword. People would scour the countryside searching for anvils, post vice and forges to make their swords. After a short period of time many were leaving the hobby that they thought was going to be the best thing since sliced bread. Why have so many people left what they wanted to do? They did not have someone that could instruct, mentor, or assist them in their hobby. I see some of the same mindset happening in astronomy. People can come into the meeting and they see beautiful pictures of nebula or star clusters and they immediately think wow I can jump right into this and I'll be taking photography that my peers would just be mouthwatering to do, not realizing there is a steep learning curve in reaching that beautiful picture they have in their minds.
So, what is the answer? REMEMBER, this is OUR club, not MY club. Let me know what the membership thinks we need to do.

Alfred

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I received an email to share with everyone. Seems to be some helpful literature.

James Yoder here, I am a co-author of a new free PDF book called The Star Hopper's Guide to the Galaxy. I thought you might want to pass this information on to your club.

Thanks!
James Yoder

The Star Hopper's Guide to the Galaxy is a free PDF book created for astronomers in the northern hemisphere who do not have a GoTo telescope or are interested in finding objects using the star hopping technique.

The book along with additional resources can be downloaded from the ArtCentrics website at https://artcentrics.com/books/

The book primarily consists of star hop instruction sheets developed by Jim Mazur that were initially made available on his website Skyledge.net. This compilation contains over 170 instruction sheets with over 250 objects. Each sheet contains two star charts; the first chart is used to help orient you to the night sky and immediate area around the target using familiar constellations or asterisms such as the Big Dipper, the Summer Triangle, or the Great Square of Pegasus. The second chart is a detailed road map on how to hop to the highlighted objects. Information on the targeted objects is provided, as well as a small image of the object, when available.

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Intense solar storm headed towards Earth, blackouts and auroras expected – NASA alerts.
The X2.7-class solar flare — the most intense in 2025 so far — erupted from the Sun's most active region. This sunspot zone, now fully facing Earth, has raised concerns about further solar disturbances. The Sun has stirred up trouble — and wonder — all at once. Just as most were settling into a regular week, space agencies began raising alerts about a powerful solar storm heading our way. It is not every day the sky becomes both a threat and a spectacle.
Sun's activity at its peak this cycle
The X2.7-class solar flare — the most intense in 2025 so far — erupted from the Sun's most active region. This sunspot zone, now fully facing Earth, has raised concerns about further solar disturbances. Experts say this burst of solar radiation may lead to GPS glitches, radio signal loss and electrical disruptions. The flare has already caused a 10-minute radio blackout in the Middle East, according to the US NOAA.
The flare's radiation struck Earth's upper atmosphere, disturbing the ionosphere and affecting communication. Scientists also warned that coronal mass ejections (CMEs) could soon follow. These giant bursts of solar plasma could interfere with satellites and power systems. NASA has advised caution for astronauts and tech-based industries over the coming days.
Photo from NASA Article from:
https://www.moneycontrol.com/science/intense-solar-storm-headed-towards-earth-blackouts-and-auroras-expected-nasa-alerts-article-13035682.html

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FRAC T-Shirts
FRAC T-shirts are still available! They are $20 at all FRAC gatherings.

Club dues ---- Please turn in ASAP if you have not already done so. $15 by cash, check or by Venmo to Mark Sutton. Make check out to Flint River Astronomy Club sent to Mark’s address or at the meeting, or pay through Venmo@fracmoney24 (search for a business account)

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FRAC meeting:

Last month we had great attendance at the monthly club meeting.
Alfred McClure, George Ruff, Wade Simmons, Carmen Simmons, Tom Moore, Larry & Twila Dove, Tom Partin, Ronda Dyer, David & Rosanne Stone, Scott Hasson, David Pendergrast, Mike Steele (visitor)
On Zoom we had Sean Neckel, Clayton Wilson, John Cruickshank, Mark & Terri Sutton, and Alan Pryor.

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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

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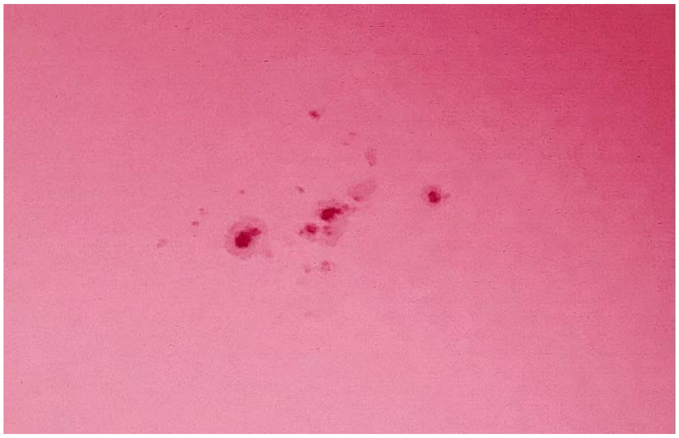

My first attempt at sunspot imaging. This image of sunspot 4100 was taken with my I-Pad using a Lunt 130mm telescope with a 16mm Nagler eyepiece. This sunspot spit out a corona mass ejection on May 30, creating aurora on June 1-2. The sunspot is classified as an EKC.

Thanks,
Larry Dove

NGC 3227 Alan Pryor
Image Acquired 3/22/25.

This is actually a photo of two galaxies, NGC 3227 and NGC 3226. They are interacting with each other, but it is unknown as to whether they will collide. NGC 3227 is a larger spiral galaxy with a Seyfert nucleus. This means it has a supermassive black hole with a mass of about 1,000,000 times that of our sun. It emits a lot of high energy radiation as it gobbles up material from nearby space. It is definitely classified as an Active Galaxy Nucleus, but the amount of energy expelled is variable. NGC 3226 is a smaller elliptical galaxy. These galaxies are in the constellation of Leo with a distance of around 70 million light-years. They have a brightness of magnitude 10.4. You can locate them by finding the top shoulder star of Leo, Algieba. Go 0.75 degrees east, and you should find them. You will need at least an 8” scope to view the nuclei of the galaxies. A 16” is needed to see the spiral arms.

This image took 4 hours and 10 minutes of exposure with a 14” scope.

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