

Our Night Sky for December 17th

Just a guess but I think other than a quick glance at some of the constellations like Orion or the Big Dipper or at Christmas a full moon, standing out in the cold to look at stars is not something you will spend much time doing.

Last week I mentioned Christmas gifts for astronomers in your family. The first book I suggest is 'Nightwatch' by Canadian astronomer Terence Dickinson. This book has several simplified sky charts. They show the brightest stars and the basic constellations on charts that are broken out by seasons. It is available as a spiral binding which allows it to sit flat making it easy to use in the dark. Another book that is a little more complicated to learn how to use easily is called 'The Audubon Field Guide to the Night Sky'. This guide has many sky charts with details and many excellent images. You won't find a more complete guide to the night sky. Expert information at your fingertips.

There is much variety in apps for your phone and software for your computer. There are links on our website to several free versions or visit the observatory during the spring open houses and we can help you select software that will work for you or help you decide on optics that will suit you.

Astronomy has become very popular and there are many more books, software and optics to help you enjoy Our Night Sky.