

PHOENIX ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY, INC.
Chuck Nash, Secretary
2736 West Rose Lane
Phoenix, Arizona 85017
(242-1581)



ASU Meeting -- "The Moon"

It seems that Arizona is blessed with more than just clear skies- those same skies are also warm. So, Arizona amateurs can consider themselves twice fortunate.

The meeting this month will be a story of "Birth and Life of the Moon" by Mr. Dan Matlaga of Arizona State University. It looks like an interesting program, so please plan to attend. The meeting place will be a little different this time. It will be in room 123 of the New Physics Wing on the ASU campus. Time will be 8:00 PM on Feb. 25. This will be a chance to find out what ASU has in terms of equipment and such for the students.

As soon as a room can be scheduled, publication arrangements made, and notices can be distributed, a special meeting will be called. According to the bylaws a group of six voting members can request such a meeting. G. Lucas, P. Jurca, K. Hepburn, T. Muggleton, D. Bogan, and R. Letterman have requested a meeting be called regarding some proposed changes in the bylaws. The time and details of the meeting will be announced in the next newsletter after they have been arranged. That will be an important meeting to attend.

After getting a sneak preview of Helen Linse's article for next month, I feel that you have a treat coming in her art work.

Incidentally, although a map was in route from Dan Matlaga at the time of typing of this page, our editor was breathing down my neck for "copy", so it was not able to be enclosed in this newsletter. Should any of you not be able to find where the New Physics Wing is located, give one of your officers a call.

Bill Anderson

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EDITOR : Cliff Vaughan 838-7107, Assoc. Editor : Florence Bossee

"FROM MY LITTLE BLACK BOOK" ----- Helen Lines

The following article was in the March 1957 issue of Sky & Scope and I had lots of fun looking at the objects mentioned. As the author has done such a superb job, I wouldn't change a word of his descriptions—



Star Party
 = March 19th =
 Carl Nuckolls
 place
 17513 El Pueblo Ct
 Fountain Hills
 837-9524
 Map in earlier
 issues -
 Lost Call
 Bob Letterman

THE BURIED TREASURE OF MONOCEROS

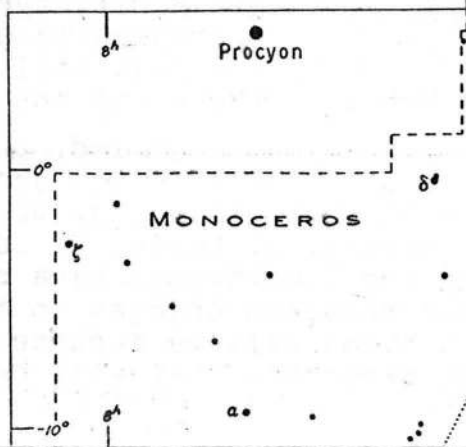
ORION, first among the winter constellations, has an obscure neighbor, unknown to the ancients and seldom observed by amateurs today. Following the "hunter of the beast" is Monoceros, the Unicorn, a dim area of the Milky Way.

The name of this neglected constellation is a Greek word meaning *one horn*. A pattern can hardly be drawn among its stars, and as Monoceros has no star brighter than 4th magnitude, it might well be described by Tennyson's line, "Swallowed in vastness, lost in silence, drowned in the deeps of a meaningless past."

To find Monoceros is easy if one looks for the great triangle formed by three 1st-magnitude stars, Procyon, Betelgeuse, and Sirius. This bounds the most interesting part of the constellation. An old stanza, saved for posterity by Admiral Smyth, praises this resplendent delta:

*"Let Procyon join with Betelgeuze,
 And pass a line afar,
 To reach the point where Sirius glows—
 The most conspicuous star;
 Then will the eye delighted view
 A figure fine and vast,
 Its span is equilateral,
 Triangular its cast."*

Mr. Copeland's Trigon is marked by a small triangle near NGC 2244.



Behind this starry frame is a beautiful hidden world, awaiting the owner of a small telescope who is willing to search in a stellar wasteland for the treasures of Monoceros. Among them Beta, a triple sun, is especially appealing. It is situated about two thirds of the way from Betelgeuse to Sirius. North of it, but relatively close, is the cluster NGC 2232, which might be called the Double Wedge.

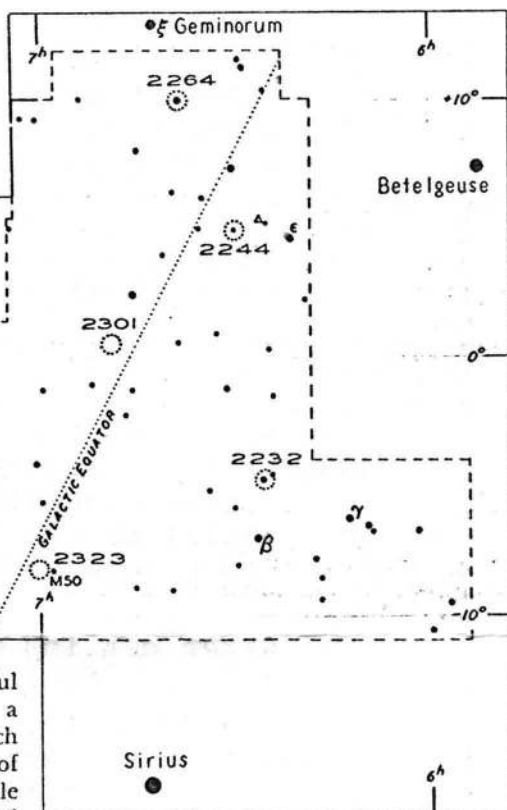
Slightly north and east of the center of the great triangle is NGC 2301, the Golden Worm, a cluster of 60 stars that forms a curving group topped with a tiny wedge of suns.

About two thirds of the way from Procyon to Sirius is another cluster, M50. According to Harlow Shapley it has 100 stars, but it is less striking than this number implies; its appearance suggests that we call it the Coil.

The fairest specimens of celestial jewelry in this region are the Christmas Tree, NGC 2264, and the Harp, NGC 2244. The first is a cluster of 20 gems not far from Xi Geminorum and well above the top line of our equilateral triangle. It has a bright star at the bottom of the tree and a double at the top, but much of the time the tree is not seen upright.

The Harp is a rather small cluster of 16 suns, most of them bright, near Epsilon Monocerotis (which itself is an easy double star). This cluster is the heart of a remarkable nebula known as the Rosette, more than 3,000 light-years from the earth. Although the nebulosity cannot be seen through ordinary telescopes, the Harp is compensation.

A little west and north of NGC 2244 nestles a beautiful, very small delta of stars, a delightful object I call the Trigon, which has seemingly been overlooked by almost all observers. Some of us will take special possession of this miniature marvel of three relatively bright stars, close to-



gether. This triple system was discovered by Wilhelm Struve over a century ago, and is number 939 in his catalogue; it consists of an 8th-magnitude star and two others of the 9th magnitude within about 40 seconds of arc.

When explored with a telescope, the entire constellation of Monoceros is radiant with a multitude of suns and with other clusters. Although celestial glories such as these were not especially made for Man, they will enrich leisure hours.

LELAND S. COPELAND
 1124 State St.
 Santa Barbara, Calif.