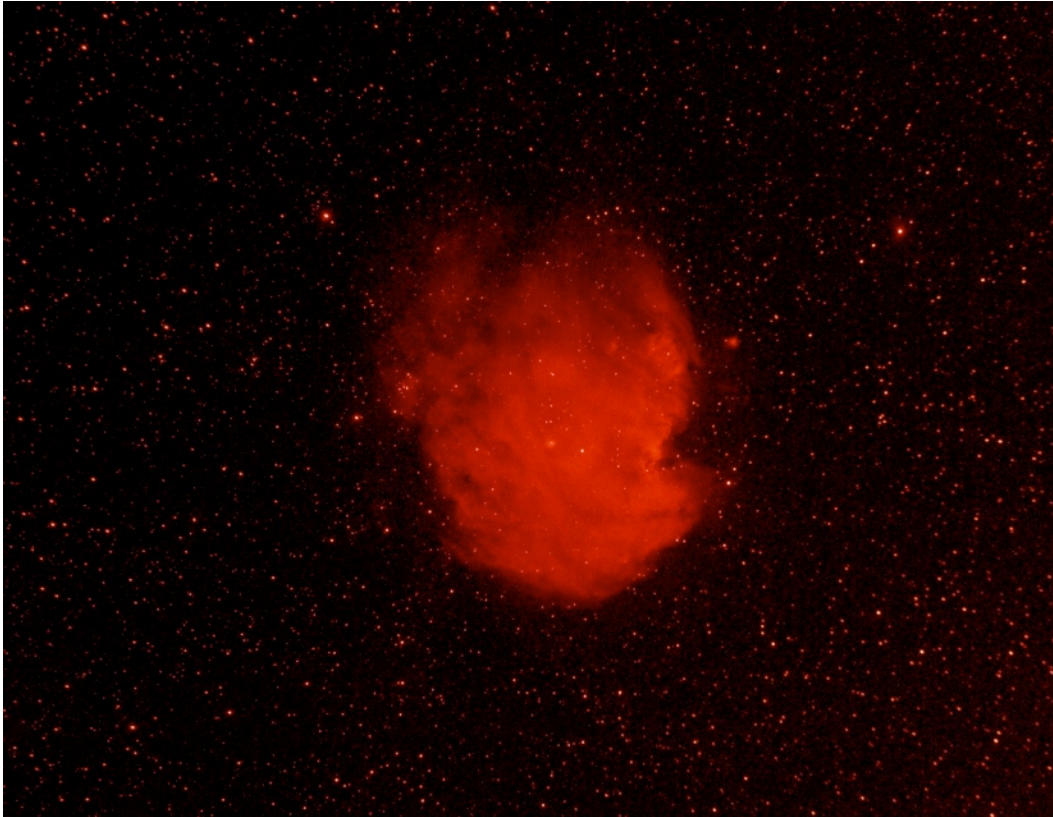


# SKYNEWS



NGC 2174 in Orion  
by Charles Banville

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## APRIL MEETING

Wednesday 11th, 2012  
University of Victoria  
A104 Bob Wright Bldg.  
3800 Finnerty Rd.

[www.victoria.rasc.ca](http://www.victoria.rasc.ca)

## On the Cover

NGC 2174 also known as the "Monkey Head" is an emission nebulae located in Orion and with lies NGC 2175. The hot young stars of NGC 2175 provides the energy for the various gasses to emit their light. In this image taken by Charles Banville a Hydrogen Alpha filter was used. It lies About 6,400 light-years distant

**Date:** April 6, 2012

**Location:** Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Victoria, BC

## April Speaker

**April 11, 2012 - Applications of Strong Gravitational Lensing: Utilizing Nature's Telescope to Study the Evolution of Galaxies - Kaushala Bandara, PhD**  
candidate, University of Victoria

In this talk, I will give an introduction to strong gravitational lensing and highlight the advantages which make it a valuable astrophysical tool. I will discuss one of the research projects of my PhD thesis, which utilizes the advantages of strong gravitational lensing to study the various processes that are responsible for the evolution of galaxies throughout cosmic times. In particular, I will introduce the [Sloan Lens ACS Survey](#), one of the most comprehensive gravitational lens discovery surveys to date and discuss the potential to conduct large scale discovery surveys with future observational facilities.



### The Presidents Report by Lauri Roche

April is Global Astronomy Month culminating in International Astronomy Day which we are celebrating here in

Victoria on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. Last month I asked you to put the date on your calendar so that you would make plans to come and drop by the Bob Wright Sciences building at UVIC for a while or take some time to volunteer for some part of the day. Thanks to all of you who have already signed up (or were pleasantly coerced by Sid Sidhu) to help and I encourage anyone else with some time to contact Sid and get yourself on the list. His e-mail is on the last page of this newsletter.

But what we really need is lots of visitors! And this is where I would like all the RASC members to help us out in one other way as well. If every person in our centre would talk to, tell about, and encourage 5 of your friends, relatives, and acquaintances to come to UVIC for some part of the day or evening programs then we would have an outstanding Astronomy Day. Please consider printing off several copies of our special poster and putting them up at your local grocery stores, library or coffee shop. You can download this from our website: [www.victoria.rasc.ca](http://www.victoria.rasc.ca) Look for the Astronomy Day link. We would love to have line-ups at the solar telescopes outside during the day and the large 32 inch telescope on the roof at night. It would be great to have crowds of people talking to our members demonstrating astrophotography or mirror making, kids taking part in crafts and games, lots of questions being asked and lively discussions going on. In the evening we want to fill the lecture room to capacity when Bob McDonald from CBC's Quirks and Quarks will be our feature speaker. Please help as we need as much publicity as we can muster!

Although we will always hope for clear skies for that day, we will be at the Bob Wright Sciences building rain or shine so come out on the 28<sup>th</sup> and help to celebrate the wonders of Astronomy.

See you there.

## Observatory News

by John McDonald

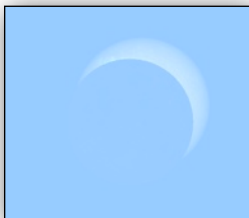
Our Victoria Centre Observatory has functioned well over the winter and spring season. We will be switching from Saturday to Friday openings starting May 18 so that we can fully participate in the CU observing nights. If you have not made use of the observatory consider becoming an Active Observer. Contact Sherry Buttner, 2nd Vice President to get on the list.

The Technical committee has been active in keeping things working and making improvements. Some of the recent changes include having a key to the washroom at the CU on a hook inside the shed, replacing the winXP operating system with win7, cleaning the optics on all the scopes, replacing the guidescope and mounting the UPS emergency power system off the floor.

Spring means it is time for some maintenance and upgrade work on the facilities. Plans include upgrades to the dew elimination system, inspection the mount drive, improving the operation of the 14" mirror and recollimation the scope and installation of a weather tower. This will involve some down time for the VCO but your techies will do their best to keep it short.

## Observing Events

### Solar Eclipse



Percentage covered as seen from Victoria

Put May 20th on your calendar for a nice celestial treat, a partial eclipse of the Sun. Victoria will see the Sun covered by about 82% at 5:16pm PDT. First contact is at 4pm and the eclipse ends at 6:25pm.

### Lunar Eclipse - June 4th



by John McDonald

The Moon will become a little darker than normal in the early morning hours of June 4th. Starting around 2 am the Moon will start to slide into the Earth's shadow and become progressively darker until the Southern most part seems to be missing. Greatest eclipse is at 3:03 am so if you're a night owl have a look outside and see an interesting sight. The Moon sets before it comes out of eclipse.

### Transit of Venus - June 5th



This is "the event" that all amateur astronomers want to see in their lifetime - a transit of Venus across the Sun. Members of the Victoria Centre will be setting up telescopes for these coming celestial events at various places around town for the public to see, so we need your participation. One telescope just won't do when you have a lineup of 30 people wanting to look. The most popular will be the Transit of Venus and the Solar eclipse. When the events get closer keep an eye on your emails for possible locations to setup. More hands make for light work.

More information can be found online

[www.transitofvenus.org](http://www.transitofvenus.org)

#### **Times to watch:**

Starts: 2:10 PDT  
Mid Point 5:30 PDT  
Ends: After Sunset  
Sunset 8:56 PDT



## Victoria Centre celebrates International Astronomy Day

**Saturday, April 28, 2012**

**University of Victoria, Bob Wright Building**

### Events:

#### Daytime - 10am - 4pm

Ask an Astronomer booth  
Big 32" telescope viewing  
Solar observing  
Telescope making  
Astro kids activities  
Walk among the planets  
Astro-photography



#### Evening - 7:00pm-10pm

**"Vacations In Space: The Hottest Holiday Spots in the Solar System." - Dr. Bob McDonald (Quirks & Quarks).**

*It's a fun presentation that looks to the future when people will go into space for fun, not just for science. Starts at 7:30PM in Lecture Theatre A104, Bob Wright Bldg.*



Observe celestial objects in the night sky through UVic's 32" big telescope. Other telescopes will be available on the roof of the Bob Wright building.

**Free admission** for everyone.

\$2.25 to park for the whole day at UVic.

*Thanks go to all our volunteers and corporate partners.*

[University of Victoria  
Astronomy Department](#)

[Lester B. Pearson United  
World College of the Pacific](#)

[NRC Herzberg Institute of  
Astrophysics](#)

## For Sale

Meade Classic LX200 12" Schmidt-Cassegrain (goto)



Been observatory mounted from new and in excellent mechanical condition  
No tripod or wedge with it but it's programmed to be used in Alt-Az if bolted on a pier

### Comes with:

Goto hand controller  
1 1/4" diagonal prism  
26mm Meade Super Plossl eyepiece  
4.8mm Tele-Vue Nagler eyepiece  
Telrad and finder

Original instruction book is available

Before use the motherboard needs a part replacing: a suggested name of a business to do the work will be given to the buyer

Detailed instructions to remove the motherboard and other essential equipment will be supplied

\$1,000 OBO

Contact Bill Almond by email or 250-478-6718

### Astronomer's Dream: Home & Astronomy income - North Island of New Zealand

New Large 4 bedroom house (150 meters squared – plus double garage) with separate

self-contained studio accommodation business. Private spa pool. Observatory: 4 meter (school sized) observatory on front lawn housing 15" Newtonian telescope. Parking for 3+ vehicles. Established gardens including a banana grove at the rear of the property. 5 minutes walk to beautiful Bayllys beach in affordable sunny Northland. 2km to golf course. 15 minutes to all the local amenities. Reluctantly selling due to a change in family circumstances and the need to relocate due to current family needs, but would prefer not to have to dismantle the observatory and shut down the business. I would love to find someone else who could carry on the [Astronomy Adventures](#) business.

Please contact Deborah on +64 9 439 1856 or by [e-mail](#) at for more details.

### Messier Marathon

*by Nelson Walker*

The 3rd Annual Messier Marathon was held March 23-24 and was a modest success .... In attendance were Nelson Walker, John McDonald, Greg Higgs, Janet Wallace, Liz Davidson, Dorothy Paul, Jim Stilburn, Jim and Micah Alders, and Michel Michaud.

All were set up on the pad outside the VCO (except those with binos only, and Michel, who was inside working on his latest project.

In any event, the conditions were somewhat variable, although always in large part clear (5/7). Readings on the SQM were in the low 20's. Observers described it as a "bit milky."

We plugged away until at least 2:00 AM, by which time all had left, except for Micah and his dad, and your humble narrator. At that time, Gregg Higgs had logged at least 51 objects, all from the VCO.

The three of us that remained then trundled down to the lower lot, where for the next four hours, Micah went to work on the Messiers in the Southern Sky, plus a few rising in the East. With his fully manual 6" dob and an iPod, he chipped away at these objects, one by one, over the city lights of Victoria. There were exactly five stars that could be seen in Scorpius, and exactly none that could be seen in Sagittarius, yet he knocked off one after the other. Occasionally he would say something like "I've got the Wild Duck Cluster," or "Do you want to see M14?" I would look at the sky and see nothing that would even lead one to find any cluster, let alone one on the list. Jim had nodded off in the back of their SUV, no small feat given the floodlights on the east wall of the shop. I tried to muster the energy to put my scope back up, but could do little more than watch Micah at work, and listen to crackpot radio, and reports of people claiming to be members of the Illuminati, or that they were in communion with aliens.

**ASTRONOMY CAFE**



**Fairfield Community Centre**

1330 Fairfield Rd. Victoria,  
7:30pm - 10pm

Call Malcolm at (778) 430-4136 for directions and information.

New comers are especially encouraged.



**New Observers Group**

Hosted by Sid Sidhu  
1642 Davies Road, Highlands. Call (250).391-0540 for information and directions.



**Email Lists**

**Observer / CU Volunteers / Members**

Contact Joe Carr to subscribe  
[web@victoria.rasc.ca](mailto:web@victoria.rasc.ca)

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday May - 9th 7:30pm - A104 Bob Wright Bldg, University of Victoria, 3800 Finnerty Rd.

**RASC Victoria Council for 2011 / 2012**

Past President John McDonald <a href="mailto:pastpres@victoria.rasc.ca">pastpres@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	Secretary / Recorder Mark Bohlman <a href="mailto:secretary@victoria.rasc.ca">secretary@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	National Representative Chris Gainor <a href="mailto:nationalrep@victoria.rasc.ca">nationalrep@victoria.rasc.ca</a>
President Lauri Roche <a href="mailto:president@victoria.rasc.ca">president@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	Librarian Michel Michaud <a href="mailto:librarian@victoria.rasc.ca">librarian@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	Light Pollution Abatement Mark Bohlman <a href="mailto:lpa@victoria.rasc.ca">lpa@victoria.rasc.ca</a>
First Vice President Nelson Walker <a href="mailto:vp@victoria.rasc.ca">vp@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	Website / E mail lists Joe Carr <a href="mailto:web@victoria.rasc.ca">web@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	New Member Liaison Sherry Buttner <a href="mailto:NewMembers@victoria.rasc.ca">NewMembers@victoria.rasc.ca</a>
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Treasurer Li-Ann Skibo <a href="mailto:treasurer@victoria.rasc.ca">treasurer@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	Telescopes / School Programs Sid Sidhu <a href="mailto:telescopes@victoria.rasc.ca">telescopes@victoria.rasc.ca</a>	<b>Members at Large</b>  Bill Almond, Jim Hesser, Alex Schmitt, David Lee