

June 2025

Meetings at Highland Road Park Observatory and online through YouTube and Jitsi

<https://meet.jit.si/brasmeet>

### **Calendar:**

- **28 May, 7PM: Astronomy on Tap at The Varsity**
- **8 June, 2PM: Volunteer Training at HRPO**
- **9 June, 7PM: BRAS monthly meeting at HRPO**
- **16 June, 9AM: Little Lambs Kid Camp in Lafayette**
- **28 June, 10AM: Dino Days at LASM**

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## Vice President's Word

Hi Everyone,

Another combined "State of the Club"/"Monthly Meeting Program" from Yours Truly here.

As far as the club news, we are plugging right along. I'm currently in communication with the appropriate folks at LSU to figure out how to get our online streaming...streamlined. I'm hoping to get this all figured out over the Summer and get us up and running. (Well...up and running a higher quality stream, anyway.) Nothing is as easy as it should be and in order to make it the best it can be, WITHOUT creating excessive cost for the club monetarily, it will take some coordinating between BRAS, LSU and BREC. Since we will be trying to utilize LSU's internet connections, the ball is currently in that court. I'll keep you updated on any progress. Wish us luck!

Our offer to donate the large Trekker telescope to the Louisiana Art and Science Museum was politely declined. They would love to have it, but space is just too limited. The very reason WE are trying to pass it along! We will continue to find a good home for the scope, though. Maybe one of you would have an interest?

On to the monthly meetings!

Our May meeting was great. Another round of applause for Dr. Singh and his cool presentation on the quantum theories with which he is involved. He also offered to come back in the Fall to give a brand new talk he's developing on Black Holes!

The June meeting will be a fun kick-off to Summer. Back by popular demand will be the Pizza Party! The club will have pizzas and sodas available to enjoy while you listen to ME (NOT by popular demand, sadly) talk about the famous Charles Messier. Many of us have heard the name and even know some of those famous night sky objects in his catalog, but who was he? How did the Messier catalog come about? Will there be enough pizza to keep you all awake? Get the answers to these questions and more at the June meeting on Monday, June 9th!

We'll have a 1st Quarter Moon on the 9th so after the indoor portion of the meeting is done, we'll

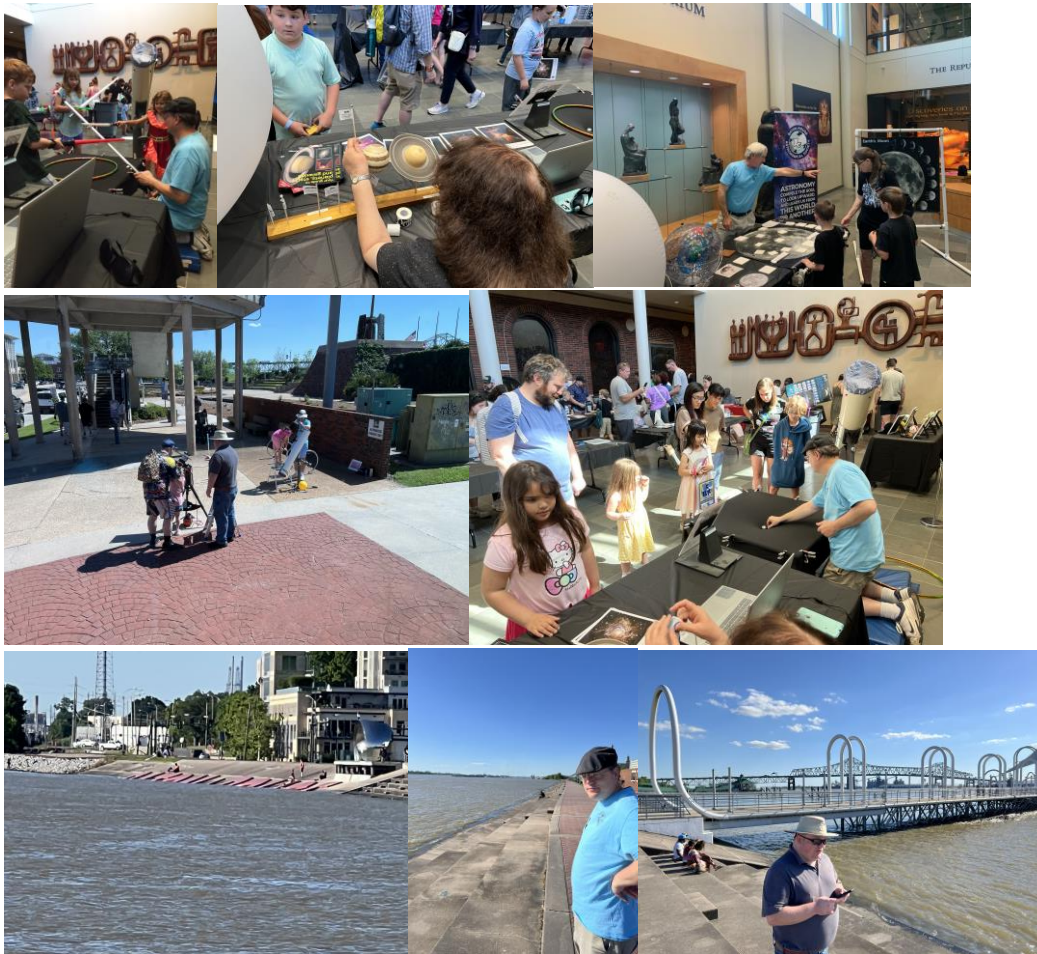
take to the outdoors and do some Lunar observing. This would be a great time to get started on the Astronomical League's (or even our OWN) Lunar Observing Club. Also, if you've got the Seestar app downloaded to your device, take a turn with the club's Seestar!

Last but not least, congratulations to Scott C. on a fun presentation last month for Astronomy on Tap over at the Varsity Theater! We had a pretty good contingent of club supporters there for him and we didn't even do any heckling!! Hopefully we'll get some more members involved with providing talks for them. It's the least we can do since we like to have THEM come out to OUR meetings so often.

Clear Skies,

Ben Toman

Vice President



Scenes from the May the 4<sup>th</sup> be with you event at LASM. Top: Ben fights ignorance with his gravity well, Roz blows the mind of a patron with the size of the solar system, and Scott acts like a lunatic for the moon. Middle: David and Chris treat the public to some live views of the sun and Ben explains his understanding of Einsteinian gravity to a bemused Dr. Penny. Bottom: Baton Rouge partially underwater, Ben and David take in the Mississippi at flood stage.

# Outreach Report

Hi Everyone,

We had a rather fun month of May. The Star Wars themed event at the LASM was a hit with around 1200 people showing up. (We were BUSY!) We also had a decent night for our final Sidewalk Astronomy of the season at Perkins Rowe. We rescheduled it to the Monday the day before the regular Tuesday hoping to get some better weather. It worked out a little bit and some folks got to see the Moon at least. We capped it off with a nice day at the Bluebonnet Swamp and Nature Center helping to celebrate their Birthday. In between big holes in the clouds, we were able to give a lot of people some great views of the Sun via H-Alpha, white light filtered scopes and the club's Seestar. Of course, our regular cadre of demos and exhibits were also on display and made for some great interactions with the community.

Many thanks to our volunteers for these events. Roz, Scott C., Chris and Annette R., David, Susan, Coy and Ben. We could not do any of this without the support of our volunteers. (Also, next time we'll keep a better eye on David to keep the Sun from melting him while doing Solar observing!)

Coming up in June, we've got a few things on the list. We'll be doing another Outreach Training session where we'll delve into some of our outreach materials and figure out how best to use them for our various outreach events. Next we'll be heading over to Lafayette for another visit to the Little Lambs kid camp. (We did this last year and it was a lot of fun! Chris and Annette come help us out here in Baton Rouge so often, it is only fair we do an event in their hometown so they get out of that long drive.) Finally, we've been invited back to the Dino Days event at the Louisiana Art and Science Museum. This is one of their most well attended events so we are sure to see a lot of people.

Take a look at these events and please consider coming out to volunteer. This is a great way to become more involved with the club and it just makes you feel good doing meaningful, educational community service. We always have fun, too!

I hope to hear from you and see you out there sometime soon!!

Clear Skies,

Ben Toman



## Upcoming Events

### **Sunday, June 8th**

2pm-4pm

Outreach Training Session

Highland Road Park Observatory

### **Monday, June 16th**

9:30am-11:30am

Little Lambs Kid Camp in Lafayette

(We will plan a carpool and likely stay for lunch with Chris and Annette)

### **Saturday, June 28th**

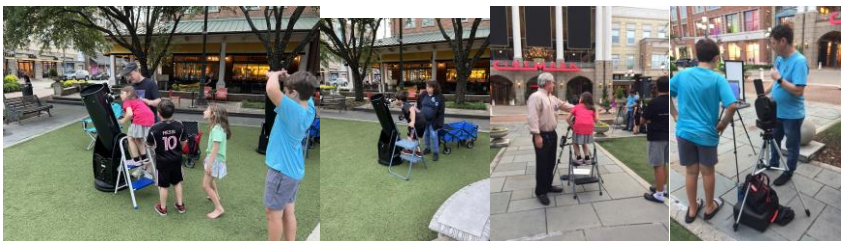
10am-2pm

Dino Days at the Louisiana Art and Science Museum

Demos, solar observing



From the Zoo Anniversary. Top: Scott talks about the layers of the Sun and Annette proves she's alive by talking solar system scale with patrons. Middle, Roz Shows how a frog hand puppet works while Susan supervises and students enjoy solar views. Bottom: Coy and David treat individuals to views of the sun.



Perkins Rowe: The last look of the season, Ben, Roz, Scott, and Coy set up at Perkins Rowe for one last Sidewalk Astronomy before the summer break.

# Secretary's Summary

## Monthly Meeting notes:

- Meeting called to order, 21 people in attendance
- Dr. Param Singh was introduced and gave a presentation on the Quantum Nature of the Big Bang—he has offered to come speak to the club again this fall about Black Holes.
- John spoke of his annual trip to TSP and winning a free mount tune-up, if anyone is interested contact him.
- Call for people to join the club for the Swamp's birthday celebration on that coming Saturday
- It was called to our attention that Craig Brendon has been in the hospital recovering from, we believe, trying to chew the ear off a bear—there was no word on the condition of the bear. Feel better Craig.
- A new round of volunteer badges are being ordered. If any one is interested, come to the meeting and put your name down on the sheet provided or contact Ben.
- A new round of club T-shirts are being ordered. If any one is interested, come to the meeting and put your name down on the sheet provided or contact Ben.
- There is an ongoing discussion of what to do with the classic 8" Newtonian from. The club will consider any suggestion and entertain any offer for purchase.
- Abby talked about her upcoming summer internship at LSU
- A small raffle was had and the 8" orange tube raffle continues.
- New members were introduced
- Meeting adjourned, several members stuck around to enjoy sky-viewing and imaging.

## Planning Meeting notes:

- New Dark Site possibilities were discussed, we have three good contenders, all within an hour of Baton Rouge.
- We are checking interest in reviving our annual dark sky star party beyond the Rockefeller trip
- Ideas for the white 8" newt were discussed
- A rundown of future speakers for the meetings was discussed
- Mention was made of the need to re-order volunteer badges and shirts
- We set up the next in our series of volunteer training days for 8 June at HRPO at 2PM



Center stage: Scott gives the first talk at LSU's Astronomy on Tap event for April. BRAS showed en-force to jeer Scott on, with Ben, Ashley, Roz, Scott, Joel, Chad, and Coy (and others) in attendance as Scott talked about how to do astronomy just for the fun of it.

## Observatory Notes

Nothing submitted to BRAS

# Sky Map



Centered on 15 June at 10PM. For an interactive sky map, go to <https://in-the-sky.org>



## Quick Picks—Events for June from Telescopius.com

- Sun 1 [Mars](#) 1.4°S of [Moon](#)
- Sun 1 Regulus 1.8°S of [Moon](#)
- Mon 2 [First Quarter Moon](#)
- Fri 6 Spica 0.5°N of [Moon](#)
- Sat 7 [Moon](#) Apogee at 405,553 km.
- Tue 10 Antares 0.3°N of [Moon](#)
- Wed 11 [Full Moon](#)
- Wed 11 [Venus](#) at Aphelion
- Mon 16 [Mars](#) 0.7°N of Regulus
- Wed 18 [Last Quarter Moon](#)
- Wed 18 [Saturn](#) 3.4°S of [Moon](#)
- Fri 20 Summer Solstice
- Sat 21 [Mercury](#) 4.8°S of Pollux
- Sun 22 Pleiades 0.6°S of [Moon](#)
- Sun 22 [Moon](#) Perigee at 363,178 km.
- Tue 24 [Jupiter](#) in Conjunction with the Sun
- Wed 25 [New Moon](#)
- Fri 27 [Mercury](#) 2.9°S of [Moon](#)
- Fri 27 Beehive 2.0°S of [Moon](#)
- Sun 29 Regulus 1.5°S of [Moon](#)
- Sun 29 Occultation of [Mars](#) by the Moon

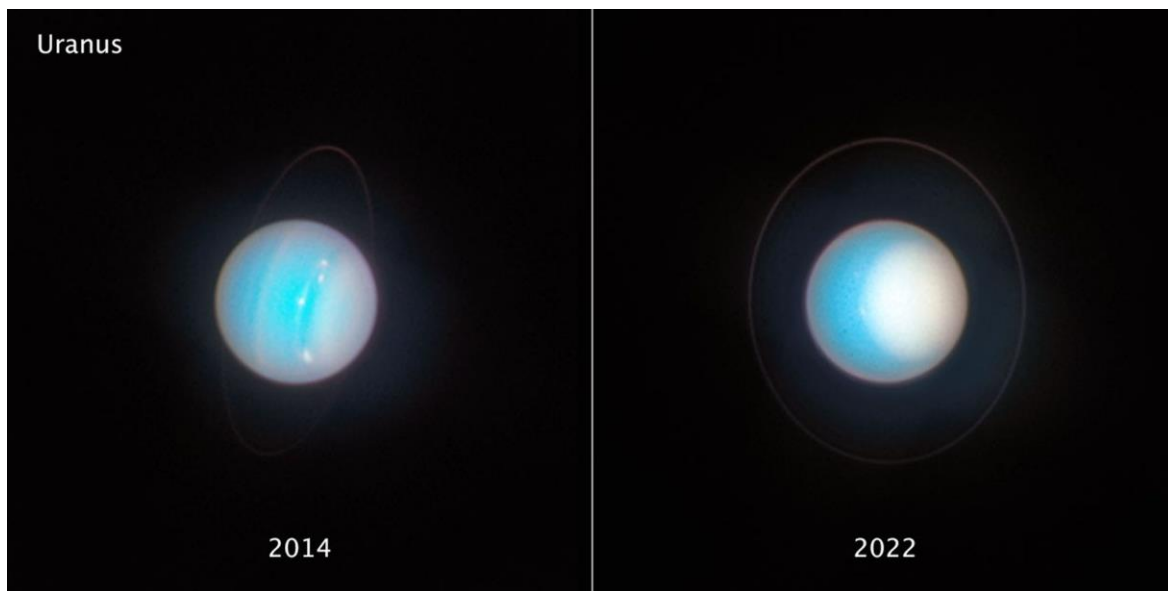
Check [stellarium.com](http://stellarium.com) for exact times and details.

# Looking up



## June's Night Sky Notes: Seasons of the Solar System

By: Kat Troche

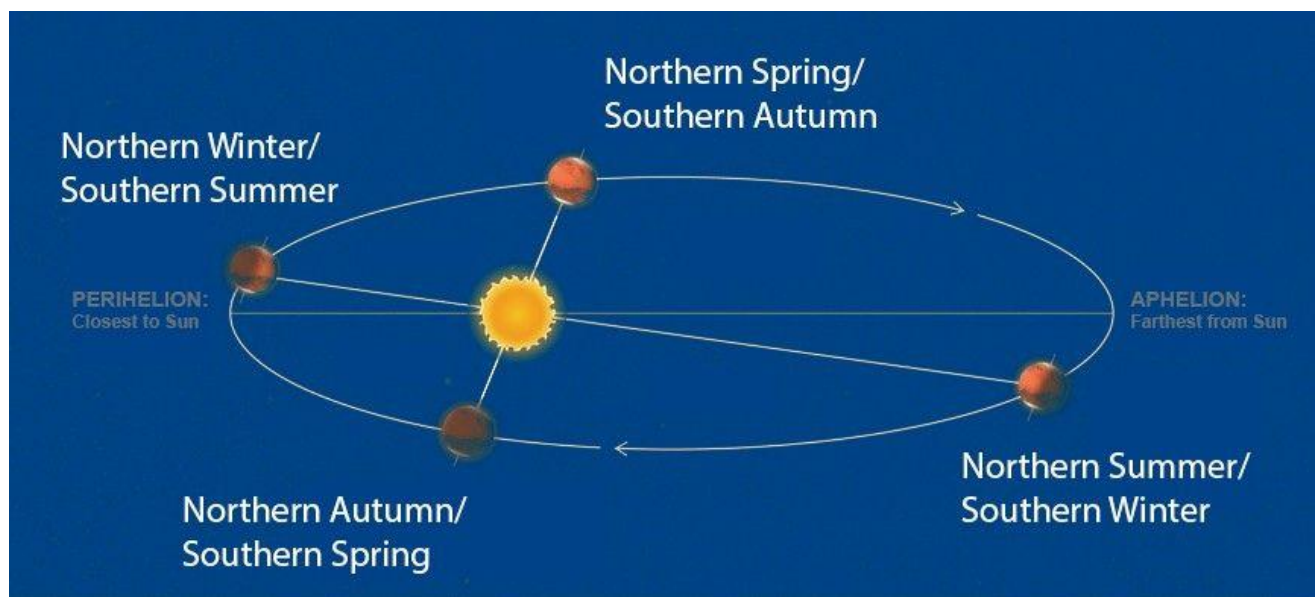


*Uranus rolls on its side with an 84-year orbit and a tilt just  $8^\circ$  off its orbital plane. Its odd tilt may be from a lost moon or giant impacts. Each pole gets 42 years of sunlight or darkness. Voyager 2 saw the south pole lit; now Hubble sees the north pole facing the Sun. Credit: NASA, ESA, STScI, Amy Simon (NASA-GSFC), Michael Wong (UC Berkeley); Image Processing: Joseph DePasquale (STScI)*

Here on Earth, we undergo a changing of seasons every three months. But what about the rest of the Solar System? What does a sunny day on Mars look like? How long would a winter on Neptune be? Let's take a tour of some other planets and ask ourselves what seasons might look like there.

## Martian Autumn

Although Mars and Earth have nearly identical axial tilts, a year on Mars lasts 687 Earth days (nearly 2 Earth years) due to its average distance of 142 million miles from the Sun, making it late autumn on the red planet. This distance and a thin atmosphere make it less than perfect sweater weather. A recent weather report from Gale Crater boasted a high of -18 degrees Fahrenheit [for the week of May 20, 2025](#).

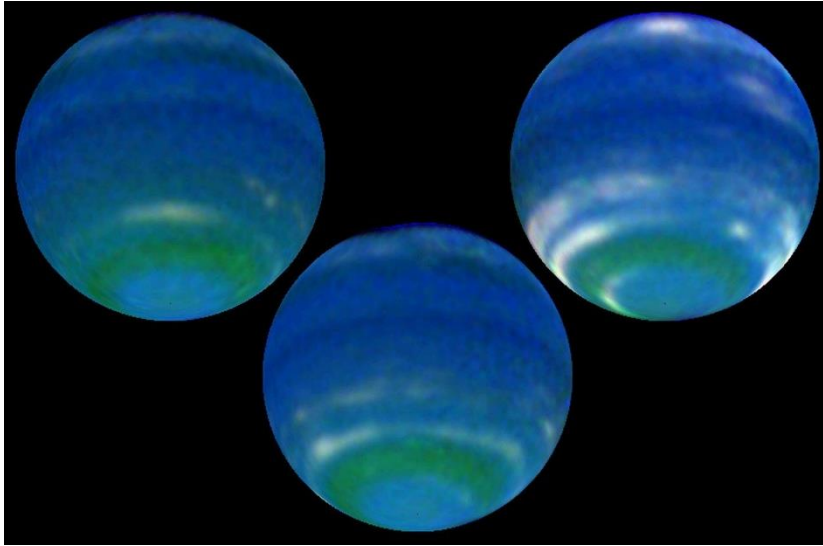


*An artist's rendition of Mars' orbit around the Sun, and its seasons. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech*

## Seven Years of Summer

Saturn has a 27-degree tilt, very similar to the 25-degree tilt of Mars and the 23-degree tilt of Earth. But that is where the similarities end. With a 29-year orbit, a single season on the ringed planet lasts seven years. While we can't experience [a Saturnian season](#), we can observe a [ring plane crossing](#) here on Earth instead. The most recent plane crossing took place in March 2025, allowing us to see Saturn's rings 'disappear' from view.

## A Lifetime of Spring



*NASA Hubble Space Telescope observations in August 2002 show that Neptune's brightness has increased significantly since 1996. The rise is due to an increase in the amount of clouds observed in the planet's southern hemisphere. Credit: NASA, L. Sromovsky, and P. Fry (University of Wisconsin-Madison)*

Even further away from the Sun, each season on Neptune lasts over 40 years. Although changes are slower and less dramatic than on Earth, scientists have observed seasonal activity in Neptune's atmosphere. [These images](#) were taken between 1996 and 2002 with the Hubble Space Telescope, with brightness in the southern hemisphere indicating seasonal change.

As we welcome summer here on Earth, you can build a [Suntrack](#) model that helps demonstrate the path the Sun takes through the sky during the seasons. You can find even more fun activities and resources like this model on NASA's [Wavelength and Energy](#) activity.

## Contact Information

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Reddit: <https://www.reddit.com/r/BRAstro/>

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