



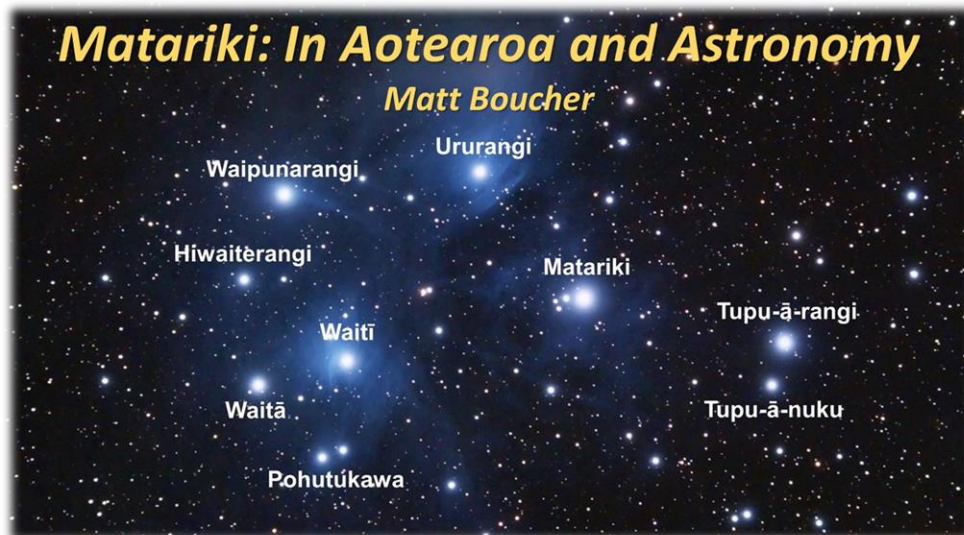
**Wellington Astronomical Society
2020-07 eNewsletter**

**Wellington Astronomical Society Inc.
Email Newsletter for July 2020**

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1. WAS SOCIETY MEETINGS – JULY 2020



We are happy to tell our members that the monthly Society meetings run by WAS will now be face-to-face after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions! We are looking forward to seeing you all again on **Wednesday 1st July at 7.30pm** at Space Place, Carter Observatory, 40 Salamanca Rd, Kelburn.

We understand that there may be some people who are unable to attend in person, which is why we will also be making the meeting available via Zoom online.

To watch online: You will need to register at <https://www.was.org.nz/2020/06/july-2020-monthly-meeting/>. An email acknowledging the registration will be sent back to you with a link to a Zoom meeting. Follow the instructions in the email to gain access to the meeting. If you don't receive the email within a few minutes, please check your Spam folder. Contact webmaster@was.org.nz if you have any issues.

This month's meeting will contain the following:

1. Night sky in July
2. Astronomy News
3. Main talk at 8:00 pm

Matariki: In Aotearoa and Astronomy - Matt Boucher

Learn about the significance of Matariki as a star cluster, a marker of the seasons and a time of celebration for the people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Matt Boucher is the Secretary of the Wellington Astronomical

Society, Deputy Principal of Thorndon School in Wellington and an experienced science teacher and communicator.

2. EVENTS

We Are Stars – Last Show! Friday 3rd July, Space Place.



Join us for the last showing of We Are Stars at Space Place - 7pm
Friday 3 July by [NSC Creative](#).

For anyone who hasn't already seen this 25min movie, we highly recommend getting in before it's gone as it covers the last 13.8 billion years and stellar evolution in an engaging way for most age groups. A few of us will be getting together for the final showing - it would be great to see you there and supporting some local economy!! Check the Space Place website for admission prices and other showings.

We Are Stars Trailer - <https://youtu.be/iSAU9ktkbLk>

WAS Astrophotography Group / Dark Sky Observing

Saturday 18th July, 7 pm onwards, Star Field - John Whitby's dark sky site.



Come along to this Astrophotography / Deep Sky event at a dark sky site in the Wairarapa. There will be a tour of the Night Sky for beginners with a pointer before we get on the telescopes. There is

also a lot of expertise available for anyone wanting to photograph the Night Sky.

As this is a private property, you will need to register if you want to come along by contacting us through Facebook Messenger or by emailing president@was.org.nz. Include your email and mobile phone in the text if you are using Facebook Messenger. Directions to the site and any updates will be emailed out. Preference will be given to members of the Society first. This event is free to all WAS members. Non-members are required to pay \$10 per person. (To join the Society see <https://www.was.org.nz/join-us/>).

What to bring for astrophotography:

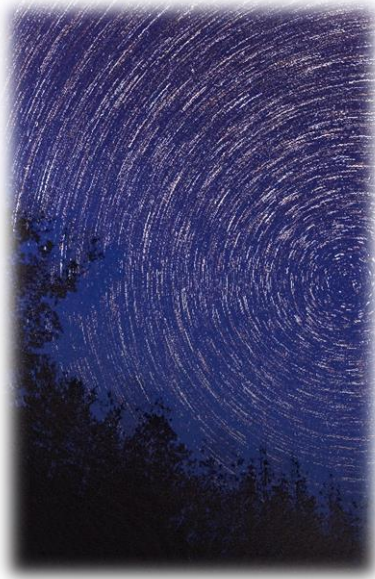
- A DSLR or mirrorless camera
- A wide-angle lens (preferably)
- A tripod to fix the camera to
- Warm clothes as it gets pretty cold at night
- Snacks and warm drinks if you want

With people taking photos, keep lights to a minimum (red lights if you can) especially car headlights (use parking lights). For those just interested in Deep Sky Observing, telescopes will be provided unless you want to bring your own.

Please contact Chris (021 890 222) or Antony (021 253 4979) for further details or cancellations. Updates will be available by the afternoon on the day of the event if the weather forecast is not looking good. This site is made available to the Wellington Astronomical Society through the generosity of John Whitby.

Night Time Mysteries

Saturday 25th July 2020, 6 pm, Wainuiomata Water Collection Area.



Greater Wellington has teamed up with WAS and the Remutaka Conservation Trust to organise this free event. A lucky few will get the opportunity to wander through some of the oldest trees in the region, be serenaded by native birds as darkness falls and even get the chance to hear the cries of kiwi or ruru. Through this event, members of the public will have the opportunity to explore areas not normally open to all, including the glowworm filled access tunnel that links to the Orongorongo Valley.

WAS will set up telescopes and provide the opportunity to search the skies and talk about Dark Sky awareness and preservation. Remutaka Conservation Trust will be available to talk about their kiwi release programme and discuss how they monitor their nesting and spread into the water collection area.

Unfortunately, this event is now fully subscribed but keep an eye on the following link for any possibilities to sign up - <https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2020/night-time-mysteries/lower-hutt>.

WAS RAG

The WAS research group (WAS-RAG) will be meeting online on 8th July and details will be communicated on the group's mailing list. Everyone in the group will be contacted beforehand for a decision on the timing.

The group will keep contact via the WAS-RAG mailing list. Roland can be reached on roland@cno.org.nz in the meantime.

WAS meeting presentations on Video

If you were unable to attend any of the Society meetings but are interested in watching our brilliant speakers deliver their presentations, you can find them online at <https://www.was.org.nz/2019-meeting-presentations/>. To access the videos, you will need the password: *WASvideo*.

WAS newsletters

Similarly, if you are interested in accessing WAS newsletters, going all the way back to 2007, you can find them on the following link: <https://www.was.org.nz/was-monthly-newsletters/>. The newsletters are accessible for anyone that is interested in reading them.

3. ASTRONOMY NEWS

World Record Light



On Sunday, 21 June 2020, which was the shortest day of the year with it being winter solstice, there was a great opportunity as a member of the astronomic community to participate in World Record Light.

This was a free event where there was the opportunity to learn about reducing light pollution to improve environmental sustainability, contributing to citizen science and breaking a world record for the most users to take an online environmental sustainability lesson in 24 hours.

Participants had to watch and complete a short lesson online about light pollution and answer multiple choice questions within a 24-hour period. People could participate from all over the world and in any location.

Yet to be confirmed but it is estimated 7000 people took part on this event. It will be a few months to before we learn if this made it as a World Record

The citizen science data contributed through [Globe at Night](#) will be very valuable for environmental sustainability decisions to be made by regulators in New Zealand and Australia. The [Globe at Night](#) displays a map of the light level measurements made within the Wellington and Wairarapa regions.



Black Neutron star



Something that wasn't deemed possible, has just been discovered and this discovery changes astronomy!

This 'black neutron star' was discovered by an international team using gravitational wave

detectors in the US and Italy. It is more massive than collapsed stars, known as 'neutron stars', but has less mass than black holes. These were not thought possible but since it's discovery, it will mean ideas for how neutron stars and black holes form will need to be rethought.

To read more about this, visit - <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-53151106>.

Nabta Playa



Africa is home to the world's first astronomical site. It is 7000 years old and is older than Stonehenge. The stone circles at the site tracked the summer solstice and the arrival of the annual monsoon season.

Located in Egypt, Nabta Playa is the oldest stone circle in the world and possibly, the oldest astronomical observatory.

To read more about this story and the discovery of the ancient site, visit - <https://astronomy.com/news/2020/06/nabta-playa-the-worlds-first-astronomical-site-was-built-in-africa-and-is-older-than-stonehenge>.

Black in Astronomy



As with all sections of society, which astronomy and science are a part of; there is a responsibility to uplift minoritised communities; and voices often unheard, to be supported to participate within astronomy. It is recognised that the same systemic racism in other parts of society pervades academia, including this field, and contributes to the inequities

present in astronomy.

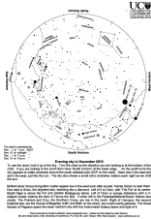
This article provides tips on how to start the journey of becoming anti-racist in astronomy and the active work that can be done to support people of colour interested in this area or other STEM subjects. This is to enable a more diverse and thriving field of science.

Though this is a US based-article, the advice is applicable in supporting communities in Aotearoa, including Māori, Pacific and other minoritised communities.

To learn more about this work, visit - <https://astrobites.org/2020/06/03/how-can-we-support-black-astronomers/>.

4. NIGHT SKY FOR JULY 2020

The [Night Sky for July 2020](#) courtesy of the University of Canterbury.

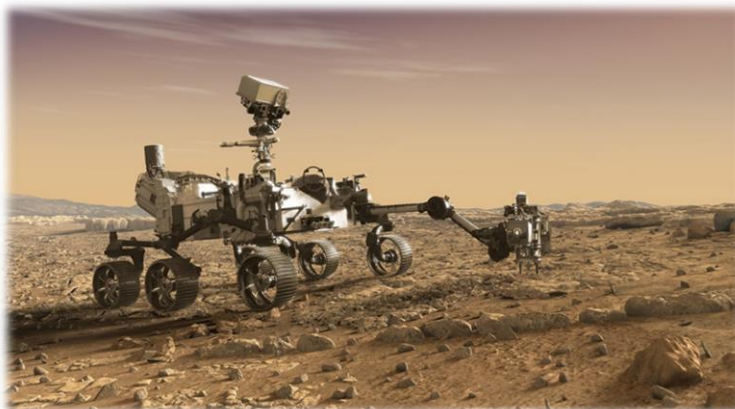


NASA Night Sky Notes July 2020



Mars's Latest Visitor: NASA's Perseverance Rover

NASA's latest Mars rover, Perseverance, is launching soon! This amazing robot explorer will scout the surface of Mars for possible signs of ancient life and collect soil samples for return to Earth by future missions. Find out more about Perseverance - and see where you can spot Mars in early morning skies - in this edition of NASA's Night Sky Notes!



This month's article is available in both [Microsoft Word](#) and [Adobe Acrobat](#) formats. The Mars finder chart is available in high-resolution

[print](#) and [web](#) friendly files, and NASA's Perseverance image is also available for [print](#) and [web](#). You can download all these items in a [ZIP file](#), or individually from the [Night Sky Network website](#).

5. CONTACTS

The following members were elected to Council at the November 2019 AGM:

President: Antony Gomez (president@was.org.nz) - 021 253 4979

Vice President: Andrew Fuller (vice-president@was.org.nz)

Secretary: Matt Boucher (secretary@was.org.nz)

Treasurer: Duncan Hall (treasurer@was.org.nz)

Membership Secretary: Shazia Gazi (membership@was.org.nz)

Newsletter Editor: Shazia Gazi (editor@was.org.nz)

Website: Peter Woods (webmaster@was.org.nz)

Telescope custodian: Chris Monigatti

Research Group coordinator: Roland Idaczyk

Council: Murray Forbes, John Homes, Isabella Eftimov, Grace Esterman

Postal Address:

Wellington Astronomical Society,

PO Box 3181,

Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Website: www.was.org.nz

Instagram: [@was.nz](https://www.instagram.com/was.nz)

Facebook page: [Wellington Astronomical Society](#).

Facebook group: [WAS – Wellington Astronomical Society](#) (for members)

Facebook Astrophotography group: [WAS Astrophotography Group](#) (for members).
