

STARDUST

Newsletter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada
Edmonton Centre



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Beautiful M42 in Orion. Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Telephone numbers should be preceded by **780** unless otherwise indicated.

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New Member Advisor	Murray Paulson		
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Web Site Coordinator	Luca Vanzella		
Library Coordinator	Don Watson		
Equipment Coordinator	Ross Sinclair		

Mailing address	RASC Edmonton Centre c/o Telus World of Science 11212 - 142 St Edmonton, AB, Canada, T5M 4A1
Centre Website	http://www.edmontonrasc.com
Observing Deck	452-9100 ext 2249
Stardust	Articles for Stardust may be submitted by email to mward@interbaun.com . Submission deadline is the last day of the previous month (e.g. for the May issue submit by 30 Apr). Submit in any standard document format (MSOffice, OpenOffice, AbiWord, plain text). TimesNewRoman 10pt single-spaced is preferred. Don't bother with fancy formatting, odd spacing, strange fonts, etc.; it will only be discarded. Graphics (GIF or JPG please) may be submitted as separate files, and clearly identified.

Edmonton Area Astronomy Discussions

astro@mailman.srv.ualberta.ca

To subscribe, send a blank email to:

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The above mailing list is completely independent and is not associated with RASC Edmonton Centre in any way.

MEETINGS 2012

MEETING LOCATIONS 2012

2012	Regular	Council	Observers	New Moon	Full Moon	Observing at Blackfoot
Jan	9	23	4	23	9	20-21
Feb	13	27	6	21	7	17-18
Mar	12	26	5	22	8	16-17
Apr	16*	23	2	21	6	20-21
May	14	28	7	20	5	18-19
Jun	11	--	4	19	4	15-16
Jul	--	--	2	18	3	20-21
Aug	--	--	6	17	1, 31	17-18
Sep	10	24	3	15	29	14-15
Oct	15*	22	1	15	29	12-13
Nov	12	26	5	13	28	9-10
Dec	10	--	2	13	28	14-15

Regular General Meetings are at 7:30pm in Telus World of Science, 11211 – 142 St follow the signs from the main entrance

Council Meetings are at 7:15 pm, room G217 BioSci, UofA campus

Observers Meetings: *location varies*



* denotes a changed date for the Regular Meeting

General Assembly 2012 Program Cover Image Contest

Attention astro-imagers of the Edmonton Centre! Would you like a chance to have one of your astro images (photo or sketch) on the full colour cover of the Program Booklet for the 2012 General Assembly? If interested, please submit astro photos or sketches to web2012ga@edmontonrasc.com by January 31, 2012. The final selection will be editor's choice (single image or collage). Note: the size of the program booklet will be 14 cm x 21.6 cm (5.5" x 8.5"). There is no prize, just the glory of having your image immortalized on the cover.

Volunteers Needed for the 2012 GA

A significant number of volunteers will be required to successfully run the 2012 GA here in Edmonton. Please consider giving a portion of your time to help us run this event.

Volunteers are needed for

- Driving (airport, bus, train pickups, drop offs, tours, etc.)
- Technical support (paper sessions, exhibits, during National Council meetings, General Assembly, & Murphy) 2 per shift
- Hospitality volunteers (hospitality suite)
- Registrations (assisting delegates, handing out packages, giving directions, etc.)
- Exhibits Area (security, information)
- Physical (setting up displays, & other physical work)
- Local Information Experts (Campus / Bus / Attractions information)
- Tour Guides (for Monday's tours)
- **We also need a volunteer coordinator**

Volunteers Numbers Required:

Position	Required	Have
Drivers	6 to 10	2
Technical Support	3 to 4	1
Hospitality	4 to 6	1
Registrations	6 to 8	3
Exhibits	3 to 5	2
Setup / Physical	4 to 6	3
Local Information	3 to 5	0
Tour Guides	3 to 6	0

The numbers above reflect volunteers who have signed-up for more than one position, why not join their numbers, we'll make it worth your while?

Volunteer Rewards: For each **shift** worked a non-driving volunteer will be refunded \$10 off their initial registration fee. This means you could get your registration fully refunded. In addition, drivers will be compensated for distance travelled to either airport, bus, or train terminal. Please note, however, that **all rewards will be reimbursed after the GA is completed.**

FOR SALE

8 inch (20 cm) f/13.3 R. E. Brandt achromatic refractor lens, plus nearly completed Dobsonian mount for folded refractor. \$1500. Contact Tony Whyte, twhyte@shaw.ca, 780-439-9367.

The Planets by Murray Paulson

Mercury starts off this month at the end of a long morning apparition and takes a leisurely dive back to its February 7th conjunction with the sun. It is headed around to the far side of the sun and its pace going is much more sedate than its coming. In daytime observations, Mercury will brighten as more of its disc is visible from earth. In the beginning of the month, it shines at magnitude -0.4 and shows a 5.5" gibbous disc. Over the month it will brighten to magnitude -1.1 as the disc fills out and shrinks in size.

Venus is a brilliant magnitude -4.0 in our evening sky and is obviously gibbous and the 82% gibbous disc has a 13.0" diameter. On January 13 Venus passes a little more than 1 degree below Neptune and they will make an interesting pair in an eyepiece. Neptune will shine at magnitude 7.9 and sits 30.8 AU away with a 2.2" disc. Venus is 12 magnitudes brighter and sits only 1.2 AU away and shows a 13.7" disc. Both are on the far side of the sun. Nice juxtaposition. Early in February, we have another nice conjunction with Uranus on the 9th. This is a close one with Venus and Uranus are only 18' apart. Don't miss this one.

Mars now rises just around 10:00 pm and will be up high enough for late night observing. Its distinct magnitude 0.0 red glow is unmistakable and in an eyepiece it resolves into a 10.1" gibbous orb. Its north pole is tilted at a 23 degree incline toward us with a great view of that shrinking polar cap. Over the month the view gets better and by the beginning of February it will rise just after 8 pm and the disc will swell to 12.5". It now shines at magnitude -0.7 and sits on the Virgo -Leo border and will transit the meridian at 3 am where it will sit 43 degrees above the horizon which is just 4 degrees short of where Jupiter sits when it transits the meridian. If you are a Mars lover, the show has begun

and it is well worth spending some quality time behind an eyepiece. Remember, there are only so many good nights of great seeing, and you have to be out there to find them.

Jupiter is still well placed for early evening viewing and really dominates the evening sky. At the beginning of January, Jupiter shines at magnitude -2.5 and shows a 43" disc. On January 30, the Moon and Jupiter are 3.6° apart. By early February, Jupiter will have receded from us and will be 38" in diameter and shine at magnitude -2.3.

Saturn starts off the month at magnitude 0.6 and in the eyepiece it shows a 16.9" disc. It now is 80 degrees from the sun and rises at 2 am. This is great for those out in the early morning hours. By early February, Saturn will rise around midnight and shines at magnitude 0.5. In the eyepiece it presents a 17.8" disc and sits just east of Spica in Virgo.

Uranus sets early, just before Midnight in early January and is around for early evening observing. It has a close conjunction with Venus which is worth the effort in early February. See the Venus paragraph for details.

Neptune is flirting with the sun right now and will be in conjunction with the Sun next month. We do get a nice conjunction with Venus in early January. Check out the paragraph on Venus for more details. It will be at the summer star parties before you have the chance again to hunt it and its moon Triton again.

On December 28, **Pluto** was in conjunction with the Sun, so it will be a very difficult challenge indeed to find it in any sky for a few months time. Check back in April.

53rd General Assembly of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada June 28 – July 1, 2012

The Edmonton Centre welcomes the RASC to our fine city for the 2012 General Assembly (GA). All Edmonton Centre members are encouraged to register for and attend this excellent opportunity to mix and mingle with fellow astronomers from across the country. The local organizing committee has put together an amazing program of exciting speakers together with some outstanding social events. Some great tours have been lined up, including an opportunity to meet a dinosaur face-to-face and a chance to hunt for a meteorite.



The GA will take place at the **University of Alberta** main campus, the principal venue being the



Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science (CCIS) – the newest building on campus and a vibrant environment for learning and discovery. Lodging for out-of-town visitors will be on campus at the Lister Centre.

Featured Events

National Council BBQ

We are continuing the fine tradition started in Fredericton by hosting a BBQ for National Council delegates and their guests. Menu will consist of a choice of steak, chicken or fish entree* barbecued to your liking. Pre-registration is required. [Thu June 28]

Wine & Cheese Reception

This will be a great opportunity to relax and mingle in the astronomy themed West Atrium of the CCIS. Admire the stellar terrazzo floor and the solar system mobile, tour the observatories on the roof, participate in Murphy Night. This reception will be kicked off with an invited talk by **Dr. Martin Connors**. [Fri June 29]



Helen Sawyer Hogg Public Lecture

This public lecture will be presented by **Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell**, best known as the discoverer of pulsars. A reception will follow the lecture. [Sat June 30]

Closing Banquet

The closing banquet in the Maple Leaf Room at Lister Centre will feature a choice of beef tenderloin, stuffed chicken, or glazed salmon for the entree*. The featured speaker at the banquet will be **Dr. Chris Herd**. [Sun July 1]

* Vegetarian options available upon request for all catered meals.

Other Invited Speakers



Dr. Martin Connors
Athabasca University

Invited Talk
“Earth’s Trojan Asteroid: A Space
Odyssey to a Space Oddity”

Dr. Christopher Herd

University of Alberta
Banquet Speaker
“When the Sky Falls: Meteorites as
Probes of Other Planetary Bodies”



Tours

The following tours are being offered.

- Whitecourt Meteorite Crater
- Elk Island National Park & Beaver Hills Dark Sky Preserve
- Fort Edmonton Park
- Enjoy Centre
- Jurassic Forest
- Muttart Conservatory
- TELUS World of Science – Edmonton

Display Competition

We will have three display competitions, open as follows:

- Project displays (adult RASC members)
- Project displays (students – open)
- Photography and Visual Displays (open)

Call for Papers

We will have two sessions of papers where delegates can share their astronomical experiences, data, and insights. Submissions close April 1, 2012.

Registration

Registration is now open! Registration fees are:

- \$110/person by March 31, 2012
- \$135/person by May 31, 2012
- \$150/person June 1, 2012 onwards

Online registration closes June 18, 2012.

Contact Us

GA Chair

Howard Gibbins, 2012ga@edmontonrasc.com

Papers & Posters

Doug Hube, papers2012ga@edmontonrasc.com

Registrations & Accommodations

Ross Sinclair, register2012ga@edmontonrasc.com

Transportation

Geoff Robertson, transport2012ga@edmontonrasc.com

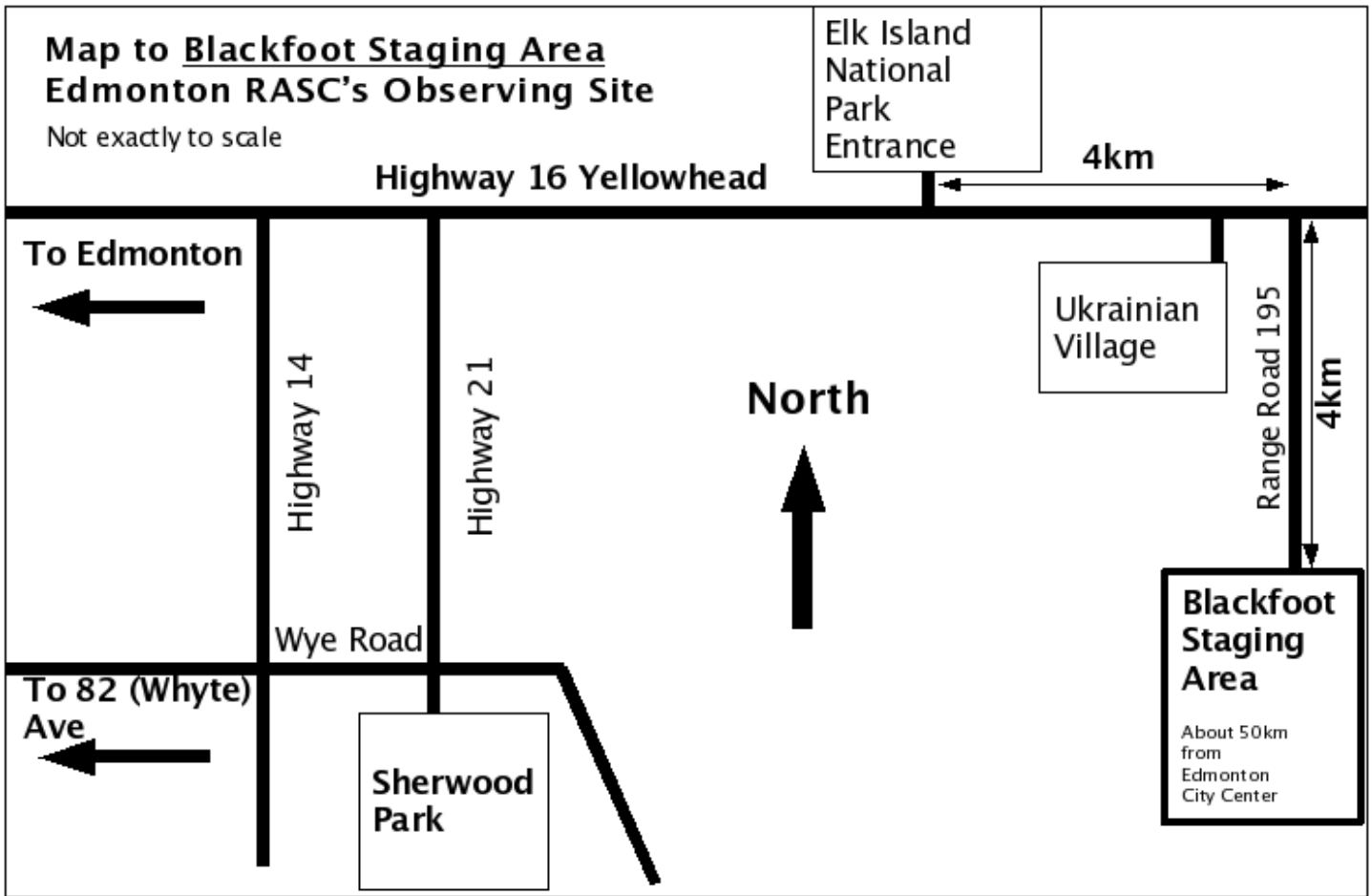
Website

See the website for full details.

edmontonrasc.com/2012ga

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