



**Monthly Notices  
of the  
Everglades  
Astronomical Society**  
Naples, FL  
September 2024



**Officers: President:** Chris & Robyn Pritchard (Paul Leopold) **Treasurer:** Kathy James  
**Mailing Address:** P. O. Box 1451, Marco Island, FL 34146  
**Home Page:** <https://evergladesastronomicalsociety.org/Home.php>

**President’s Message**

Greetings EAS,

Robyn and I are stepping aside as Co-Presidents of EAS. We succeeded Denise Sabatini who had been President serving four terms, in July 2019.

We were fortunate that Toastmasters clubs that I had been involved in gave me Zoom meeting experience, we transitioned to online and continued to meet beginning in March of 2020 when Covid lockdowns began.

When the restrictions were lifted two years later, we began to meet with the hybrid format and moved our meetings to the Collier Government center. Now that we are back to normal, we have continued to meet hybrid for members that are out of town or unable to attend in person.

It is hard to believe that we have served five terms. The club has held together through difficult times thanks to the many dedicated members.

Many organizations have had to rebuild as we have. I believe we are about to enter a growth period. Paul Leopold has agreed to step into the top chair and lead the club to new heights. We wish him luck.

I am stepping into the Tech Master role, because I have the Zoom experience and Vic left me the projector & screen to store.

Thank you for your support these past 5 years,  
Chris & Robyn Pritchard

**A Note on the Monthly Newsletter**

Your articles and images are the most important part of the EAS Monthly newsletter! The submission deadline is the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the preceding month. So for our upcoming October newsletter, please share your articles and images (outreach, club photos & astrophotography) by September 25. Thanks very much.

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**Next EAS Meeting**

Our monthly meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month and start at 7pm.

**September 10, 2024: Time 7:00 – 8:00 pm**  
North Collier Government Center  
2335 Orange Blossom Dr., Naples, FL

To participate via ZOOM:

Meeting ID: 349 568 7507  
Passcode: telescope

Please do NOT share this info with non-club members.

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**CLUB NEWS**

**EAS 2024-2025 Dues**

Annual dues are “due” next month, we will have more details at the monthly meeting and in next

month's newsletter.

## Big Cypress and Other Viewing

We are bogged down with summer weather for the time being, so we don't have any planned dates yet for our next observing trip to BC.

Keep an eye on the **Discord app**, since members now indicate (sometimes at the last minute) that they would like to go to Big Cypress if we get a break in the weather.

## Winter Star Party 2025

By Mike Usher

It's almost time to register for the Winter Star Party 2025! Registration is scheduled to open on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This upcoming event is scheduled to run from January 27<sup>th</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

For those of you that don't know, the Winter Star Party is held on Scout Key (formerly known as West Summerland Key) under the sponsorship of the Southern Cross Astronomical Society. The event is held at the Girl/Boy Scout camps located on the island and you would camp very near the water's edge on the Atlantic side of the key. The skies are pretty dark and you will have an excellent view of the Southern Cross, among other deep southern sky sights. This is one of the premier Star Parties in the world although its reputation has slacked off recently as hurricanes (particularly Ian) have battered the key frequently in recent years destroying infrastructure.

Yes, I said camping! You can stay offsite, but you better get your hotel reservations now - but last spring would have been better. For the non-campers among you the WSP does have a limited number of huts available in which you can stay in (comparative) luxury. Campers have a choice of which camp to stay in: Wesumkee, the Girl Scout camp, has no electricity and almost no water, or Sawyer, the Boy Scout camp, which has electricity and showers. Attendees at Wesumkee can just walk to the showers as needed. People driving RV's are required to stay in Wesumkee, generally the tent campers prefer to stay in Sawyer. I should point out that even in Sawyer the electricity is limited;

enough for telescopes and CPAP machines, but not much of anything else. Bring a hundred foot extension cord. Generator use is limited, check the website for details. Groceries and other supplies are found on Big Pine Key just 3 miles away; you can also purchase meals on the spot 24/7.

The weather is fine mostly 70's during the day and 60's at night. Warmer or cooler is certainly possible. The real problem is the wind; normally a gentle breeze it can really howl if a cold front is nearby, flattening tents and destroying canopies. Typically though the weather is just fine and the air is steady. Bortle 3 skies with an average SQM of 21.76.

Oh yes, their door prizes are amazing!

Here is the registration link:

<https://www.scas.org/winter-star-party/?y=2025>

See you there!

## Book Review

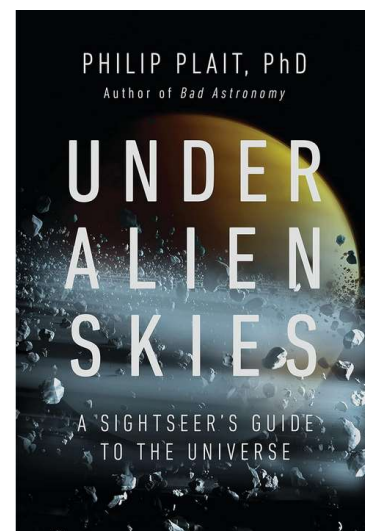
*Under Alien Skies* by Philip Plait, Ph.D.

Published 2023, 336 Pages

Grade: B+

Hardback \$16.04, Paperback \$16.38 on Amazon

By Rich Sherman



This is a fun book. The author takes us on a journey around the heavens to tell us what it would be like to visit planets and moons and other objects in space. Dr. Plait makes the science relatable by describing what we would experience and sense on

a visit to these bodies—from the difficulty of ambulation on low gravity objects (e.g., the Moon), to the challenge of insomnia living on a planet which orbits multiple stars, to the beautiful blue sunsets on Mars. I enjoyed the book, especially the first half, when we visit the Moon and Mars, Saturn, and Pluto. There are lots of humorous quips which are nice additions to the book. The second half gets a bit slow, as we visit other bodies and eventually slip into a black hole (ouch). At \$16 for the hardback, it is hard to go wrong with picking up a copy. I just wished “Under Alien Skies” was about 50 pages shorter.

## New Toys for The Seestar

By Rich Sherman

I recently purchased two items for my Seestar.

First, here’s a look at the Apertura 2” filter holder. It slides in front of the lens (where your Seestar solar filter goes) and allows you to screw on any 2” filter you prefer, like a dualband filter or a better light pollution filter than the onboard one (remember to turn off the onboard LP filter if you are going to use an external one).



COST: \$14.95 at High Point Scientific (free shipping)

PROS: It is heavy and made of aluminum, works well. No jiggling, and fits snugly. Nice threads.

CONS: Due to the thickness, you must remove it before you shut down the Seestar because the scope will not slide into the parked position with the filter holder on the scope. The filter holder even has a reminder printed on the front of it to help you remember to remove the filter holder before shutting down.

Second, the Apertura Easy Leveler saves you time when you get that annoying message that your Seestar is not level.



COST: \$39.95 at High Point Scientific (free shipping)

PROS: Made of heavy aluminum and brass bolts, this is a solid device. It has 2 bubble levelers: one at top so you can get the tripod leveled BEFORE you put the scope on top of the tripod. The second leveler is on the side, but that is low (under the telescope) and hard to see for those of a certain age and certain height once you put the telescope on.

Leveling is performed using six knobs, two above each tripod leg location. The big knobs are for leveling and the little knobs are for locking or unlocking the big knob (remember to hold the big knob while you are tightening the little locking knob so as to not accidentally change your leveling).

CONS: You must remove the leveler from your tripod before storing your Seestar in the case. Even after removal, it is challenging to fit the leveler in the snug Seestar case, but it is possible with some

careful packing. Also, the bolt on top of the leveler that connects to your telescope seems a little shorter than the threaded bolt on the Seestar tripod. It is still sufficient for stability but makes me nervous when I am removing the telescope and it starts to wobble in my hands.

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## NON-EAS ASTRO NEWS & NOTES

### Other notable non-Florida “Star Parties”

#### 2024

- Joshua Tree Night Sky Festival (29 Palms, CA) 10/4/2024-10/5/2024, info at <https://www.skysthelimit29.org/night-sky-festival.html>

#### 2025

- Texas Star Party (90 mins. SW of Dallas): 4/24/2025 to 4/27/2025, info at <https://texasstarparty.org/>
- Grand Canyon Star Party (Grand Canyon N.P.): 6/21-6/28/2025, info at <https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/grand-canyon-star-party.htm>
- Green Bank Star Quest (West VA): 6/25/2025-6/28/2025, info at <https://greenbankstarquest.org/>
- Stellafane (Vermont): first week in August, info at <https://stellafane.org/convention/>

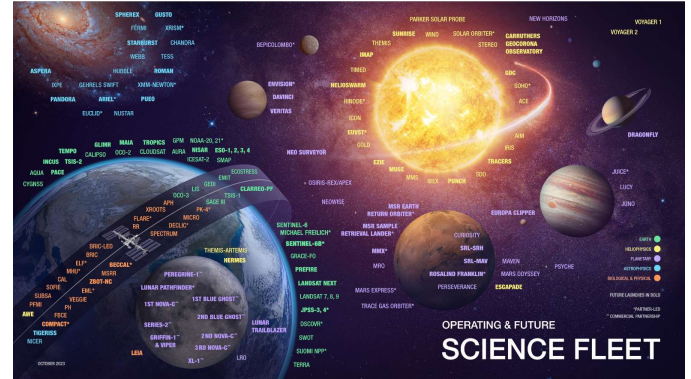
### Articles of Interest

The Earth's deepest living organisms may hold clues to alien life on Mars

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20240821-could-alien-life-survive-in-deep-lakes-below-mars-surface>

Ever wonder how many scientific instruments are in space? To view the full image on your browser, visit:

<https://smd-cms.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/smd-fleet-master-10-15-2023.pdf>



Reservoir of water found on Mars:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czx1849j77ko>

Two American astronauts potentially stuck in space until 2025:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg4yqep469o>

NASA Citizen Scientists Spot Object Moving 1 Million MPH:

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/nasa-citizen-scientists-spot-object-moving-1-million-miles-per-hour>

NASA’s Webb Images Cold Exoplanet 12 Light-Years Away

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/nasas-webb-images-cold-exoplanet-12-light-years-away>

Mars Curiosity Rover finds sulfur crystals:

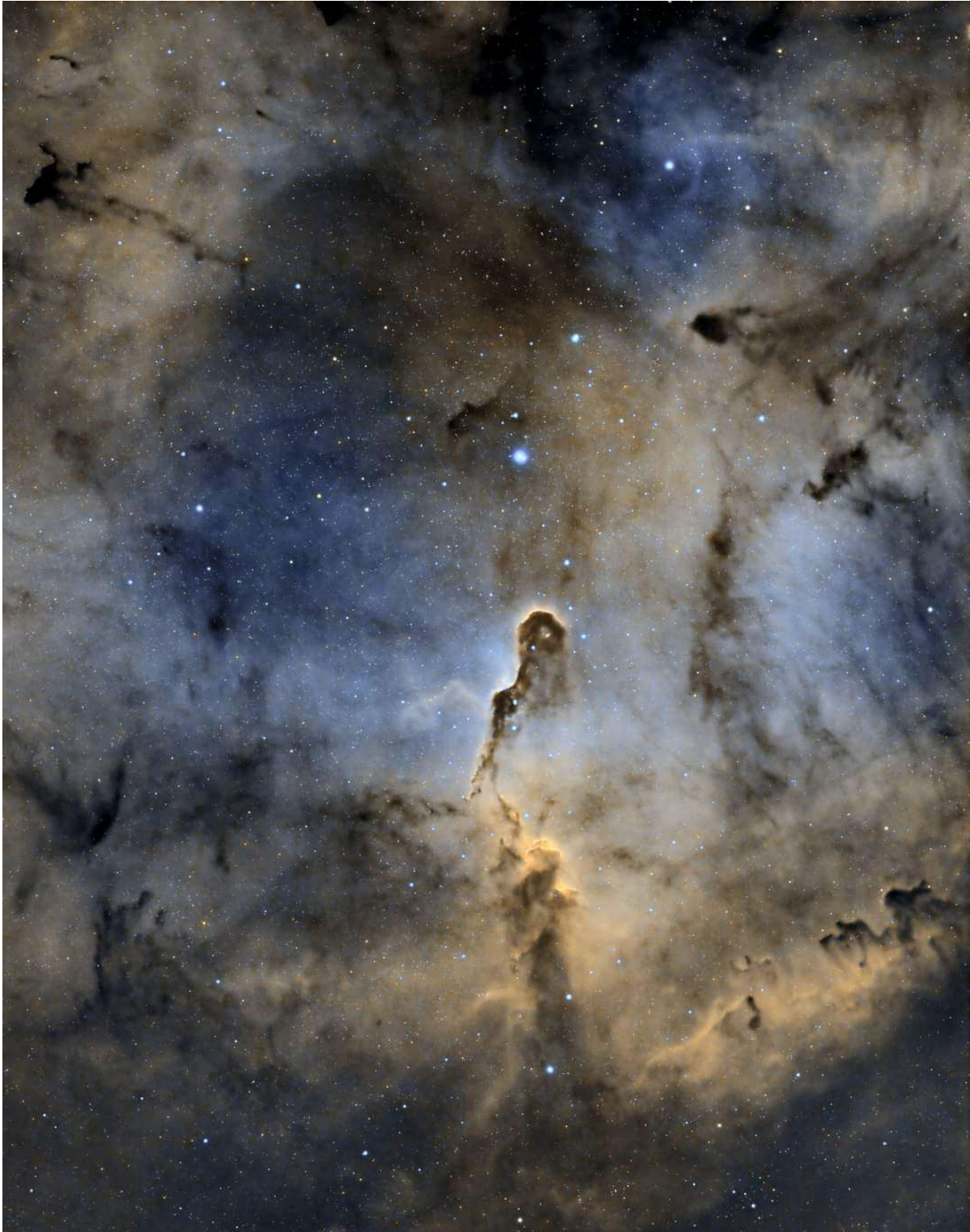
<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/nasas-curiosity-rover-discovers-a-surprise-in-a-martian-rock>

Voyager 1 instruments running again

<https://blogs.nasa.gov/voyager/>



## MEMBER ASTROPHOTOS



Elephant Trunk Nebula (IC1396A) in Cepheus

By Vic Farris

Murfreesboro, TN – 7/6/2024

Telescope: Sky-Watcher Esprit 100ED Refractor

Camera: ZWO ASI2600MM (monochrome)

Filter(s): Antlia Ha 3nm Pro, Antlia OIII 3nm Pro

Exposure/Integration: Ha - 18 x 300 seconds, OIII - 18 x 300 seconds (3 Hours total)

Processing: sHO, Software: PixInsight



Northern Lights by John Pigman  
Canon t5i with 400mm lens  
Canton, OH – 5/10/2024



Super Moon by Rich Sherman  
Seestar  
Esterro, FL - 8/19/2024



Western Veil Nebula (NGC6960 and Pickering's Triangle) in Cygnus

By Vic Farris

Murfreesboro, TN - 7/10/2024

Telescope: Sky-Watcher Esprit 100ED Refractor

Camera: ZWO ASI2600MM (monochrome)

Filter(s): Antlia 3nm SII, Ha, & OIII

Exposure/Integration: SII - 15 x 300 seconds, Ha - 15 x 300 seconds, OIII 15 x 300 seconds (3.75 Hours total)

Processing: SHO, Software: PixInsight



Aurora Borealis

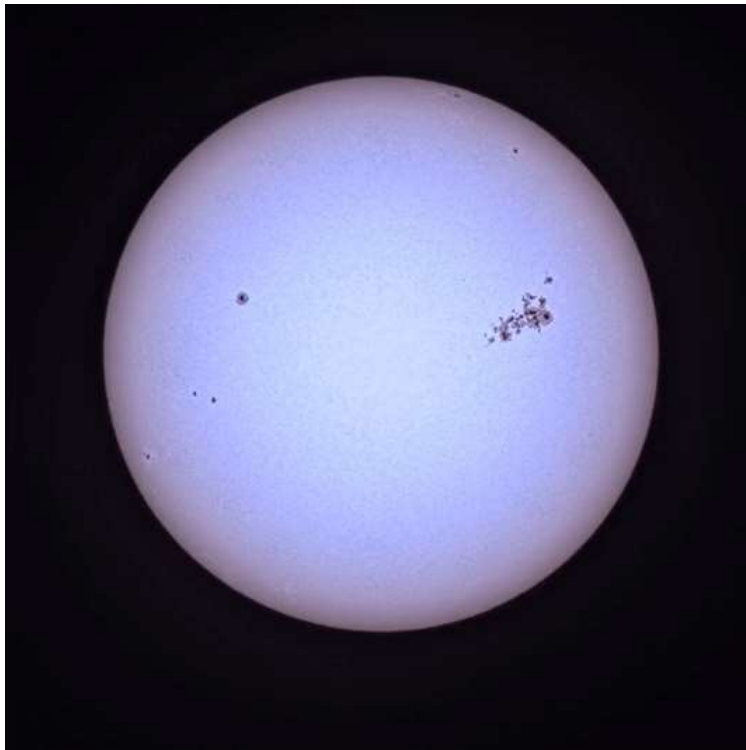
By Chuck Dryer - 8/12/2024

Upper Peninsula (MI)

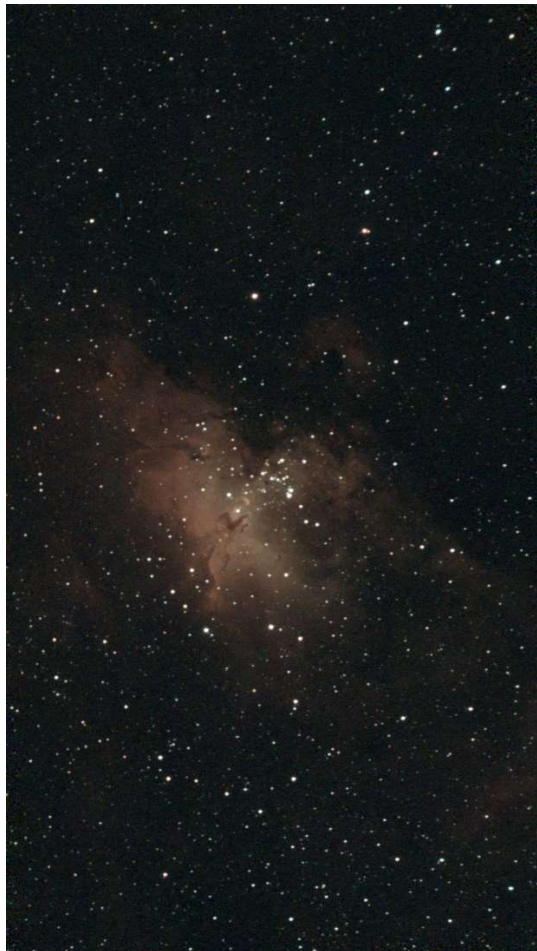
Canon EOS R with Sigma 24mm lens

10 second exposure at f/2 at ISO 800

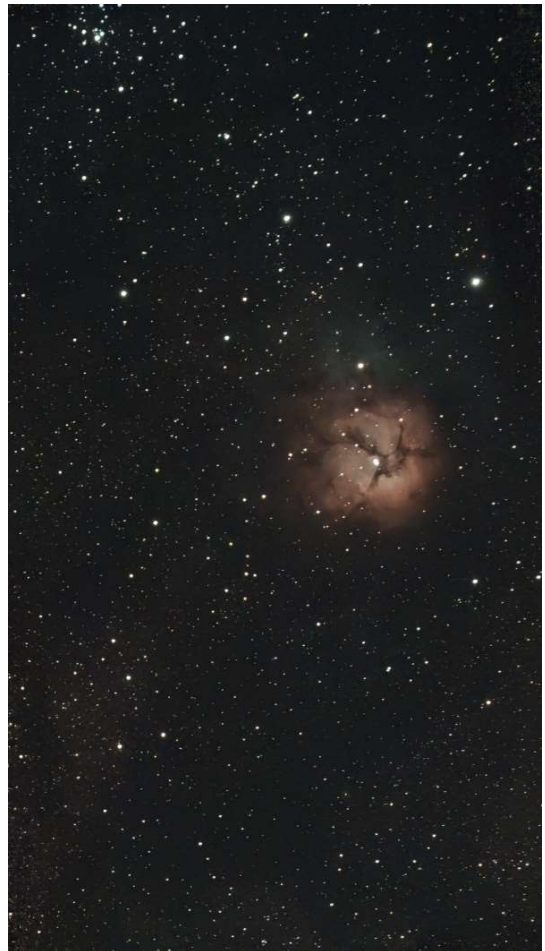




May's Active Sun  
By Dave Higgins



The Eagle Nebula  
By Dave Higgins



The Trifid Nebula  
By Dave Higgins





The Bubble Nebula  
By Dave Higgins



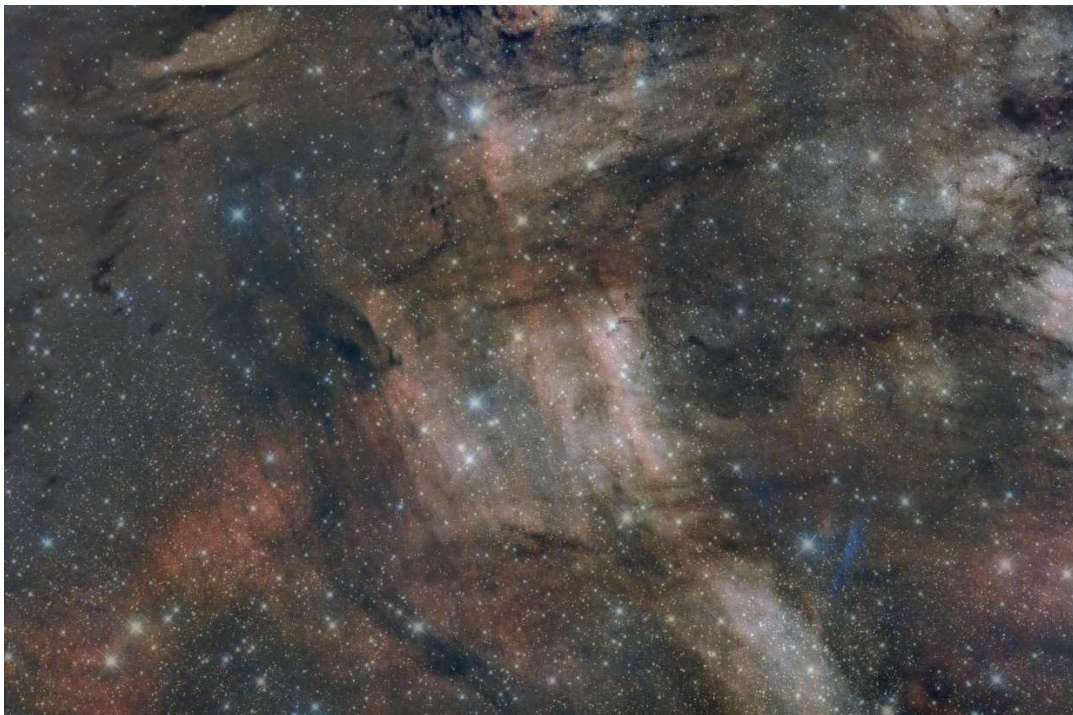
Comet 12P Pons-Brooks  
By Dave Higgins



The Sun  
By Robyn Pritchard  
Seestar  
Naples, FL - 8/19/2024



The Moon  
By Robyn Pritchard – 8/24/2024  
Seestar  
Naples, FL



IC5068, The Forsaken Nebula (Cygnus)  
By Eric Uthus  
Glenwood, MN – 8/6 and 8/9/2024  
Player One Poseidon-C Pro Camera, 30 x 300 sec. OSC, 58 x 300 sec. Ha/OIII



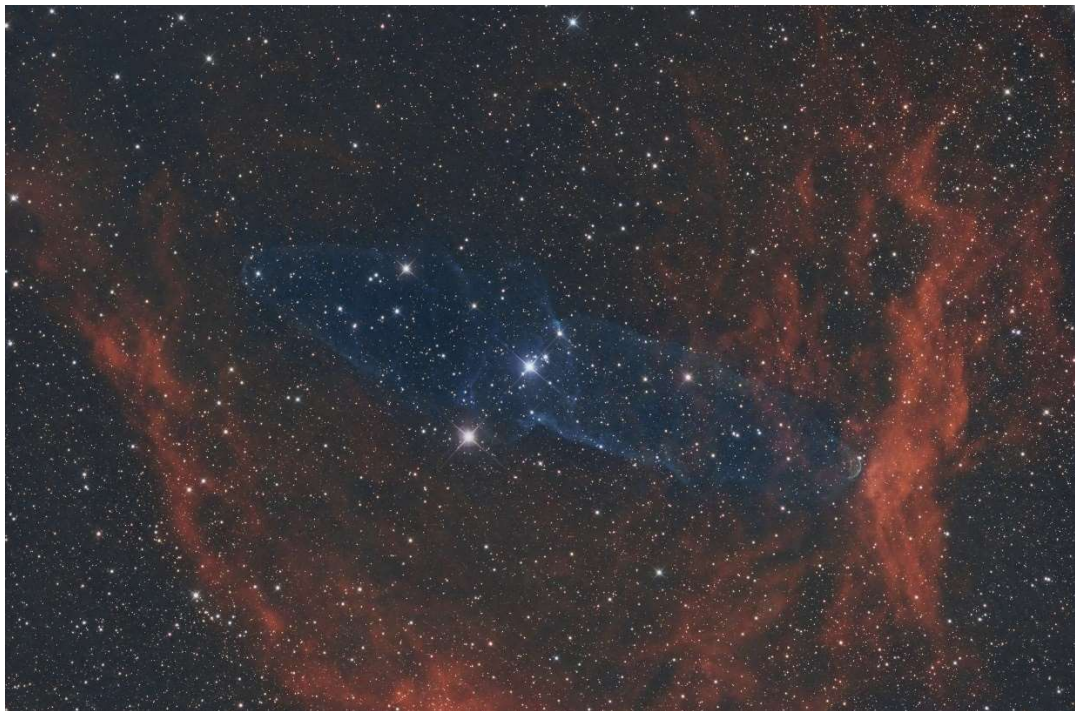


The Propeller Nebula (Cygnus)

By Eric Uthus

Glenwood, MN - 8/10/2024

Player One Poseidon-C Pro Camera, 23 x 300 sec. OSC, 48 x 300 sec. Ha/OIII



IC5068, The Squid (blue) and The Flying Bat Nebulae (reddish wings) in Cepheus

By Eric Uthus

Glenwood, MN – 8/11 and 8/12/2024

Player One Poseidon-C Pro Camera, 19 x 300 sec. OSC, 120 x 300 sec. Ha/OIII