Click here to enter text.

JERSEY ASTRONOMY CLUB

SIR PATRICK MOORE ASTRONOMY CENTRE,
LES CREUX COUNTRY PARK,
ST. BRELADE

Email: jerseyastronomyclub@ymail.com
Website: http://jerseyastronomyclub.weebly.com

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY

Next Meetings – Visiting Speaker and Club Night

Saturday February 6 at 7.30 – outside our normal club night, Jonathan Renouf will be giving an illustrated presentation "Behind the Scenes at The Sky at Night"

Note the venue is St Brelade's Church Hall, beside the Church, and NOT the astronomy club.

Jonathan is an award winning Executive Producer for BBC's Sky at Night and has also been Executive Producer on other Cosmology and Science programmes, so this should be a very interesting evening.

Monday, February 8 at 8.00, at the clubhouse – Tony will give a brief presentation on astronomy in the news, and Neil will give a presentation on what to see in the Spring Night Sky.

Monday, 14th March at 8.00 at the club house. In anticipation of April Fool's day, Tony will give a presentation on Great Astronomy Hoaxes.

For your Diary:

Monday 25th April, 8.00, venue to be announced.
Dr Roberto Trotta is coming to speak on "The Science of Star Trek"

Dome News

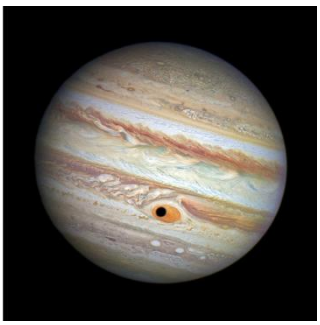
Neil will be having regular Monday night viewings if the night is clear.

Wi-Fi Available

We now have a 4G Wi-Fi router so we can access online astronomy sites and remote telescope feeds when the sky is cloudy. We hope to have that configured and active for the February Meeting.

Cubs / Brownies /Schools

We have a visit being arranged for the St Ouen's Cub Group in February to the club house.



Clay tablets, including one at the left, revealed that Babylonian astronomers employed a sort of precalculus to describe Jupiter's motion across the night sky relative to distant background stars. They did this 15 centuries earlier than Europeans were first credited with making such measurements.

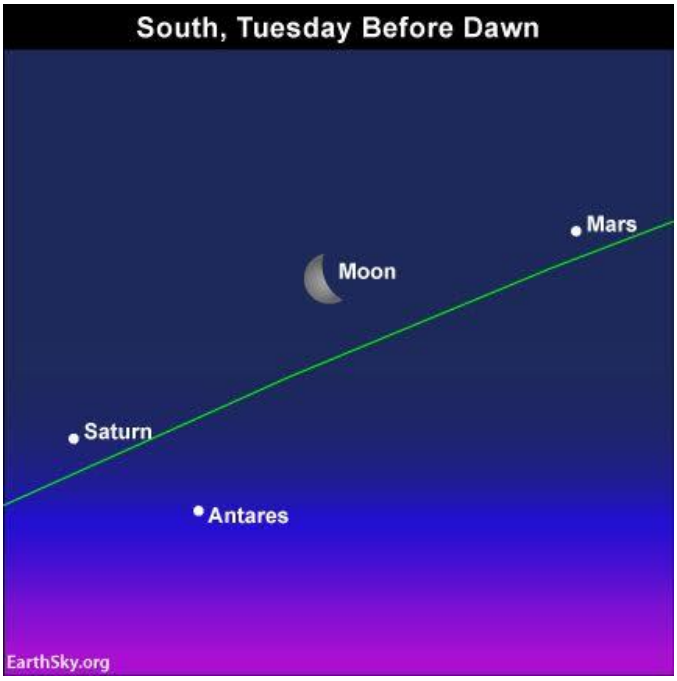
For people living in the ancient city of Babylon, Marduk was their patron god, and thus it is not a surprise that Babylonian astronomers took an interest in tracking the comings and goings of the planet Jupiter, which they regarded as a celestial manifestation of Marduk

What is perhaps more surprising is the sophistication with which they tracked the planet, judging from inscriptions on a small clay tablet dating to between 350 B.C. and 50 B.C. The tablet, a couple of inches wide and a couple of inches tall, reveals that the Babylonian astronomers employed a sort of precalculus in describing Jupiter's motion across the night sky relative to the distant background stars. Until now, credit for this kind of mathematical technique had gone to Europeans who lived some 15 centuries later.

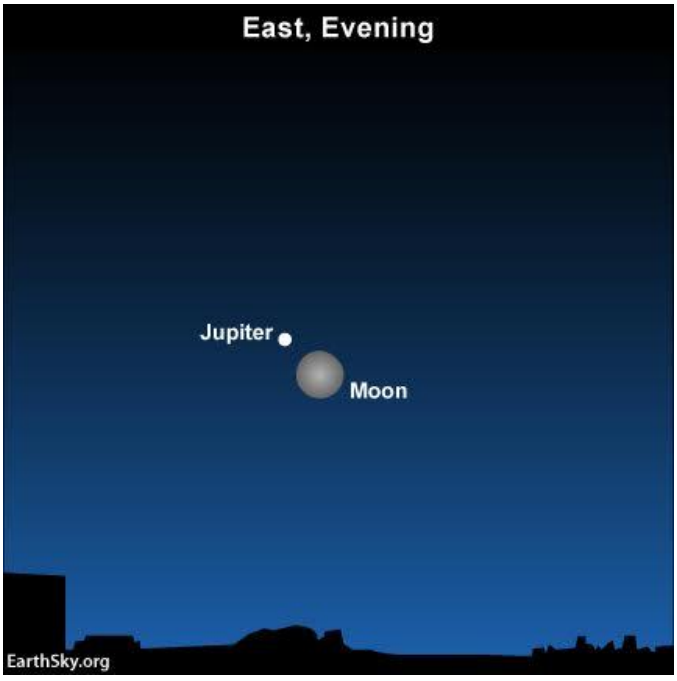
Tim Peak calls wrong number!

British astronaut Tim Peake has apologized after calling the wrong number from the International Space Station. Major Peake gave an unsuspecting woman a shock after calling her by mistake and asking "hello, is this planet Earth?" when she picked up.

Sky gazing in February

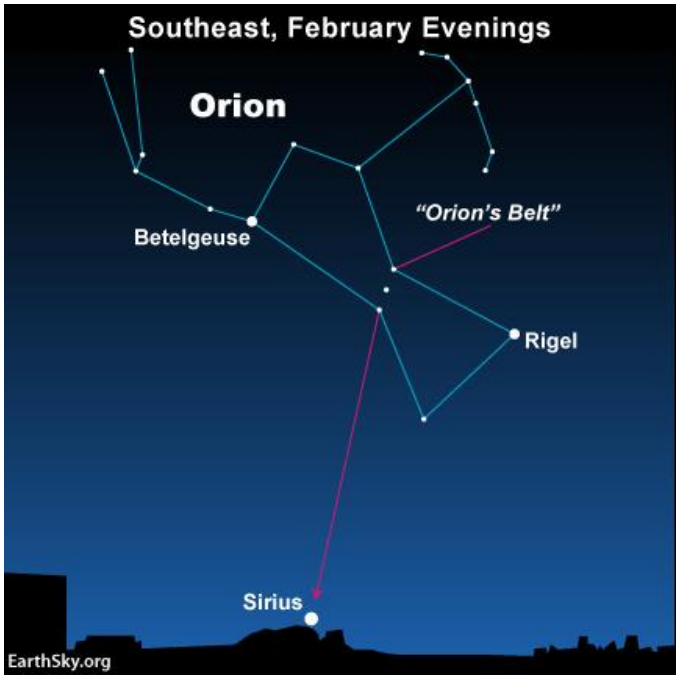


Tomorrow, before sunrise February 2, look for the moon between the planets Mars and Saturn. The green line depicts the ecliptic – the Earth's orbital plane projected onto the dome of sky.



On the night of February 23, the moon will be near Jupiter in the night sky. And Jupiter is now nearly as bright as it will be for this entire year.

Simply look for the full-looking moon in the east at early evening – or an hour or two after sunset. The moon may appear full to the eye on the evening of February 23, but it won't be astronomically full – most directly opposite the sun. No matter. Just find tonight's full-looking waning gibbous moon, and the dazzling star-like object near it will be the king planet Jupiter.



Not sure which is Jupiter and which is Sirius, the sky's brightest star? Orion's Belt always points to Sirius. Plus, Sirius tends to sparkle wildly when it's near the horizon, while Jupiter exhibits a steadier light.

February has probably our best evening skies of the year - if we are lucky enough to have clear skies - and, this time around, one extra day in which to enjoy them.

Orion is unmistakable in the South in the mid-evening as Capella in Auriga shines near the zenith and Sirius, the Dog Star, nips at Orion's heels, blazing and twinkling like no other star in our night sky.

February 22 - Full Moon -. The Moon will reach full phase – making it visible for much of the night, lying almost directly opposite the Sun in the sky.

Full Moons are traditionally given names according to the season in which they fall, and this will be the third full moon of winter 2016, traditionally called the Lenten Moon.

This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Snow Moon because the heaviest snows usually fell during this time of the year.

Since hunting is difficult, this moon has also been known by some tribes as the Full Hunger Moon, since the harsh weather made hunting difficult.

February 24 - Conjunction between the Moon and Jupiter -. The Moon and Jupiter will make a close approach, passing within 1°36' of each other...

At the moment of closest approach, the Moon will be at mag -12.6, and Jupiter at mag -2.5, both in the constellation Leo. The pair will be too widely separated to fit within the field of view of a telescope, but will be visible to the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars.