

BETELGEUSE VISIBLE ON VALENTINE'S DAY; EVENT AT ROTHNEY ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY



NEEL ROBERTS
Sky's the Limit

SKY WATCH

The Zodiacal Light is a faint, roughly triangular, whitish glow seen in the night sky extended up from the vicinity of the sun along the ecliptic or zodiac. The best time to see it is from Tuesday Feb. 7 for two weeks and from Thursday, March 9 for two weeks, in the west after evening.

Betelgeuse, the Valentine's star, is visible on Valentine's Day, starting in the southeast from dusk until setting in the west at around 3:30 a.m.

A conjunction of the moon, Jupiter and Venus occurs on Wednesday, Feb. 22. You'll see this trio after sunset until they set a couple of hours later.

A conjunction of the moon and Mars takes place after sunset on Monday, Feb. 27. Look up for this due to hang out most of the night.

PUBLIC EVENT

A public event takes place at the University of Calgary's Rothney Astrophysical Observatory, located near Priddis, on Saturday, Feb. 25.

That night, ancient Roman connections to the night sky will be explored.

Lisa Hughes will present the Roman interpretation of celestial objects and the seasonal changes observed in the sky. Dr. Hughes is an associate professor with the Department of Classics and Religion and her research areas include art and architecture of

Pompeii and Rome.

With it being close to the new moon phase, the dark sky will create great conditions for observing faint light objects like planetary nebulas and distant galaxies. The sky will be filled with mythical lions, dragons, bears and sea monsters. Mars will be visible along with the planet Jupiter.

There will be an array of telescopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society



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of Canada (RASC). You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions on Feb. 25, from 7:30-10:30 p.m.

The entrance fee to the event is \$10 plus GST per person and can be paid at eventbrite.ca. For more information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca or 403- 931-2366. *Neel Roberts is a local astronomer in southern Alberta and welcomes your comments at Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com and 403-560-6574. Check out his work at www.ptccanada.com.*