

Saturn—size hurricanes astonish Cassini observers

While the hail might pound us during the summer months on the prairies, cyclones cause a bigger concern to the seas coast dwellers of the country. When Hurricane Katrina trashed the Southern U.S. almost 10 years ago, the damage still remains prominent today and much will never be the same again.

Although this may sound threatening to us, it doesn't compare to what goes on in our neighbouring planets. Recently, NASA's Cassini's spacecraft captured staggering hurricanes taking place on the north pole of the planet. Spinning at speeds of more than 480 kilometres per hour, the mysterious hexagon storm is in a six-sided weather swirl — totally foreign to what we have on Earth. With an eye of more than 2,000 kilometres, it is



Neel Roberts
The Sky's the Limit

20 times wider than the average hurricane on earth.

Sky watch for the next month

On Saturday, July 12 after sunset, look southwest and Spica is below Mars from sunset until they set together after midnight.

On Sunday, July 13, look out for large tides overnight as the moon will be the closest to Earth.

On Tuesday, July 22 just before dawn, check out the star Aldebaran in the east next to the Moon as they fade away into the

sunlight.

On Monday, July 28 and Tuesday July 29 look in the southern sky after midnight as it expected debris from comet 96P Machholz will fall at a rate of 15-20 per hour. With a new moon, it will be easy to spot.

Public events for the next month

Mark down Friday, July 11 at 7:30 p.m. on your calendar and join us at the Trek Station for our monthly star gazing. We will try to show you the rings of Saturn during daylight (yes, this is possible with the scope we have!) followed by a short indoor presentation on the cosmos (weather pending). Experts are on hand the second Friday of the month to explain the heavens, teach telescoping skills and help you develop your knowledge of our sky.

For further information, contact the Trek Station at 403-485-2994.

Join us for some good times and great viewing under wonderfully dark skies from Friday, July 4 to Sunday, July 6 with all weekend camping at Eccles Ranch Observatory, just north of Caroline, Alta. Camping costs \$20 per vehicle, and the Saturday buffet is \$21 per person. For further information, contact Roland Dechesne at 403-510-4330 or Roland. Dechesne@cnrl.com, and go to <http://calgary.rasc.ca/starbq.htm>.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—the nation's leading astronomy club. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 and at Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.