The Night Sky

March - April

Crawley Astronomical Society



M82, Kabir, Feb 2026

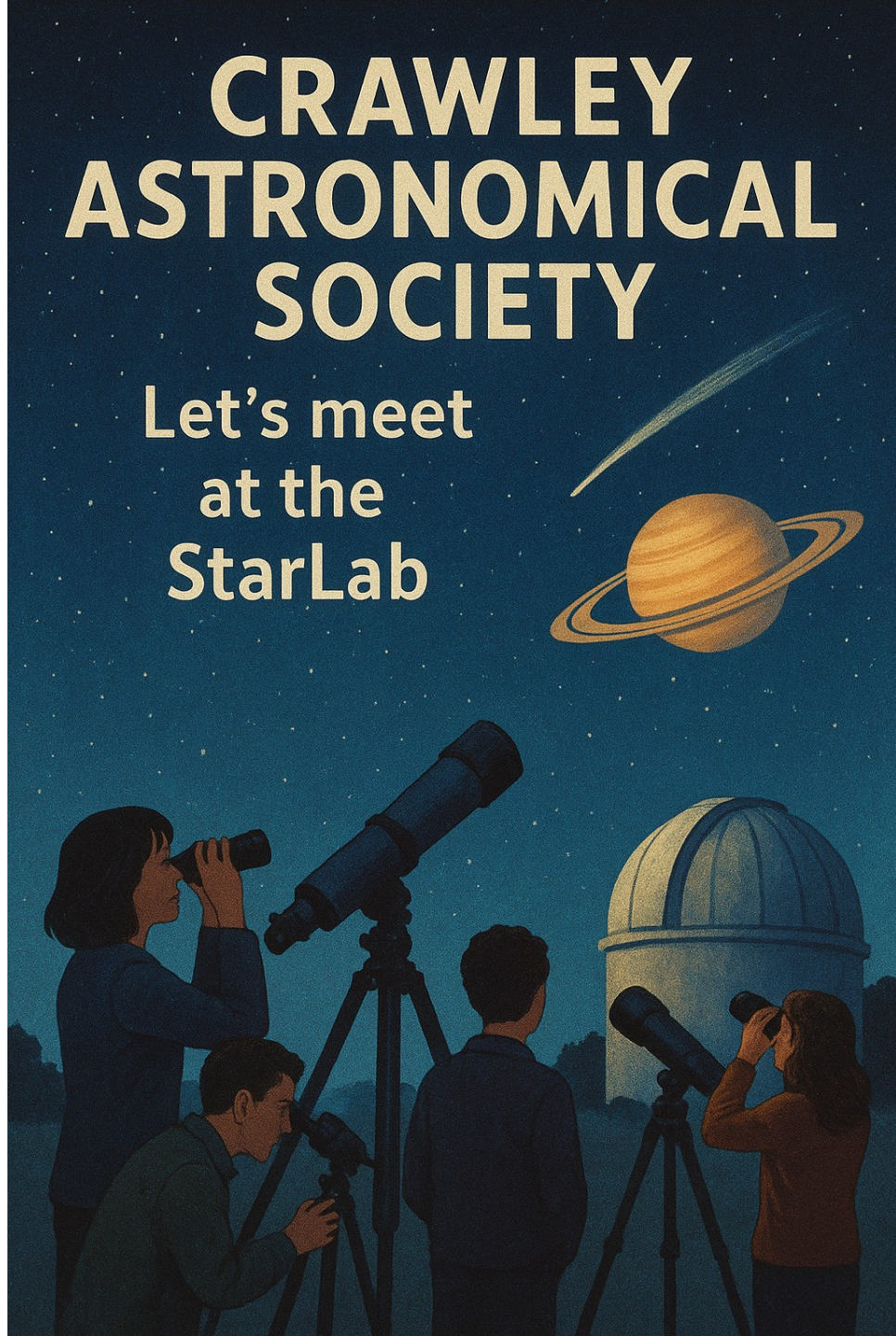
CAS Workshops 2025-26

- ✓ 12th September: processing images from smart telescopes
- ✓ 10th October: choosing a first telescope
- ✓ 14th November: filters in visual and imaging astronomy
- ✓ 5th December: guiding
- ✓ 9th January: image processing with Siril
- 13th Feb: mono cameras (postponed)
- 27th March: servicing a mount: -> will be replaced by a Video from Kevin
- 24th April: using masks in image processing
- 22nd May: NINA
- 12th June: different types of reflectors, pros and cons (SCT, RASA, RC, Mak, Newton)



Outreach – 2026 plan

- ✓ 24th January – Science Festival at the Caterham school
- x 27th February – in collaboration with the Caterham school – Cancelled due to the weather
- x 6th March – Observation night at the StarLab – Cancelled due to the weather
- ✓ 16th March – Science Day at the Copthorne Prep School
- 27th March – Let's observe the night sky – Outreach at the StarLab – 7.30pm
- 16th May – STEM in the Park – Crawley
- 12th August – Solar Eclipse – Tillgate park TBC
- 12th – 13th Sept – Teide observatory Tenerife??



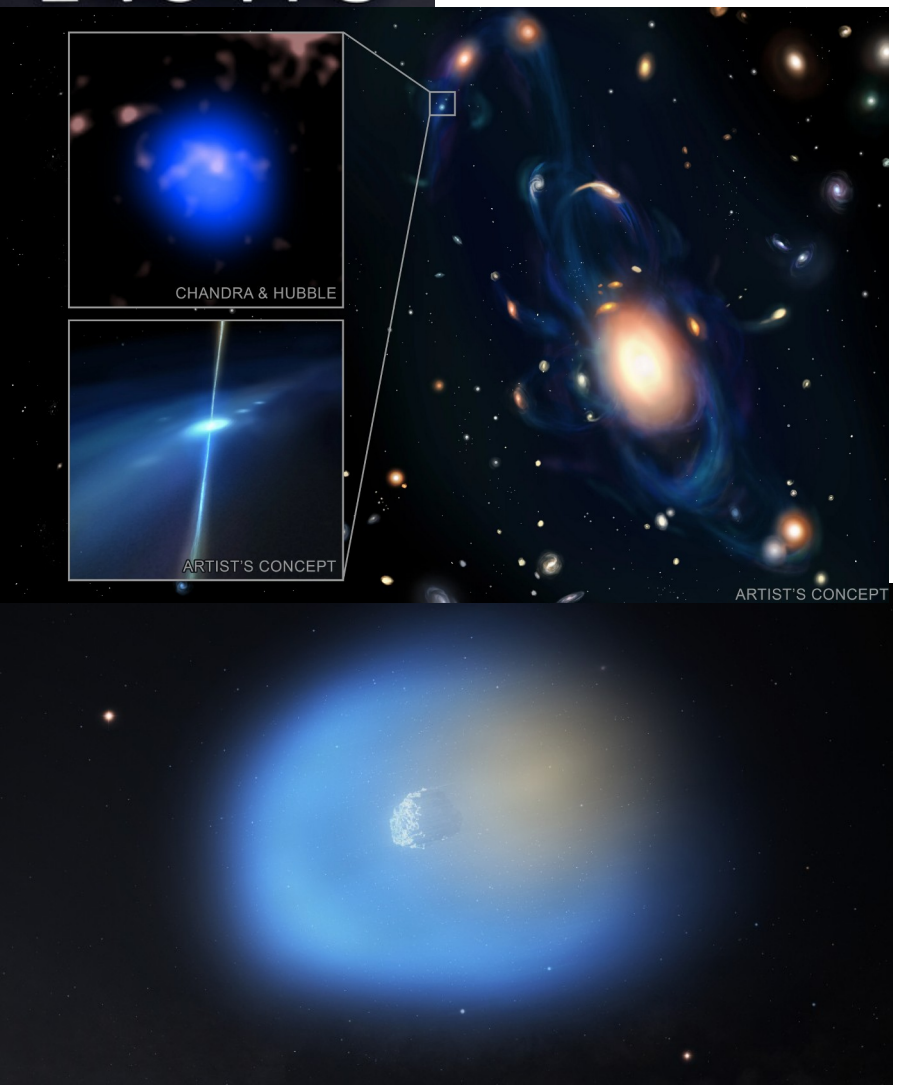
Outreach event at the Copthorne Prep school – 16th March



- School staff very appreciative of the CAS support
- Tricky questions from the kids! “how close to a black hole can you get without being dragged in to your death?”
- Nick’s innovative ideas to overcome the clouds!



Astro News!



- Interstellar comet 3I/ATLAS reveals unusual chemistry
- Evidence of extreme stellar collision discovered
- Possible evidence of planets colliding in another system
- A total lunar eclipse occurred (3 March 2026), not visible from Europe
- Artemis II lunar mission preparations continue

March – April Sky Diary

- Galaxy Season with the Leo, Ursa Major, Canes Venatici and Coma Berenices
- Full Moon 2nd April, known as the Pink Moon (Farmer's Almanac). It refers to early spring bloom of a wildflower native to eastern North America
- New Moon on the 19th March, next one 17th April
- Equinox 20th March
- Jupiter visible first part of the night
- **12th August: Total solar eclipse, 91% partial in the UK!**



17th April, 10.00pm

Leo



Leo

- **One of the zodiac constellations**, lying along the ecliptic between **Cancer** and **Virgo**.
- **Best visible in Northern Hemisphere spring** (March –May), high in the evening sky.
- Recognisable by the **“Iron” asterism**.
- The bright star **Regulus** sits at the base of the Sickle and marks the Lion’s heart.
- Leo is **one of the 48 constellations catalogued by Claudius Ptolemy** in the 2nd century.
- Mythologically associated with the **Nemean Lion** killed by **Heracles** in Greek mythology.



A few Deep Sky objects in Leo

- **Leo Triplet** – three interacting galaxies:
  - **Messier 65**
  - **Messier 66**
  - **NGC 3628**
- Leo sits in a region rich in galaxies because we are looking **away from the Milky Way plane**.
- Other Messier galaxies include **Messier 95**, **Messier 96**, and **Messier 105**.

-> Relatively small objects, ideally FL>1000mm / SeeStar 50 also ideal!





Focus on member's photos: Steve

- The Moon
- Olympus E- M5 camera with 150mm + 1.4X teleconverter f/11 (420mm 35mm equiv.) .
- Using Hi-Res mode (60Mpixel with pixel shifting).

Focus on member's photos: Gareth

- NGC 2403 (C7), a sprial galaxy on Camelopardius, it's an outlying member of the M81 group and is about 8mly away.
- NGC 3079, a barred spiral galaxy in Ursa Major about 50 mly distant.
- NGC 5981 (right), NGC 5982 (centre) and NGC 5985 (left), In Draco and together known as the Draco group.











Focus on member's photos: Kevin

- M81 and M82, the Bode and Cigar Galaxies
- M51, the Whirlpool galaxy
- Seestar S50

Focus on member's photos: Nick

- The Great Orion Nebula M42 (right)
- 8 mins
- M81 and M82 (left)
- 40 mins
- Seestar S50







Focus on member's photos: Brian

- The Orion Great Nebula M42
- Seestar S50



Focus on member's photos: Steve

- M1, the Crab Nebula
- RC8 @1000mm FL
- ASI1600MM
- LRGB
- 6.5 hours integration
- Raspberry Pi + StellarMate- KStars/INDI/Ekos- Siril & GIMP



Focus on member's photos: Kabir

- Eta Carinae Nebula - NGC 3372.
- iTelescope
- Deep Sky Chile at Rio Hurtado Valley, Chile - MPC TX07
- 135 mm f/3.5 Samyang Lens
- ASI2600MM camera
- Only one hours (9-10 minutes for each filter).

Focus on member's photos: Gordon

- Flaming Star (IC 405) & Tadpoles (IC 410) nebulae in SHO
- Askar SQA106,
- ZWO ASI2600MC colour camera,
- EQ6R mount,
- 4 hours of HaOIII, 2 hours of S2OIII, and 90 mins of broadband for the stars.



Focus on member's photos: Gordon

- The Rosette Nebula
- Askar SQA106,
- ZWO ASI2600MC colour camera,
- EQ6R mount,
- A total of 2 hours HaOIII and 1 hour of broadband for the stars





Focus on member's photos: Axel

- The Horsehead Nebula
- Newton 6" F4
- Nexus 0.75 reducer
- ASI2600MC colour camera
- 2.5 hours integration, no filter

Thanks!



Comet C/2025 A6 (Lemmon) and NGC3184 – Astrobin- Oct 2025