




Community Observatory St Martin's on Scilly

July 2024

What to see in Scilly's skies this month

<p>July: Long days, short nights! Summer in the Northern Hemisphere means longer daylight, shorter nights. Surrounded by sea with low horizons, we get dark even later! This makes family stargazing tricky this month. Stargazing on Scilly in July is best after midnight.</p>	<p>July Constellations Hercules, Lyra and Cygnus are high in the sky. The first stars to 'pop out' after dusk will be orangey Arcturus (in Boötes) and bluey-white Vega (in Lyra). Familiarise yourself with the summer triangle of bright stars Vega, Deneb and Altair - sitting pretty in a rich area of sky.</p>	<p>All Month: Noctilucent Clouds Early July offers the best chance for potentially seeing the highest clouds Earth's atmosphere offers. 80km above us, NLCs, aka 'space clouds' are almost neon-bright. Visible up to 2 hours after sunset, above the NW horizon.</p>
<p>5 July: New Moon The Moon's on the same side of the Earth as the Sun so isn't visible at night. This is the best time to view deep sky objects, but see above - you'll need to be up late! The sky around Cygnus (the Northern Cross) is well worth exploring with binoculars.</p>	<p>17 July: Jupiter The gas giant is good for viewing from the middle of the month. Tonight, between 02:06 and 02:31, there is a double shadow transit, cast by its moons Io and Europa. Jupiter has some 95 moons! Find out more here: </p>	<p>24 July: Moon and Saturn The 83% waning gibbous Moon appearing just east of Saturn from 23:00. To the naked eye, Saturn appears a bright, yellowy-white star-like object in the night sky. It's not as bright as Jupiter but still easily visible.</p>
<p>All month: the Sun We're still in the midst of one of the Sun's busiest cycles for year. Observe Sun spots aplenty, flares and coronal mass ejections through 2 of our specialised telescopes. Gazing upon our nearest star is currently very rewarding! Drop in with Terry, 14:00-16:00 Fridays, cloud permitting.</p>	<p>30 July: Delta Aquariids Meteors This meteor shower, which is active 12 Jul-23 Aug, reaches its peak tonight. Best viewed after midnight when the radiant is higher in the sky. Face SE and scan the sky. Saturn will help mark the position of Aquarius. Allow 20 minutes for eyes to adjust!</p>	<p>Next Month: School holidays - we'll be busy! Book well in advance if you're planning to visit us! The planets return: bag your next Scilly 'wow' by viewing Jupiter and Saturn through a 'scope. Nights in August darken a tad earlier: more astronomy!</p>

St Martin's Observatory opening times

Tuesdays: 21:00-22:00 *all-weather; pre-booking essential*

Fridays: 14:00-16:00 *cloud permitting; drop-ins*

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