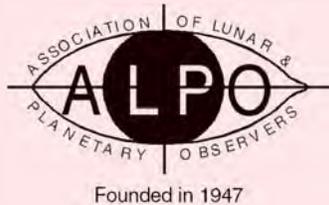


Journal of the Association of Lunar & Planetary Observers



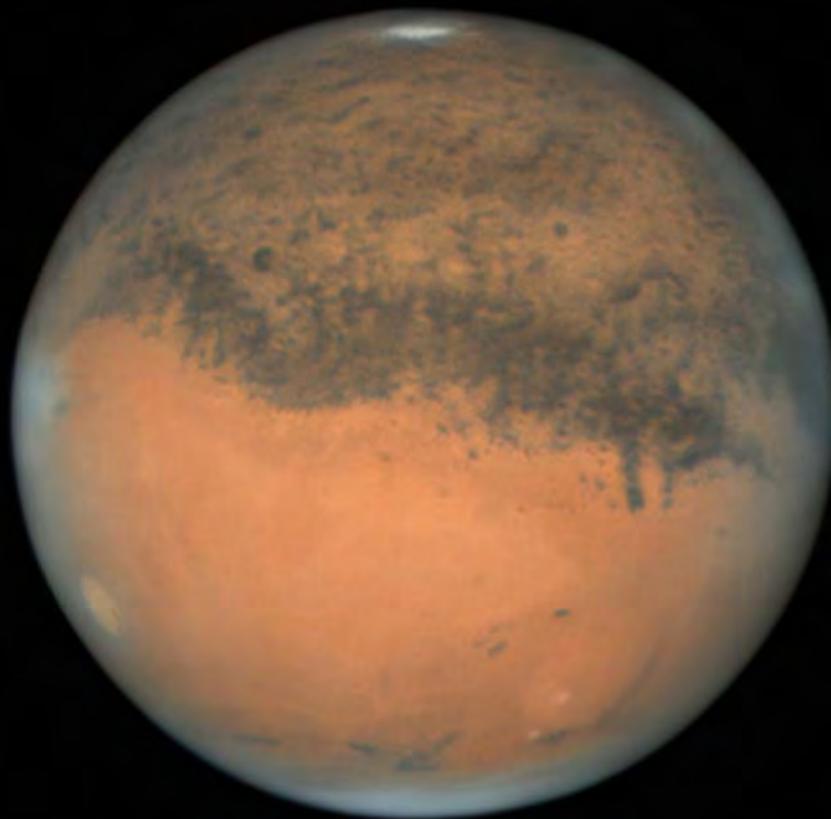
The Strolling Astronomer

Volume 63, Number 2 Spring 2021

Now in Portable Document Format (PDF) for

Macintosh and PC-compatible computers

Online and in COLOR at <http://www.alpo-astronomy.org>



Mars: Almost within arm's reach
(See page 3 for image details.)

Journal of the Association of Lunar & Planetary Observers The Strolling Astronomer

Volume 63, No.2, Spring 2021

This issue published in March 2021 for distribution in both portable document format (pdf) and hardcopy format. Hard copy printing and distribution by Sheridan Press.

This publication is the official journal of the Association of Lunar & Planetary Observers (ALPO).

The purpose of this journal is to share observation reports, opinions, and other news from ALPO members with other members and the professional astronomical community.

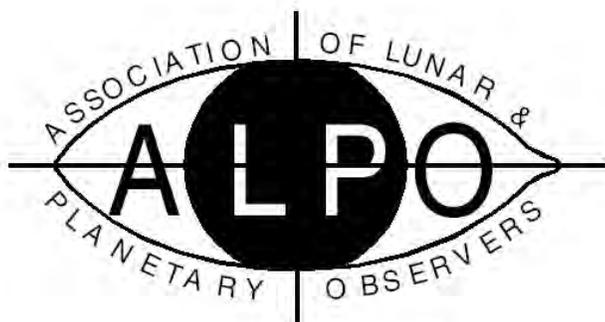
© 2021, Association of Lunar & Planetary Observers (ALPO). The ALPO hereby grants permission to educators, academic libraries and the professional astronomical community to photocopy material for educational or research purposes as required. There is no charge for these uses provided that credit is given to *The Strolling Astronomer*, the "JALPO" or the ALPO itself. All others must request permission from the ALPO.

For membership or general information about the ALPO, contact:

Matthew Will
ALPO Membership Secretary/Treasurer
P.O. Box 13456
Springfield, Illinois 62791-3456

E-mail to: matt.will@alpo-astronomy.org

Visit the ALPO online at:
<http://www.alpo-astronomy.org>



Founded in 1947

Inside the ALPO

Point of View: Who Writes for the Journal? You Do!	2
News of General Interest	3
Our Cover: A Most Attractive Mars	3
ALPO 2021 Conference News	4
Search Continues for Jupiter Section Lead Coordinator	4
Hardcopy JALPO Issues Still Available	5
ALPO Website Updates	5
Book Review Ideas Needed	5
Call for JALPO Papers	5
ALPO Interest Section Reports	5
ALPO Observing Section Reports	8
Errata	27

Papers & Presentations

Interpretive Observing: Personal Reflections on Observational Astronomy	29
A Report on Carrington Rotations 2231 through 2235 (2020 01 06.3826 UT to 2020 05 21.8750 UT)	35
J and H filter Brightness of Venus: 2014-2020 Basic Interpretation and Analysis of Lunar Thermal Images	45
The Mysterious History of Mapping 'Luna Incognita!'	52
ALPO Observations of Jupiter During the 2016-2017 Apparition	68
ALPO Observations of Saturn During the 2016 - 2017 Apparition	78
	93

ALPO Resources

Board of Directors	113
Publications Section	113
Interest Sections	113
Observing Sections	113
ALPO Publications	114
The Monograph Series	114
ALPO Observing Section Publications	115
Back Issues of <i>The Strolling Astronomer</i>	116



Inside the ALPO Member, section and activity news

Individuals interested in participating in the programs of the ALPO Venus Section are encouraged to visit the ALPO Venus Section online <http://www.alpo-astronomy.org/venusblog/>

Lunar Section

Lunar Topographical Studies / Selected Areas Program

Report by David Teske,
program coordinator
drteske@yahoo.com

The ALPO Lunar Topographic Studies Section (ALPO LTSS) received a total of 225 observations from 29 observers in 8 countries during the October-December 2020 quarter. The countries represented by observers were Argentina (10), USA (6), Italy (2), Columbia (1), Uruguay (5), France (1), Bolivia (1), Mexico (2) and unreported (1).

It is most impressive to have so many high-quality lunar observations submitted from so many observers throughout the world, particularly Latin America. A total of 27 articles were published in addition to numerous commentaries on images selected in the monthly newsletter *The Lunar Observer*, which had an average page count of 71 pages per issue during the quarter. It was placed on the *Cloudy Nights* website and viewed an average of 161 times in each month of the quarter.

Throughout the quarter, *The Lunar Observer* included a section called “By the Numbers,” which looked at observer’s locations and telescopes used for Moon gazing. In all three months, Schmidt-Cassegrain telescopes were the most common telescope for lunar observations, followed by Maksutov-Cassegrain telescopes.

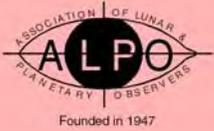
The “Focus-On” series continued under Jerry Hubbell, with the continuation of the “Lunar 100” observing program



Pastel drawing of the Moon-and-Mars conjunction on September 9, 2020, at 06:00 UT by Michel Deconinck (Aquarellia Observatory, Verdon, France). Observed with a 152 mm (6.0 in.), f/8 Bresser refractor; magnification 32x. Time span to complete this drawing, 05:50 to 07:00 UT.

during this quarter. Every other month starting in May 2020 explores 10 of the “Lunar 100” targets. In November 2020, the fourth 10 items on the “Lunar 100” list were featured, and in January 2021 the fifth set of 10 were explored. We have had an incredible response from across the globe, including contributions images and drawings of these lunar subjects.

Future “Focus-On” articles will highlight observations from the Lunar 100 observing list. The “Lunar 100” observing list was originally compiled by Charles Wood as a list of 100 targets to observe on the Moon from very easy (Lunar 100 number 1, the Moon) to very challenging (Lunar 100 number 100, Mare Marginus swirls). Every other month will feature 10 of the “Lunar 100” targets in the “Focus-On” series. March 2021 will feature “Lunar 100”



Inside the ALPO Member, section and activity news

Introducing Michel Deconinck

Michel is the newly appointed acting assistant coordinator for the ALPO Comets Section and works with that section's lead coordinator, Carl Hergenrother. Below is how he entered the world of astronomy and the ALPO:

A retired nuclear engineer, Michel worked first for different nuclear medicine projects and then as senior principal consultant at Oracle.

He's been a fan of the cosmos since the very beginning of the space conquest. "I still remember, I was age 5, the 'bip-bip' of the first Sputnik. And then follows the different missions with 'supermen' on board of incredible spaceships."

He joined the CAB (the Brussel Astronomical Club) as member and quickly moved up to being president. "I worked for some specific jobs at the Royal Belgium Observatory, mainly around the solar specialties (Wolf number estimation, corona polarization during eclipse, spectroscopy, solar interferometry...). Jannik (my wife) helps me with this passion; she is very motivating and this is a huge help!"

He first learned of the ALPO by way of his interest in meteors. "I've active in naked-eye meteor observation since 1970. At that time, I joined the past IUAA (a sort of an IAU branch for the amateur, as coordinator for the meteor section). For example I'm in contact with Robert Lunsford (of the ALPO Meteors Section and the American Meteor Society). On the cloudynights.com forum, I regularly read Carl Hergenrother's great comets notes, so the link with ALPO was natural."

Michel also is an avid sketcher, as well as an observer. "As a long-time astro-sketcher, I was interested first in the huge database of comet images maintained in ALPO. For me, this is "THE" world's best reference. In parallel, I'm interested in information about the Lunar, Mercury and Venus sections of the ALPO, where I send my sketches, as well.

As an imager, he had a chance to catch a good photo of the comet West 1975. That photo was used in national newspapers and some books and "was probably the starting point for my comet passion." In 1986, Michel joined the International Halley Watch in order to collect observations from Belgian astronomers and also organized a specific exhibition for the Université libre de Bruxelles (a research university in Brussels).

His mobile observatory (a lovely California van) is equipped with the following: a pair of Vixen 126mm, f/5 binoculars; a 102mm, f/10 refractor on an EQ3 mount motorized for right ascension; a 70mm, f/5 refractor on an altazimuth mount. In addition, Michel's backyard home observatory includes: a 152mm, f/8 refractor equipped with a white light filter and is dedicated mainly to daily sunspot counting and is used alongside a 35mm H-alpha Lunt solar telescope (both of which are on an EQ5 mount motorized for declination and right ascension; and 250mm, f/10 and f/15 Takahashi Mewlon (Dall-Kirkham) telescopes on GoTo EQ6 mounts. All are used only for observation and sketching.

I'm a navigator, sailing for years with my wife on our two-mast sailing boat in the Atlantic, the North seas and the med seas, and... using stars with a sextant to know where I was.

I'm an artist, today I teach art in different painting schools in Provence. Since years I specialize myself in night watercolors. I put in scene (with precision), the stars, planets and comets, this is the scientific part of the view, and in the foreground, I like to paint houses, trees, mountains and sometime an observer (with less precision but creativity) for the artistic counterpart.

I send astronomical alerts to the French speaking community. New objects as cataclysmic stars, aurora, meteors, etc... and of course new comets. I ask the contacts I have now, to share their photos, sketches and observations to ALPO.

I share to ALPO my own observations of comets, estimation of magnitude, coma diameter, DC, tails characteristics as well as the sketches done.

