

## **Urban Club Chair:**

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### **Introduction**

Welcome to the Astronomical League's Urban Club!

The purpose of the Urban Club is to bring amateur astronomy back to the cities, back to those areas that are affected by heavy light pollution. Amateur astronomy used to be called "backyard astronomy". This was in the days when light pollution was not a problem, and you could pursue your hobby from the comfort of your backyard. But as cities grew, so did light pollution, and the amateur astronomer was forced to drive further and further out into the country to escape that light pollution. It is not uncommon today for a city dweller to drive 100 miles to enjoy his/her hobby. But many people do not have the time or the resources to drive great distances to achieve dark skies. That is the reason for the creation of this club, to allow those who want to enjoy the wonders of the heavens in the comfort of their own neighborhoods to do so, and to maximize the observing experience despite the presence of heavy light pollution.

Our crack team of observers observed the objects on this list from the East Coast to Middle America to the West Coast, and from major metropolitan areas like Miami, Baltimore, Dallas, Houston, and Los Angeles. Limiting magnitudes went from a high of 4, down to 2, to a "Geez" as Becky Schultz commented on one particularly bad evening. Instruments ranged from a six-inch reflector to a ten-inch SCT. So as you can see, there is a world of objects out there that can be enjoyed under even poor skies, and it only takes a small to medium sized telescope to enjoy them. We sincerely hope that this club encourages you to continue your enjoyment of this wonderful hobby of ours.

### **Rules and Regulations.**

To qualify for the A.L.'s Urban Club Certificate, you need only be a member of the Astronomical League, either through an affiliated club or as a Member-at-Large, and observe 100 objects on the Urban Club list in light polluted skies. Light polluted skies are defined as any area where you cannot see the Milky Way with the unaided eye. You may observe the objects with the naked eye, binoculars or any size telescope. However, telescopes from six- to ten-inches in aperture are recommended since a larger aperture helps pull out fainter objects in non-contrasty skies. Previous observations of these objects may be used toward this club as long as they were done in light polluted skies. Previous observations from dark sky sites may not be used. All observations made in

achieving the certificate for the Urban Club may be used toward certificates of other A.L. observing programs.

To record your observations, you may use log sheets similar to those found in the back of the Astronomical League's manual *Observe: A Guide to the Messier Objects*. You can order the *Observe* manual through Astronomical League Sales. If you use your own log sheets, they should include: object, date, time, power, seeing, type of instrument, and observing notes.

If you need to become a member of the Astronomical League as a Member-at-Large, [click here](#).

### **The List**

There are actually two lists, one for deep-sky objects, and another for double and variable stars. All objects are listed in Right Ascension order so that you can view them as they rise in the East and set in the West. Information provided on each deep-sky object includes: Catalog Number, Right Ascension, Declination, Magnitude, Messier Designation (if any), Type of Object, Size, Constellation, and what chart it is located on in both the Uranometria or Tirion's Sky Atlas 2000. Information provided on double and variable stars includes: Object, Right Ascension, Declination, Magnitude, and Separation of the components.

I hope you enjoy this list of objects to observe, and that it helps increase your satisfaction in observing from a light polluted area. I will look forward to your sharing your observations with me. Until then, good luck, clear skies, and good observing!

### **Acknowledgment**

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We also gratefully acknowledge the hard work of the following people who helped to select and check all the objects in the two lists:

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Roberto Torres - Southern Cross Astronomical Society

- John Wagoner