

Solar System Observing Program

Solar System Observing Program Coordinator:

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Due to an emergency situation, Aaron Clevenson will be temporarily coordinating the Solar System Observing Program. If you have any questions or have recently submitted your observations, please contact Aaron.

Introduction

Welcome to the Astronomical League's Solar System Observing Program. The S.S.O.P. is a list of selected projects designed to introduce you to the pleasures of planetary observing. Observing skills come only with experience. An eye trained by observing will see more, regardless of what type of optical aid is used. Good observing skills reinforce the desire to observe. Observing trains the eye to see. It is a cycle that has to be willed to happen. Given the time and effort it WILL happen. Once it happens, astronomy will become a very joyful lifelong experience.

In these days of increasing light pollution, the wonders of our own solar system may well take on an increased importance among sky watchers. Dark skies and moonless nights are not a priority for any of the listed projects. If you are intrigued by the enclosed projects, I would refer you to the [Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers](#). ALPO members regularly observe solar system objects and have contributed significantly to our understanding of this corner of the universe. For more information you may contact:

ALPO Membership Sec./Treas.,
P.O. Box 13456
Springfield, IL 62791-3456.

Quick View of Requirements	
Solar System Observing Program	
Uses Eyes	
Uses Binoculars	
Uses Telescopes	Yes
Must be an AL Member	Yes
Date Deadline for Submission	
Minimum Instrument Size	
Manual Observations Required	
Go-To Telescopes Allowed	
Remote Telescopes Allowed	
Number of Observations	25
Option for Imaging	
Special Equipment Required	
Equipment Must Be Constructed	
Observations Must Be Submitted to an On-Line Database	

Whether you decide to go on to serious data collection or simply observe for your own edification - *enjoy yourself*. The sky is there for all. It is a great equalizer. Beneath its huge expanse we are all reduced to nearly infinitesimal size, but in trying to understand it we grow.

Rules and Regulations

To qualify for the Astronomical League's Solar System Observing Program certificate and pin, you need only be a member of the Astronomical League, either through an affiliated club or as a Member at Large, and complete twenty-five of the suggested projects. Record your observations on copies of the included log, or equivalent. Some observations may require sketches, but don't panic; artistic prowess is not required. Make as many copies of the log sheet as you will need. Fill in information appropriate to that project.

Be sure to include the object name, Date and Time of the observation (local or UT), Latitude and Longitude, Seeing and Transparency, and a description of the object.

At the end of the projects, you will find a glossary of terms.

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

To receive your Solar System Observers Program Certificate and [pin](#), simply send a scanned **COPY** in PDF form of your logs along with your name, mailing address, email address, phone number, and club affiliation to the Solar System Observing Program Coordinator. If you prefer to send them via regular USPS mail, send complete **COPIES** of your logs (**NOT STAPLED**) and personal information to the Solar System Observing Program Coordinator.

Observation Requirements	
Solar System Observing Program	
Object Name/Number	Yes
Observer's Latitude	Yes
Observer's Longitude	Yes
Observer's Location (City)	
Observer's Altitude	
Date of Observation (LT or UT)	Yes
Time of Observation (LT or UT)	Yes
Description of Object	Yes
Sketch of Object	
Seeing	Yes
Transparency	Yes
Sky Conditions	
Size of Instrument Used	
Power/Magnification	
Filters Used	

A new **Binocular Solar System Observing Certificate** has been created to allow binocular-based observers to experience the wonders of the Solar system. To receive this certificate you must certify that you have observed 20 of those requirements indicated by a *B* on the observing list using just your eyes or a pair of binoculars. These may be included as requirements to meet the standard requirements to receive the certificate and pin for the Solar System Observing Program.

Submitting for Certification

To receive your certification, please send completed logs to the Solar System Observing Program Coordinator or have them reviewed and approved by an officer of your astronomy club, who can then send an email to the Coordinator. Be sure to indicate whether you have done the Binocular Requirements using just your eyes or a pair of binoculars.

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Submission Requirements	
Solar System Observing Program	
Observer's Name	Yes
Observer's Mailing Address	Yes
Observer's Club Affiliation	Yes
Observer's Phone Number	Yes
Observer's E-Mail Address	Yes
Information for Person to Send the Award To For Presentation	Yes

Upon verification of your observations, your certificate and pin (if appropriate) will be forwarded to you or your club's Award Co-ordinator, whomever you choose.

Happy Observing!

Bryan and Aaron

PROJECT LOG

NAME OF PROJECT _____

Project Begun _____ Project Ended _____

Seeing Conditions _____

Binocular Size _____

Telescope: Type _____

Aperture _____

Focal Length _____

Eyepiece Focal Length _____

Observational Notes, Comments and Impressions:

Add pages with copies of any supplementary sketches.

Galileo's TOES:

The Galilean Moons that orbit Jupiter are in a continual dance with the planet. For those who take the time and make the effort, we have developed a **Galileo's TOES Certificate** to recognize the accomplishment.

For information about this new certification, click: [Galileo's TOES](#).

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