

Thanet Astronomy Group

Astronomy for Everyone in Plain English

Your Questions

Answers to popular questions you have asked.

What happened to Comet ISON

In November 2013, there was talk of a spectacular comet.

After its 3 million year journey from the Oort Cloud, unfortunately, on the 28th November, it flew within 750,000 miles of the Sun. It's thought very little survived. A Meteor shower is unlikely as it didn't cross Earth's path.

Why did we see the Aurora Borealis

On Thursday 27th February, we were treated to the rare sight of the Aurora Borealis, (Northern Lights). This happens when Coronal Mass Ejections emitted by the Sun, interact with Earth's magnetic field. And I missed it!

What is the Spring Equinox

This occurred on March 20th. It is when the Sun crosses the Celestial Equator from the southern to the northern hemisphere. It marks the beginning of spring.

Can I see Jupiter's Red Spot

Jupiter remains high overhead, the brightest object on view. Now is a good time as the atmosphere is thinner directly above and causes less distortion. If you have a telescope, look for the Great Red Spot. You might have to wait for Jupiter to turn but it's worth it.

What to see March 31

Star (Arcturus)

Planet (Mars)

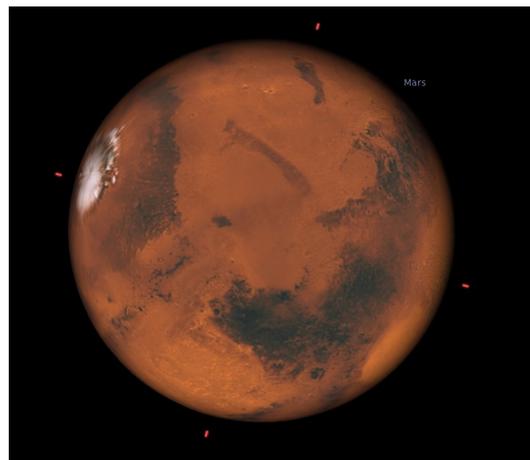
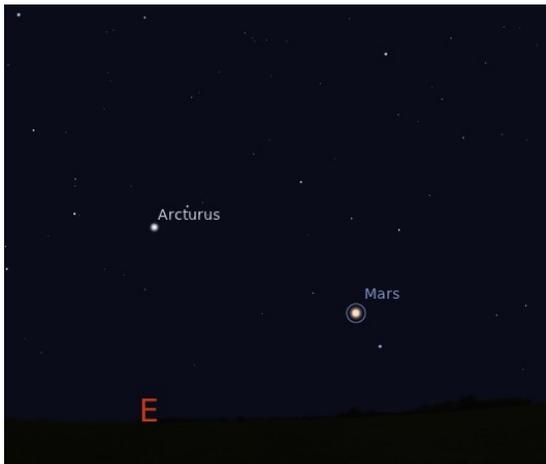
About 9:00pm on 31 March 2014

Arcturus

Look directly east, you will see Arcturus the 4th brightest star, just under 20deg. above the horizon.

Mars

Now look a little to the right and lower down, you will see a brighter object about 7deg. above the horizon. It will have a reddish tint. This is the planet Mars.



If you don't have a view of the horizon, wait until 10 or 11pm, both objects will be higher in the sky.

Contact us if you need help or more information.

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