

2020 February Observations from Big Woodchuck Observatory

----- Original Message -----

Subject:M42 from Wednesday night

Date:Thu, 20 Feb 2020

hi all,

Took advantage of last night's clearing and headed outback to image the Orion Nebula - M42.

Here's the results, made with my 8" SCT @ f6.3 and my ZWO ASI294MC camera.

<http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/M42-02192020.jpg>

15 second exposures, with 480 stacked for a total of 2 hours.

Larry

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Observations from Friday night

Date:Sat, 22 Feb 2020

hi all,

Spent Friday evening outback in Big Woodchuck Observatory using my 8" SCT and ZWO camera.

No luck with getting a good image of the Horse Head either with the H-beta filter or without. Guess my local light pollution was too much for it. Now that I look back thru my other video/image observations of B33, it's always been from a dark-sky site, such as this image from the BFSP: <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/B33-09262019.jpg> (30 second exposures, with 120 stacked for a total of 1 hour.)

I did get a decent image last night of the Eskimo Nebula (NGC2392) in Gemini, <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/NGC2392-02212020.jpg> (15 second exposures, with 80 stacked for a total of 20 minutes.) though it would have been better if I had first removed the f6.3 focal reducer and imaged at f10, but I didn't want to mess with changing the telescope equipment. I also spent a few minutes imaging star clusters M46 & M47, before calling it a night. M46 has that little planetary nebula in the foreground. You can find the clusters and others on my 'Pretty Pictures' webpage: <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallerytour.htm>

Thinking about heading out tonight for a third observing session in a row!

Larry

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Observations from Saturday Night

Date:Mon, 24 Feb 2020

hi all,

Well, I did make it out for a third night in a row! Saturday night was probably the best evening sky-wise from the South Hills of Pittsburgh. But I spent the majority of the time tinkering with hardware rather than video/imaging observing. Got a new laptop to use for doing astronomy, and even though during the day I installed the software that I would use, I spent the evening fighting with trying to get PHD2 to even recognize my ASI120 guide camera. (never did get it working until Sunday afternoon after I had to download a camera firmware upgrade so it would work with AMD processors). But my main imaging camera, (ZWO ASI294) and the SharpCap imaging program worked like a charm! Not being able to get the guider to work with my 8" Meade SCT LX200GPS limited my exposure time, so I tried taking very short 2 second images of M42 while I fought with the guider software & camera. Here's the result, (attached) a cropped image of the Trapezium starcluster at the heart of the Orion Nebula: (a stack of over 2600 frames totaling around 87 minutes) <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/M42-02222020.png>

After putting aside trying to fix the guider, I connected my homemade allsky domecam, a ASI290 & fisheye lens housed in a small plastic dome. While I did capture a series of time-lapse images with the domecam, testing whether I could have multiple sessions of SharpCap running at the same time on the new laptop, I didn't really bother to create a video from it. Maybe next time. Kinda glad it clouded over Sunday night, I needed a break from the three nighter!

Larry