

2020 March Observations from Big Woodchuck Observatory

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

Subject: Good night of observing

Date: Mon, 16 Mar 2020

hi all,

Sunday night was a good night to get out in the backyard observatory and get in a little imaging. (one of the better clear nights in awhile, I could almost see a couple of the stars in the Little Dipper's handle, lol). With the way my observatory's roof opens, I only have a clear view of the meridian from overhead to the southern horizon, and a little to the east and west. So last night I focused on deep-sky objects in Monoceros and later in Hydra and Sextans.

Here's the better images:

M50: <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/M50-03152020.jpg>

NGC3242 ' Ghost of Jupiter': <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/NGC3242-03152020.jpg>

NGC3115 ' Spindle Galaxy": <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/NGC3115-03152020.jpg>

Hopefully, other folks were out last night too!

Larry

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

Subject: [ORAS] Leo Triplet

Date: Thu, 26 Mar 2020

hi all,

With yesterday's afternoon sky clearing off, I decided to head outback last night to the observatory to work with my ZWO ASI294MC camera and my observatory's 8" Meade LX200GPS SCT. I didn't have any particular observing plan in mind, but wanted to mainly build a new dark-frame library for this year, as the series of darks that I built in 2019 were getting a bit 'stale'. I also wanted to practice the technique of creating a flat-field using my LCD light-box.

So after spending some time creating the flat and then doing a series of darks at my camera's largest size capture area, (4144x2822), with Leo was approaching the meridian I decided to save building darks for another day and instead use the newly created frames to image the 'Leo Triplet' of galaxies M65, M66, and NGC3628.

As the sky had gone kinda soft, I limited the exposure to 30 seconds and used SharpCap to stack 180 frames for a total of 90 minutes. Here's the link to the image: <http://www.stellar-journeys.org/gallery/Leo-Triplet-03252020.jpg> (you can find the full camera settings for the image listed on my website in the 'Pretty Pictures Tour' page under 'Galaxies').

Not quite sure if I liked how the flat-field worked out with the image. (could be that I didn't create a good flat, as I'm still learning how to do that). It left some artifacts that caused me to have to do a little post-processing of brightness/contrast/midtone shadows to minimize. I'll have to keep practicing flats imaging technique.

Hopefully, others were able to take advantage of last night, as it looks like we're back to the normal clouds and rain!
Larry