

The Observer's Challenge Objects

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November: **NGC 55** – Galaxy - Sculptor; mag_v=7.8; RA: 0h 14m 54s Dec: -39° 11' 48"

NGC551 is located in the late Fall constellation of Sculptor – “the Sculptor's Studio”.

The +7.8 magnitude, nearly edge-on barred spiral galaxy is about 6.5 million light years distant and about 88,000 light-years in size. It is located along the southern boundary of Sculptor and Phoenix, and is one of the dozen of the sky's brightest galaxies! NGC55 is also one of the closest non-Local Group galaxies to our Milky-Way galaxy. NGC55 is a Magellanic type barred spiral galaxy, which is an intermediate class between irregular galaxies and dwarf spiral galaxies.

Scottish astronomer James Dunlop discovered NGC55 on the night of July 7th, 1826 using his 9" reflector from his home observatory in Parramatta, Australia, located about 15 miles west of Brisbane.

EAA Observation:

10/16/2025 from the Bortle-1 dark-sky location of the Enchanted Skies Star Party near Magdalena, NM. Using an 8" SCT optical tube @ f6.3 on a GEM mount, with a CMOS/USB color camera and broadband filter @ 300-second guided exposure livestacked for 45 minutes.



Using EAA techniques, visually on the monitor the edge-on galaxy displays a small star-like core along with numerous dust lanes and bright knots of HII that can be observed in its single elongated spiral arm.