

Exploring the Sky-2026 78th Year

National Capital Astronomers / National Park Service

18 Apr 8:00 pm M45, Orion, Jupiter
16 May 9:00 pm M44, Leo, Arcturus, M13, Jupiter, Venus (?)
20 Jun 9:00 pm Leo, Bootes, M13, Moon, Venus, Beehive
18 July 9:00 pm Moon, M13, Summer Triangle, Venus
15 Aug 8:30 pm Moon, M13, Summer Triangle, M57, M31, Venus
19 Sep 8:00 pm Moon, Summer Triangle, M31, M13
17 Oct 7:30 pm Summer Triangle, Moon, M31, Saturn
7 Nov 7:00 pm Summer Triangle, Pegasus, M31, Saturn, Moon

Exploring the Sky is a joint program between the National Capital Astronomers and the National Park Service Rock Creek Park Nature Center and has been run since 1948 at this location, the field at the corner of Glover and Military Roads in the District. There is an adjacent parking lot. It is free and all are welcome who have an interest in observing the heavens. It's not an ideal dark sky location but we can still see solar system objects (even the occasional comet), open and globular clusters and maybe a distant galaxy or two. If it is cloudy or raining observing is, of course, cancelled. As a bonus, come to the Nature Center an hour before the observing starts for a free planetarium show on that night's sky.

For more information about Rock Creek Park, please visit <https://www.nps.gov/rocr/planyourvisit/nature-center-and-planetarium.htm>. To learn about their planetarium programs and scheduling, please visit <https://www.nps.gov/rocr/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>. You can also explore keywords like "astronomy" or "dark skies," or simply reach out to the Nature Center directly at 202.895.6070.

Information on joining the National Capital Astronomers, which is 86 years old, can be found at <https://capitalastronomers.org>.

Join us for an evening of celestial wonder!