



LAS Newsletter – December 2014

Celestial Highlights

Jupiter



Jupiter rises just after 10 pm in the constellation Leo early in the month and by 8 pm at the end of the month. It is -2 magnitude in brightness and its apparent size grows from 36 arc sec to 40 arc sec across. Times to view or photograph the "Great Red Spot" at mid transit this month:

Dec 2 04:37 am Alt 83°
Dec 5 02:07 am Alt 43°
Dec 7 03:45 am Alt 64°
Dec 7 11:36 pm Alt 23°
Dec 9 05:23 am Alt 79°
Dec 10 01:14 am Alt 77°
Dec 12 02:52 am Alt 77°
Dec 13 04:30 am Alt 66°
Dec 15 12:22 am Alt 37°
Dec 16 06:09 am Alt 54°
Dec 17 02:00 am Alt 73°
Dec 19 03:38 am Alt 66°
Dec 19 11:29 pm Alt 31°
Dec 20 05:16 am Alt 59°
Dec 22 01:07 am Alt 50°
Dec 24 02:45 am Alt 65°
Dec 25 10:36 pm Alt 24°
Dec 26 04:23 am Alt 63°
Dec 27 12:14 am Alt 45°
Dec 28 06:01 am Alt 81°
Dec 29 01:52 am Alt 61°
Dec 31 03:30 am Alt 83°

*Transits below 20° alt not shown

No LAS Meeting this Month

There will be no meeting this month as our normal 3rd Thursday meeting night would be just a week before Christmas. Many of us will be busy attending parties, buying presents for family, attending church services, and of course shopping for last minute imaging and other telescope goodies!

It is time to think about volunteering to be a club officer or board member! All positions are open for nomination every year.

The offices to be filled are:

- President – conducts meetings & arranges for speakers
- Vice President – conducts meetings in absence of president
- Treasurer/ALCor – maintains club bank accounts and coordinates with the Astronomical League
- Secretary – keeps minutes for meetings
- Board member-at-large (3 positions) – vote on purchases and other issues

Volunteers are also needed to help with the newsletter and website.

Upcoming Events

Volunteers needed to support the following events:

- Northridge Elementary, 1200 19th Ave. in Longmont, CO on Monday, December 8th at 6:30 pm.
- LAS annual banquet meeting and elections Jan 18? (TBA)
- Superior Brings Night Sky to You on Jan 24, 2015 at 6-8 pm





Our Night Sky December 7 at 8 pm

Comets

C/2014 Q2 (Lovejoy) will become high enough to be visible in our telescopes after about December 22nd.

It will be fairly easy to spot after Christmas as it will be magnitude 8.7. It should brighten to magnitude 7 by mid-January and be visible in binoculars.

On evening of Dec 28th it passes very close to globular cluster M79 about midnight. See chart on following page.

Moon

Full moon: Dec 6 5:27 am
 Third quarter: Dec 14 5:51 am
 New moon: Dec 21 6:36 pm
 First quarter: Dec 28 11:31 am

Mars

Mars is still visible in the southwest this month. It is about mag +1 and 5.1 arc sec across.

Venus

Venus becomes visible low in the southwest after sunset starting around the first week this month. It is mag -3.9 and 10.1 arc sec across.

Mercury

Mercury becomes visible low in the southwest after sunset from about the 21st. It will be about mag -0.9 and 5 arc sec across.

Uranus

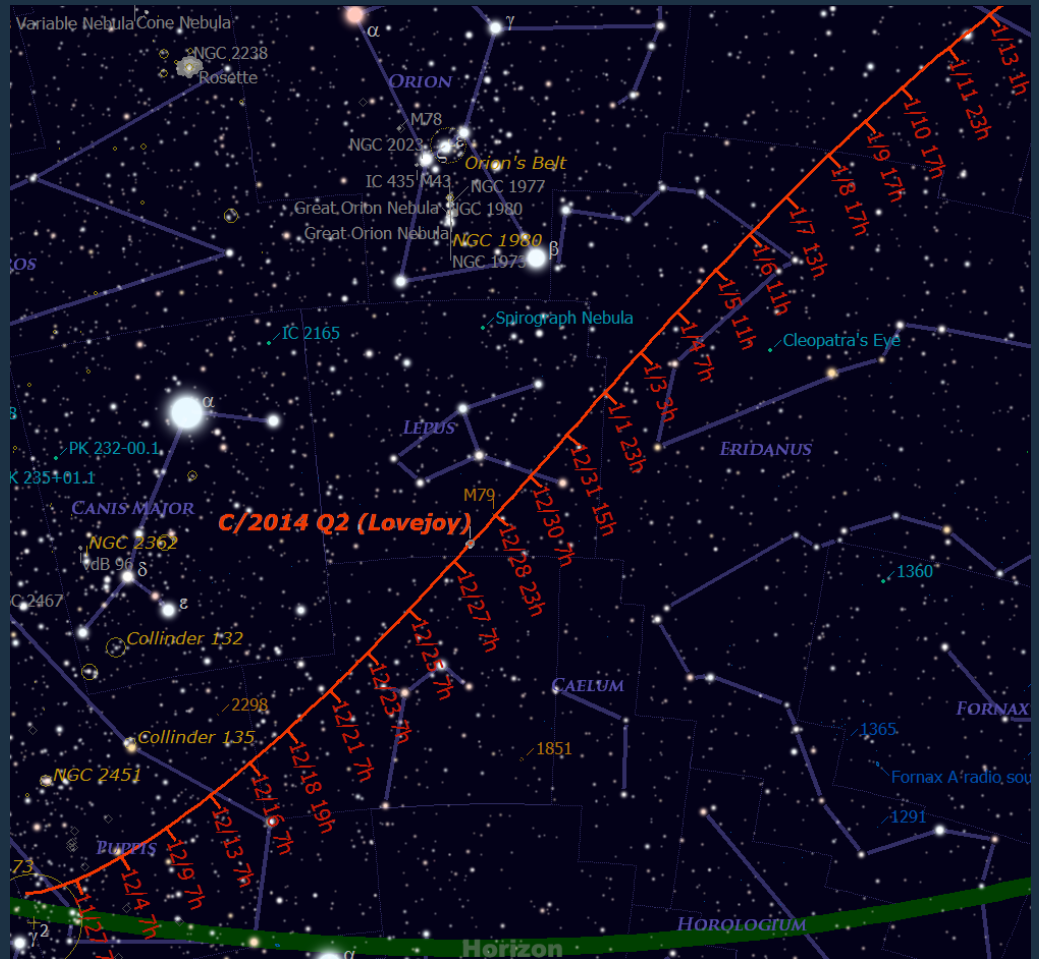
Uranus is in the constellation Pisces; it is mag 5.8 and 3.8 arc sec across

Neptune

Neptune is in the constellation Aquarius; it is mag 7.9 and 2.4 arc sec across.

Saturn

Saturn reappears low in the morning sky in the ESE; it is mag +0.5 and 15.4 arc sec across.



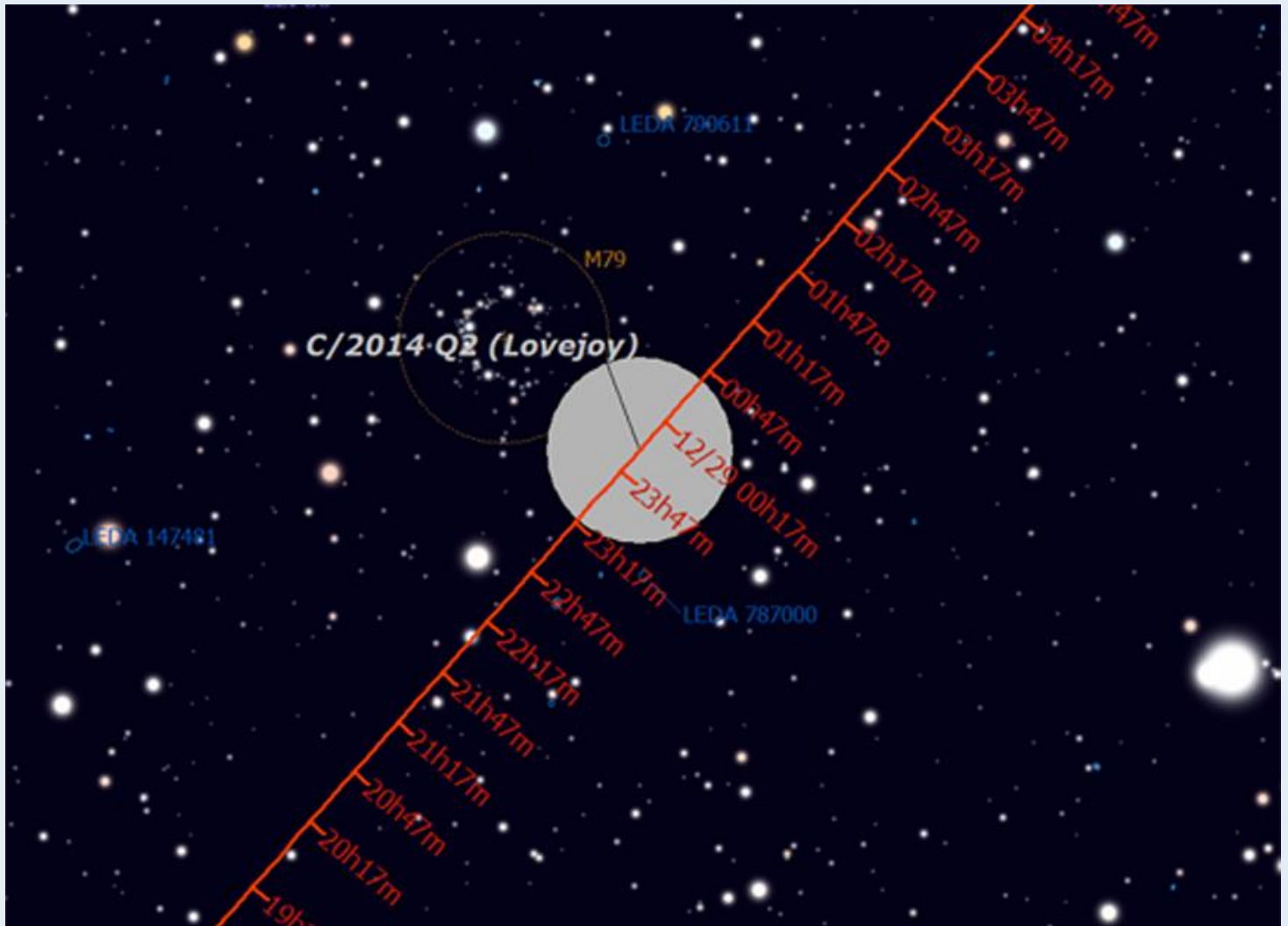
Position of Comet C/2014 Q2 (Lovejoy) December 2014

Date	RA	Decl	Date	RA	Decl
12/01/2014	7h37m19.9s	-44°11'40"	12/17/2014	6h38m34.7s	-38°54'31"
12/02/2014	7h34m53.1s	-44°04'36"	12/18/2014	6h33m20.4s	-38°11'52"
12/03/2014	7h32m17.9s	-43°56'28"	12/19/2014	6h27m54.4s	-37°25'01"
12/04/2014	7h29m33.9s	-43°47'09"	12/20/2014	6h22m17.0s	-36°33'39"
12/05/2014	7h26m40.9s	-43°36'33"	12/21/2014	6h16m28.4s	-35°37'26"
12/06/2014	7h23m38.5s	-43°24'33"	12/22/2014	6h10m29.0s	-34°36'01"
12/07/2014	7h20m26.5s	-43°11'02"	12/23/2014	6h04m19.2s	-33°29'06"
12/08/2014	7h17m04.5s	-42°55'52"	12/24/2014	5h57m59.7s	-32°16'19"
12/09/2014	7h13m32.2s	-42°38'52"	12/25/2014	5h51m31.1s	-30°57'24"
12/10/2014	7h09m49.3s	-42°19'54"	12/26/2014	5h44m54.1s	-29°32'04"
12/11/2014	7h05m55.7s	-41°58'46"	12/27/2014	5h38m09.6s	-28°00'06"
12/12/2014	7h01m50.9s	-41°35'16"	12/28/2014	5h31m18.6s	-26°21'20"
12/13/2014	6h57m34.9s	-41°09'13"	12/29/2014	5h24m22.1s	-24°35'42"
12/14/2014	6h53m07.3s	-40°40'22"	12/30/2014	5h17m21.1s	-22°43'13"
12/15/2014	6h48m28.2s	-40°08'29"	12/31/2014	5h10m16.9s	-20°44'02"
12/16/2014	6h43m37.3s	-39°33'18"			

* Positions all at 11:00 pm MST



Comet C/2014 Q2 (Lovejoy) and Messier 79 on December 28



On the evening of December 28th just before midnight, the comet will pass very close to Messier 79 as you can see in the above SkyTools3 chart. If you haven't found the comet by then, this would be the time to do it!

Meteor Showers

The peak of the Geminids meteor shower is the evening of December 13th. Moonrise is at 11:33 pm so take a look before then. The Geminids radiant is at 7h 28m, Decl 32.2° (just below Castor) so it is well placed for viewing after about 10 pm. Geminids are usually the strongest meteor shower of the year. They are often bright and intensely colored. In dark location about 60 to 70 meteors per hour may be seen.



The Great Orion Nebula by Gary Garzone

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