

Howard Astronomical League

Member Meeting – May 14, 2026

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Book of the Month
- Events & Outreach Notes
- ALCOR News
- Presentation:

Why the Moon

David Teske, ALPO Lunar Section Coordinator

- What's Up in Space
- Shallow Skies
- Seestar Transfer
- Member Astrophotos



**WHY
THE
MOON?**
WITH
**DAVID
TESKE**

May 14, 2026 at 7 p.m.
Attend in person at the Robinson Nature Center
or via the Zoom link found at <https://howardastro.org>



WELCOME ABOARD
NEW MEMBERS!



Book of the Month

Title:

- Back to the Astronomy Cafe

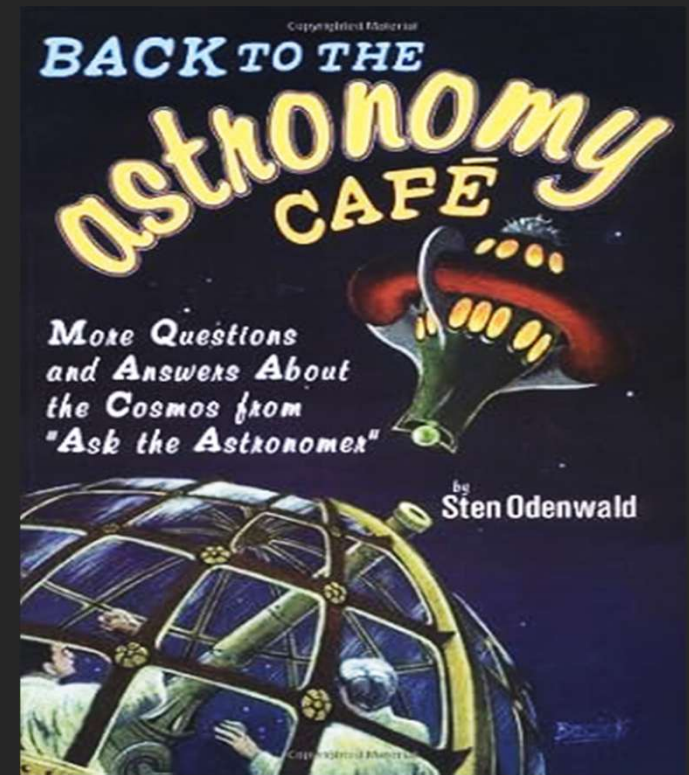
Author:

- Sten Odenwald (2003)

Length: 273 pages

Audience Level:

- Beginner Friendly
- Intermediate
- Experienced



May 2026

March 28th Public Star Party

Apr 11th

20 members • 16 scopes

Apr 19th

4 members • Clear to midnight • SQM-L 19.29

Apr 20th

Solo session • Excellent transparency • SQM 19.95

Apr 30th

4 members • Clear night with bright Moon

May 9th

Clear, above-avg transparency • SQM-L 19.25 • Two new members attended



Up Next

- Member Star Party: May 16th
- Public Star Party: May 23rd

Outreach Events

- Very successful event at the Clarksville Commons Earth Day
- Still looking for a couple more HAL members to help with the Astronomy Festival on the National Mall (AFNM) set for Sept. 26th
- Outreach@howardastro.org





- **Dates & Host:** August 12–15, 2026 • Cincinnati Astronomical Society & Astronomical League
- **Program Highlights:** National convention with lectures, workshops, observing sessions, and vendor exhibits
- **Special Events:** Tours of local astronomy facilities • Saturday night awards banquet • Networking with League members nationwide
- **Audience:** Amateur astronomers, educators, vendors, and outreach leaders from across the U.S.

Why the Moon?

Embrace the Moonlight!



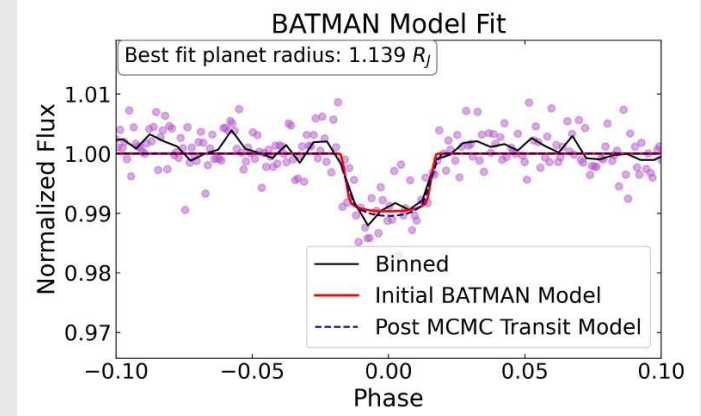
What's Up in Space Headlines

May 14, 2026

TESS Treasure Trove

- The Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) launched in April 2018 to search for exoplanets via transit observations
- In an AI-supported analysis of the first year of TESS data, Joshua T. Roth et al (2026 ApJS 284 19) report finding **10,091** new exoplanet candidates among 80 million light curves
 - Focused on fainter stars than previous analyses
 - Limited to about one-half of the sky
- They have confirmed one new exoplanet
- Demonstrates the ability of machine-learning assisted exoplanet searches

More Info at <https://earthsky.org/space/10000-new-exoplanet-candidates-tess/>
<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/1538-4365/ae5b6c>



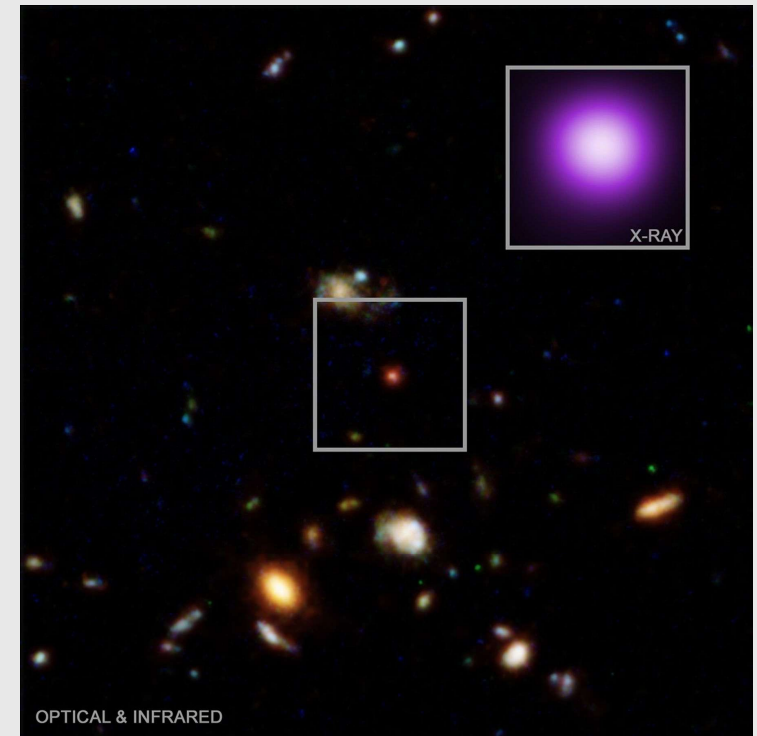
Roth, et al, 2026, ApJS, 284, 19 (Figure 4)

What's Up in Space Headlines

May 14, 2026

Chandra's X-Ray Dot

- The “Little Red Dots” (LRDs) found in deep JWST images have yet to be explained
 - May be accreting supermassive black holes
 - Very weak x-ray emission due to dense thermalized gas surrounding the SMBH
- Chandra x-ray observatory observed a source at $z=3.28$
 - Many spectral characteristics of LRDs
 - Includes luminous, possibly variable, x-ray emission
- Analysis of existing photometry and spectral data (UV to IR)
 - Dust models fail to reproduce the spectral energy distribution



X-ray: NASA/CXC/Max Plank Inst./R. Hviding et al.; Optical/IR; NASA/ESA/STScI/HST; Image Processing: NASA/CXC/SAO/N. Wolk

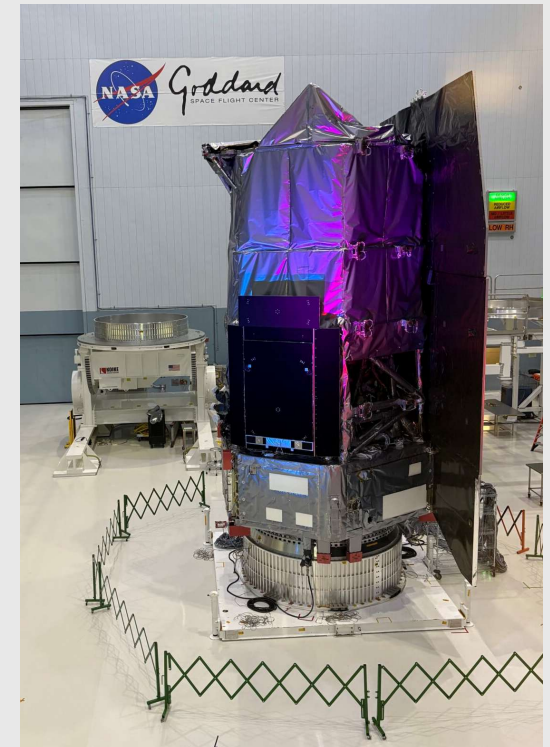
More Info at <https://science.nasa.gov/missions/chandra/nasa-connects-little-red-dots-with-chandra-webb/>

May 14, 2026

What's Up in Space Headlines

Roman Space Telescope Prepped for Launch

- The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope (RST) is the next great observatory developed by NASA
 - Wide FOV IR imaging and coronagraphy (tech demonstration)
 - Imaging FOV 100x HST WFC3
 - Expect 1.4 terabytes of data/day
- Development and ground testing is complete
 - Eight months ahead of schedule
 - Below budget
- Prepping for delivery to Kennedy Space Center
 - Will be launched on a Falcon Heavy to L2
 - Target launch date is now early September 2026
 - “Not Earlier Than” date – it could slip



John Timmer

More Info at <https://arstechnica.com/science/2026/04/eight-months-early-and-under-budget-the-roman-telescope-is-ready-to-launch/>



Seestar S50 Program

<https://howardastro.org/seestar-loaner-program/>

Amy Hoffheiser => Jeff Pleines



Seestar S50 果

NGC 457

JimT / 76° W, 89° N / 2025-12-21 19:59

63min

Shallow Skies for May-June 2026

- **Mercury** will have its best evening apparition for 2026, but still need a good western horizon
- **Venus** is easily seen in west, sporting a gibbous phase and increasing size
- **Mars** is in the pre-dawn sky, tiny and just emerging from the Sun's glare
- **Jupiter** is now rapidly losing altitude in the west – catch it in the fading twilight for your best views
- **Saturn** is also climbing into the pre-dawn sky and the rings are better displayed than last year. It'll reach opposition in October.

Daytime Venus (and Crescent Moon) Challenge

Monday afternoon around 4-5 p.m. May 18th

- Block the Sun safely with a building or structure to improve contrast and protect your eyes
- Start by finding the ultra-thin 2½-day old Moon in late afternoon sky
- Use binoculars to lock onto the crescent, then try sweeping about 5° below and left of the Moon to pick up Venus

Venus-Jupiter Conjunction

- Tuesday June 9th as twilight deepens
- Pairings of these two bright planets happen about every 8 months - but
- Venus & Jupiter are close this time, about $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ apart. This is the best conjunction until 2028. Mercury can also be spotted.



Member Astrophotos, Sketches, & Artwork



Leo Triplet



Seestar S50

M 66

Michael R Connelly

369min

Michael Connelly

1st Quarter Moon



 Seestar S50 梨

76° W, 39° N / 2026.04.23 23:23

Moon

Harrini Meenashi Sundar

M81 – Bode's Galaxy



Seestar S50 梨

76° W, 39° N / 2026.04.22 23:54

M 81

108min

Harrini Meenashi Sundar



This image of M51 was taken with a Williams Optics Zenithstar 73mm f/5.9 and ZWO ASI533MM on a ZWO AM3 mount with RGB filters located at the Starfront Observatory in Rockwood, TX on 04/08/26. 117 total 120 second exposures. Post processed with Pixinsight.

Bill Kautter

Jupiter w/Great Red Spot - April 22, 2026
Celstron NexStar 6SE SCT



© Steve Rifkin, 2026

“Earth Day” Sun



Jose Urias

Object of the Month: Leo Triplet



STATS
Scope: SV503 80ED
F/L: 560 mm
Camera: 585MC Pro
Filter: UV/IR Cut
Subs: 188x30s
D/B/F: N/Y/Y
Capture: N.I.N.A
Processing: PixInsight

Wes Ferwerda

C/2025 R3 PanSTARRS

Wes Ferwerda

STATS
Scope: S30 Pro
F/L: 160 mm
Camera: IMX585
Filter: UV/IR Cut
Subs: 49x20s
D/B/F: N/N/N
Capture: SeeStar App
Processing: PixInsight

Markarian's Chain

STARS
Scope: S30 Pro
F/L: 160 mm
Camera: IMX585
Filter: UV/IR Cut
Subs: 286x60s
D/B/F: N/N/N
Capture: SeeStar App
Processing: PixInsight

Wes Ferwerda

M81 – Bode's Galaxy

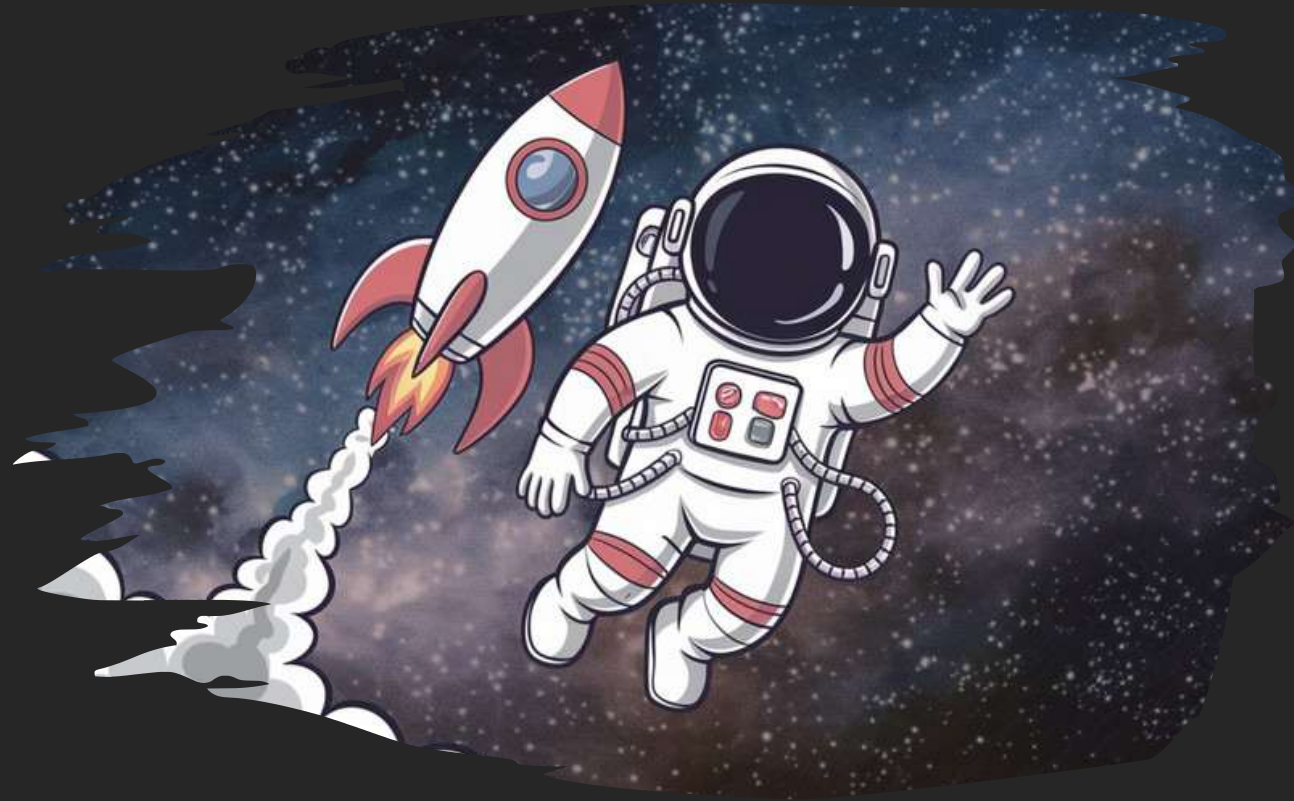
M81
April 7, 8, 20, 2026
Alpha Ridge Park

8-inch RC
LRGB (156x2min,[52,52,52x3min])
13h exposure time

ASI294MM-P, 2x2
Gain 120 (1.0e/ADU)
Wayne Baggett

Wayne Baggett

Thanks for Joining Us!



Be safe heading home – see you next month



HAL Planning Meeting: Jun 1, 2026

HAL Members Meeting: Jun 11, 2026