

GALAXY OBSERVING MARCH

This month's notes cover right ascension 8h to 9h. This part of the sky picks up parts of Ursa Major, Lynx, Cancer and Hydra. It is an area which is richer in galaxy than has been the case in the first two months observing notes as we are now looking out in to deep space rather than through the Milky-way.

The finest pair of galaxies in the sky are found in this section of the sky. M81 (2) and M82 (3) can be found in Ursa Major by drawing a line from Phecda and Dubhe and extending it by the same length again. These galaxies are truly awesome in my ten inch scope. M81 is a bright oval and M82 is an edge on galaxy with distinctive markings along its length. With a low power eyepiece it is possible to get them both in the same field of view. These two are visible in binoculars. The galaxies are part of a group of 30 or so and are about 12 million light years away which is relatively close in galaxy terms!

The next brightest galaxy in this section of sky is NGC 2903 (6). It is a fine bright oval galaxy just to the right of the sickle of Leo. It is one of the brightest non messier galaxies and one of my favourites. It nestles next to a triangle of three stars and is just possible to pick up with large binoculars in a dark sky.

There are five other "bright" galaxies in this month's review.

NGC 2655 (6) at the top of Camelopardalis is a nice bright circular galaxy which is easy to spot even with the low power eyepiece.

NGC 2787 (6) is ten degrees lower in Ursa Major relatively close to M81 (2) and M82 (3). It is similar to NGC 2655 (6) presenting a bright circular shape at the eyepiece.

Working further south we pick up NGC 2549 (6) in Lynx. This is another bright very extended oval shaped galaxy. It's bright enough to pick out in my ten inch scope even with a half moon in the sky and is near the bright star 30 Lyncis.

Towards the bottom right of Ursa Major we find NGC 2681 (6). It is a bit tough to locate as it is away from any bright stars. It is a fine oval shaped galaxy which is easy to see with direct vision in my ten inch telescope.

The final "bright" galaxy in this section of sky is one of my favourite galaxies. It is a fine oval shaped galaxy close to the star "Theta" in Ursa Major. It sits at an angle between two field stars making the view more memorable. One I keep coming back to time and time again.

There are eight other galaxies listed in the datasheet below which have been given a category 7 rating. These are all visible with direct vision in my ten inch scope. Perhaps oval NGC 2768 (7) is the easiest to see of this group.

Finally there are eleven faint galaxies in this month's datasheet all that require averted vision.

Datasheet

M 81	UMA	09 55.6	+69 04	6.9	13.2	24.9 m	2
M 82	UMA	09 55.9	+69 41	8.4	12.5	10.5 m	3
NGC 2903	LEO	09 32.2	+21 30	9	13.6	12 m	4
NGC 2655	CAM	08 55.6	+78 13	10.1	13.2	4.9 m	6
NGC 2787	UMA	09 19.3	+69 12	10.8	12.6	3.1 m	6
NGC 2549	LYN	08 19.0	+57 48	11.2	12.8	3.8 m	6
NGC 2681	UMA	08 53.5	+51 19	10.3	12.8	3.7 m	6
NGC 2841	UMA	09 22.0	+50 59	9.2	12.7	7.7 m	6
NGC 2985	UMA	09 50.4	+72 17	10.4	13.3	4.6 m	7
NGC 2976	UMA	09 47.2	+67 55	10.2	13	6.2 m	7
NGC 2768	UMA	09 11.6	+60 02	9.9	13.7	8.2 m	7
NGC 2950	UMA	09 42.6	+58 51	10.9	12.5	2.7 m	7
NGC 2685	UMA	08 55.6	+58 44	11.3	13.7	4.6 m	7
NGC 2639	UMA	08 43.6	+50 12	11.6	12.3	1.8 m	7
NGC 2859	LMI	09 24.3	+34 31	10.9	13.8	4 m	7
NGC 2683	LYN	08 52.7	+33 25	9.8	12.9	8.8 m	7
NGC 2732	CAM	09 13.4	+79 11	11.9	12.4	2.1 m	8
NGC 2880	UMA	09 29.6	+62 29	11.5	12.4	2.4 m	8
NGC 2742	UMA	09 07.6	+60 29	11.4	13	3 m	8
NGC 2654	UMA	08 49.2	+60 13	11.8	12.9	4.2 m	8
NGC 2693	UMA	08 57.0	+51 21	11.9	13.6	3 m	8
NGC 2537	LYN	08 13.2	+45 59	11.7	12.6	3.1 m	8
NGC 2782	LYN	09 14.1	+40 07	11.6	13.9	3.7 m	8
NGC 2832	LYN	09 19.8	+33 45	11.9	13.5	3 m	8
NGC 3021	LMI	09 51.0	+33 33	12.1	12.3	1.5 m	8
NGC 2968	LEO	09 43.2	+31 56	11.7	13	2.1 m	8
NGC 2964	LEO	09 42.9	+31 51	11.3	12.8	3 m	8