

The Newbie Corner

Overlooked Objects

By Brad Hutton

I decided that I would be a little less technical with this issue of the Newbie Corner. We all get caught up in the viewing of the most popular and common night sky objects. So let's look at some of the overlooked summer objects. When you're out this summer try finding these night sky objects.

NGC 4449

The Box Galaxy NGC 4449 has a distinctly rectangular shape and what appear to be double nuclei. You can see the galaxy with an eight inch scope and under dark skies a twelve inch scope all of the galaxy details will be exposed. NGC 4449 Mag. 10.1 Distance 14,000,000 l.y. size 6' x 4' Diameter 24,400 l.y.

NGC 4485 & NGC 4490

Even in a small telescope this pair of galaxies is a nice sight. NGC 4490 is a pear shaped galaxy named the Cocoon Galaxy. Only two minutes away is NGC 4485 a small galaxy. Through larger telescopes the pair seem to be attached. NGC 4485 Mag 12.5 Distance 14,000,000 l.y. Size 2' Diameter 9,400 l.y. NGC 4490 Mag 10.3 Distance 14,000,000 l.y. Size 6' x 3' Diameter 65,000 l.y.

NGC 4631

NGC 4631 is a nice galaxy, an edge-on spiral with unusual dust lanes. It can be seen in all size telescopes, larger scopes showing more detail. Mag 9.6 Distance 14,000,000 l.y. Size 16' x 3' Diameter 65,000 l.y.

NGC 4656

NGC 4656 the Fish Hook Galaxy is an edge-on galaxy with a distinctive hook at the northeast end of the galaxy. The hook has its own NGC catalog entry, NGC 4657, it is part of NGC 4656. Dark skies and a twelve inch scope are required to see the hook. Mag 10.6 Distance 24,700,000 l.y. Size 15' x 3' Diameter 107,750 l.y.

NGC 6826

NGC 6826 The Blinking Planetary is a planetary nebula that appears to blink. While looking directly at the nebula, the nebulosity disappears because of the brightness of the central star. Using averted vision, the nebulosity "blinks" back into view. Most amateurs switch viewing methods automatically, causing the nebula to blink on and off. Mag 10 Distance 1,700 l.y. Size 24" Diameter 0.2 l.y.

NGC 6543

In large to modest telescopes NGC 6543 The Cat's Eye Nebula is a pretty sight. Try to use high magnification if possible to enjoy the greenish-blue hue of this object. Twelve inch and larger scopes may be able to glimpse the helical detail. Mag 9 Distance 3,200 l.y. Size 24" Diameter 0.37 l.y.

Enjoy the hunt for these objects. Till next time keep your telescope pointed up and may your skies be clear

- the Newbie.