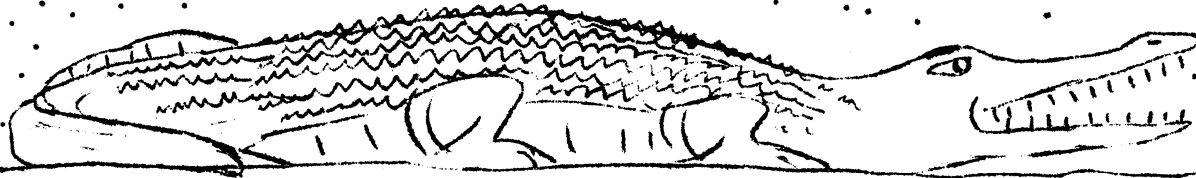
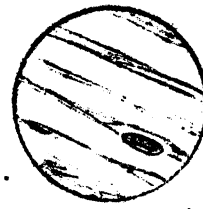


AGAC



AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ASTRO-GATOR ASTRONOMY CLUB

Burnett Park will be the location of the next AGAC meeting. Starting at 6:00 pm, February 20, the club will have a cookout-star party. After supper the agenda includes lectures under the night sky and just telescoping around the heavens. After midnight members will be treated to a partial lunar eclipse. The moon enters the penumbra at 12:59, and mid-eclipse is at 3:30.

As you all know, March 7, is the day of the solar eclipse, but perhaps you don't have any plans for observing. There are many projects which the amateur can perform, many which are totally ignored by other amateurs. At the next meeting everyone present will be assigned a simple, but none the less important project which can be done during the eclipse. Among these projects are observing the zodiacal light, earthshine on the moon's nearer surface, and stars near the sun's limb. About 30 degrees south of the sun, and a little to the west will be a 2-3 magnitude comet. Comet Bennet is now approaching perihelion, and by mid March it will be quite favorable for evening observing in the northern hemisphere. Richard Sweetser, the club's director, has checked through seven years of Sky & Telescope magazines, looking for different projects for amateurs and he has come up with quite a list.

Also, the next bulletin, due in another 1-2 weeks, will have a listing of these projects as well as important data on the eclipse. Since there wont be a meeting on March 6, the special eclipse edition may come out a little early.

After the eclipse is over and the results of the projects reviewed, they will be published and sent to interested individuals.

SEE YOU FRIDAY AT BURNETT PARK!

THE NIGHT SKY - Jerome Green

It might seem a little out of place to talk about the sun in an article entitled The Night Sky, but with the March eclipse just weeks away I think it's suitable.

I know most of you don't have much equipment, i.e. cameras, filters, etc. necessary for photographing the sun, but there's a lot to see during the eclipse with the unaided eye. But keep one rule in mind: PROTECT YOUR EYES. The partial phases of the eclipse are as dangerous to watch as when the sun is not covered any at all. The simplest method of protection is using a roll of film which has been exposed to daylight and then developed. Buy an inexpensive roll of B&W film and unroll the film in daylight. When the film is developed you can make a good filter with two thicknesses of the film.

Another method of protection is by using a box with a pinhole. Go to the store oneday and find a box big enough for you to stick your head into with a little room to spare. Paste or tape a piece of white paper on the inside of the box on one of the ends. Then on the opposite end, near the box's bottom make a small hole just large enough to let some sunlight into the box. Now go outside on a sunny day and sit on the ground facing away from the sun. Place the box over your head so the pinhole is toward the sun and the end with the sheet of paper, and also the end of the box you're facing, is in the direction away from the sun. Adjust the position of the box so the sunlight falls on the paper from the hole. You should get an image of the sun's disk on the paper.

Observing a solar eclipse can be one of the most enjoyable things you can do, but good planning and knowledge about what you are doing is required to get the most out of this experience.

A smart idea for each of you who aren't experienced in observing the sun, would be to read as many books as you can find on observing the sun.

Among the things visible to the eye during an eclipse are shadow bands, approximately 2 inch wide bands moving rapidly across the ground just prior and following totality, the moon's shadow moving across the landscape, the sun's chromosphere, a relatively thin layer of the sun's atmosphere, and the solar corona.

Comet Daido-Fujakawa, a bright, sun-grazing comet, passed perihelion earlier this week. The comet swung in from the opposite side of the sun and is returning in a similar direction. At perihelion (7:20 pm, 2/15/70) the comet is expected to be -4 magnitude and about 7 million miles from the sun. More info on any observations will be in the next issue.