
ASSA: ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY SECTION ANNUAL REPORT (2017-2018)

STATE OF ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGING

The Astrophotography section (formally known as the Imaging section in the ASSA constitution) was originally created to coordinate and promote the use of astronomical imaging technology in amateur observations, and to collect images created by amateur astronomers. In recent years, more and more South African amateur astronomers have begun using their imaging equipment to collect and provide data to professional astronomers around the world. At the same time, astrophotography seems to be blossoming as an art form in South Africa. The quality of artistic astronomical images produced by both professional and amateur photographers in South Africa continues to improve.

MEMBER ACTIVITY

The astrophotography section continues to encourage the submission of photographic images of astronomical subjects, which are stored in the ASSA image archive. This archive is kept on Flickr, with all original files kept in a cloud storage folder as backups. The images in the archive are displayed on the ASSA website, under the Gallery section, grouped by photographer and subject. We only accept submissions from South African photographers, or images that were captured in South Africa. We do not require the photographer to be an ASSA member, nor do we refuse submissions based on quality, in line with the requirement that the section work to promote and encourage the art of astrophotography.

Submissions have been on the decline over the past year, with the exception of Clyde Foster's planetary images which continue to flow in at a rapid rate. Despite several planned and unplanned breaks in his observing programme, he has produced such a volume of work that he is now the single most prolific contributor to the ASSA image gallery.

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION AT SCOPEX

The section director was on the judging panel of last year's astrophotography competition at ScopeX. The competition was well supported, with many varied entries covering a range of subjects and skill levels. Prizes were awarded to Johan Moolman, Karen Swart and Luan Swart

SECTION DIRECTOR

The current Section Director, Allen Versfeld, has resigned in order to serve in the new Citizen Science Section. In his place, we would like to welcome Martin Heigan. Martin

is a professional photographer with an ongoing interest in astronomy and many years experience in digital animation and image processing. He is an accomplished astrophotographer, and we look forward to his leadership in the coming years.