

WEEKLY SKY REPORT

May 12 – May 18, 2024

SPACE STATIONS

The International Space Station has a great pass over Berkeley this week:

May 12 8:39pm South West, Altitude 20°; 8:41pm South East, Alt. 72°; Magnitude -3.8

ROCKET LAUNCHES

NASA is aiming for another attempt to launch the first flight of Calypso, Boeing's Starliner spacecraft, to the International Space Station (ISS) with two astronauts on board. This is a certification flight, which if successful, will allow flights with a full crew. The capsule can accommodate 7 people, though 4 will be the usual number going to the ISS. This first flight will carry Sunita "Sunni" Williams and Barry "Butch" Wilmore. Sunni Williams has been to the ISS four times and has been on seven spacewalks totaling over 50 hours. She has even run the equivalent of 2 full marathons while on the Station—at the same time as the Boston Marathon! Wilmore flew on Space Shuttle Atlantis in 2009 and was part of Expedition 41 to the ISS in 2014.

May 17 3:16pm (PST) Launch Watch on nasa.gov or space.com

EVENTS

There are some wonderful space-themed events that are happening this summer. The Lawrence Hall of Science has a few great planetarium shows: *Mission to the Red Planet*; *Traditions of the Spring Sky* (leaving soon); *Traditions of the Summer Sky* (coming soon); and *Dive into the Blue Planet*. These are 30-minute shows. There is also a program that is described as: "...drop in between shows for *Planetarium Pilots*, a self-guided experience where you control the dome and choose where to explore!" Lawrence Hall also has a couple of amazing 3-D Theater shows: *Return of the Giants*, about blue whales; and *Backyard Wilderness*, which explores the secret life of your backyard. Also, coming soon, *Wings Over Water*, for an up close look at birds.

Chabot Space & Science Center has their ever popular Friday and Saturday night free telescope viewing, from 7:30pm-10:30pm. Chabot also hosts hikes around their lovely location and even a Father's Day *Slumber with the Stars* overnight event.

Telescopes @ Berkeley Public Library!

We have 5 Orion StarBlast Astro Reflector Telescopes that you can borrow! Each BPL Branch has a telescope, which may be borrowed for 1 week. Place a hold on it and then pick it up from your branch when it is ready. It is fairly easy to carry at 13 lbs., and stands about 2 feet tall.

Here's what you get:

"A great compact grab-and-go telescope designed for entry-level and intermediate astronomy enthusiasts. Substantial 4.5" aperture and fast f/4 focal ratio provides bright, detailed views of solar system targets like the Moon and planets, as well as wide-field celestial objects like nebulas and star clusters."



Much of the information for this report comes from the wonderful web site, Heavens Above. You can enter your home city location and bookmark it for easy access: <http://www.heavens-above.com>. Other stellar sources include: <http://www.space.com> and <http://www.nasa.gov>. And check spacex.com for launches.

Binoculars @ Berkeley Public Library!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cal Falcons program, we have 9 Vortex-Raptor binocular kits that you can put on hold and pick up at the location of your choice.

Here's what you get:

Porro prism performance in a mid-size, wide-angle design, the Raptors deliver a bright, crisp image with excellent color fidelity - even in low light conditions. With a wide range of interpupillary distance, they can easily be adjusted to fit anyone in the family, making them ideal for serious, hard-core youth hunters. The kit comes with a copy of The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western America and a pocket guide to local birds of the SF Bay Area. But it is also great for looking at planets, the moon and the stars!

