



President's Message

I trust you have been enjoying the summer Academy activities so far. Some members have had adventures bushwhacking their way through woodland and up stream beds in the pursuit of (elusive) fossils while others have trod more gently through park lands identifying bugs and plants. The sky watchers too have their eyes and ears trained on sights and sounds, but beyond the earth.

And, speaking of "beyond the earth," July 14 was a remarkable day, was it not? A fly by of Pluto and a close look at this icy system was a long time coming. What fascinating landscape features appeared! We are seeing geological and chemical wonderlands that will keep us amazed and working for explanations for years to come. And, just think, the excitement will continue as New Horizons swoops into the field of dwarfs in the Kuiper belt!

No matter what field you are exploring, have fun!

*Jutta Siefert Dudley, President
RAS*

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Share Your Experiences

Are you working on a project? Are you and members of your Section engaged in "citizen" science activities? The RAS BOD wants you to share your

experiences and discoveries with the community! You have a great opportunity to do this at the next RAS Scientific Paper Session on Saturday morning, **November 7, 2015**, hosted by Finger Lakes Community College.

An abstract of your oral or poster presentation will appear in the program and will be published in a future *RAS Proceedings*. It will eventually land in libraries around the world that are part of the RAS-University of Rochester exchange program. Imagine that!

*Jutta Siefert Dudley, President
RAS*

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RAS Supports ADK Expo

On Saturday, June 13 the RAS participated in and contributed to the annual Outdoor Expo of the local chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK), held at Mendon Ponds Park. This club has supported outdoor activities and conservation since 1922.

RAS's Fossil and Mineral section exhibitors gave away free mineral and fossil samples to anyone who could identify a sample from the master display. They also distributed educational handout materials describing fossils and minerals, making their canopy a



Don Chamberlain speaks to outdoor enthusiasts about finding one's way around the sky at ADK Outdoor Expo at Mendon Ponds Park, June 13, 2015.



RAS Members Dan Krisher, & John Handley, engage the public at ADK Outdoor Expo.

busy place as usual. Participating this year were John Handley, Dan Krisher, Paul Dudley, Kathy Henrie, Fred Haynes and George Wonder.

Meanwhile, Don Chamberlain set up his solar telescope introducing the public to a safe way of viewing sunspots and there actually were a couple sunspots this year to see!

Most active ADK members enjoy the outdoors in some form. Many are unfamiliar with the night sky and are curious to learn more, particularly what's up there and how to find their way around. To that end, ASRAS member Don Chamberlain created a major event presentation to explain how to find the major constellations. He incorporated several large constellation charts illustrating how to move from one constellation to another. Also available were helpful resources hikers and boaters could use to keep current with the sky.

-Bob Crumrine, Editor RAS Bulletin

Did You Know...

...that astronomer Percival Lowell initiated a failed search for a so-called Planet X between 1905 and his death in 1916 at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona?

...that a systematic search resumed in February 1929 with newly trained Clyde Tombaugh at work in a new dome using a specially constructed 13" telescope (astrograph) with a useful wide field of view?

...that on February 18, 1930, Tombaugh saw a new planet (but not Lowell's theoretical Planet X) on plates taken on January 23 and 29?

..Pluto's largest moon Charon was found in 1978, followed by Nix (goddess of darkness and mother of Charon) and Hydra (many headed monster) in 2005, Kerberos (dog) in 2011, and Styx (river) in 2012?

...that the space probe journey of New Horizons toward Pluto and the Kuiper Belt took off in January 2006 carrying 30 g of Tombaugh's ashes and some memorabilia?

...the dust counter instrument on New Horizons is named after Venetia Burney, an 11 year old in England, who was credited by Lowell Observatory director V.M. Slipher, for being first to suggest the name Pluto in 1930?

...that Pluto's physical and orbital characteristics caused the IAU to catalog it in 2006 as a minor planet, 134,340 Pluto, and had Pluto been recognized as such back in 1930, it would have been listed as # 1164?

...that other terms used to describe Pluto are dwarf planet, trans-Neptunian object, plutoid, & Kuiper Belt object?

Jutta Siefert Dudley, President RAS

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Postage Stamp Inspires Future Exploration



In October 1991, the USPO issued an artist's rendering of Pluto as part of a NASA exploration series. The stamp with its teasing label "not yet explored" often appeared in presentations at astronomical conferences resulting in a determined push by scientists to ensure Pluto would not remain so!

New Horizons carries on board one of these 29 cent stamps to the delight of astronomers and stamp collectors. As a spokesperson for the USPO said recently, "No stamp has ever traveled so far!"

Jutta Siefert Dudley, President RAS

In Memoriam RAS Fellows

Laura Wyand Moon

RAS Fellow 1970. member former Ornithology section. d. January 3, 2015 age 96. Braddock Bay birding platform is dedicated to her and husband Neil (Fellow 1967) for their bird migration work.

Gerhard Leubner, Ph.D.

RAS Fellow 1964. Member former Ornithology section. d. Feb 3, 2015, age 93. Meticulous observer & record keeper; helped compile & publish list of Monroe County birds.

Events for August/September, 2015

For updates to events, check the Academy website, <http://www.rasny.org>, and Section websites.

AUGUST 2015

Fri 7 ASTRONOMY SECTION MEETING

7:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m at the Farash Center, Ionia. ASRAS General Members Meeting. For more information, contact Joel Schmid at (585) 533-2097.

Sat 15 LIFE SCIENCES FIELD TRIP

10:00 a.m. We will meet at Tinker Nature Park, in the Calkins Rd. parking lot, at 1525 Calkins Rd. in Henrietta. The field trip will consist of walk on the 1.2 mile trail, which includes open field, wetland, and forest environments. We will end with a visit to the indoor exhibits at Tinker's Hansen Nature Center. For more information call Larry Hirsch at 429-6199.

Wed 19 RAS BOARD MEETING

7:00 p.m. Brighton Town Hall, Stage Conference Room.

Fri 14 ASTRONOMY STAR PARTY

9:00 – 10:45 p.m. Northampton Park, Hubble Lodge. For more information, contact Jim Seidewand at (585) 703-9876.

SEPTEMBER 2015

Fri 4 ASTRONOMY SECTION MEETING

7:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m at the Farash Center, Ionia. ASRAS General Members Meeting. For more information, contact Joel Schmid at (585) 533-2097.

Tues 15 MINERAL SECTION MEETING

7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Downstairs Meeting Room. Brighton Town Hall, 2300 Elmwood Ave. Rochester, NY 14618.

The meeting will be a "Show & Tell, Swap and Sell" by our general membership of their mineral specimens and stories of their collecting adventures over the summer. Door prizes and refreshments. For more information contact Stephen Busschaert at mineralvp@rasny.org or 585-732-5321.

Sat 12 LIFE SCIENCES FIELD TRIP

10:00 a.m. Webster Park. We will join Burroughs Audubon Nature Club (BANC) on their field trip. Mushroom expert Dave Wolf will lead us as we look for common and unusual fungi in Webster Park. Webster Park parking lot at Lake and Holt Roads in Webster at 10:00 AM. Bring a hand lens if you have one, so you can better see the identifying characteristics of the fungi. Contact, Karen Wolf, 670-9709.

Wed 16 HERBARIUM

1:00-4:00 p.m. Life Sciences section will hold a workshop at the RAS Herbarium, located in the basement of the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC). We will continue work on replacing torn and damaged genus folders, as well as repairing specimens as needed. We will continue work on replacing torn and damaged genus folders, as well as repairing specimens as needed. It is a great way to see interesting plants from the Rochester region and

around the world! No experience needed! If you plan to attend, please send an RSVP to Elizabeth Pixley. Then, at RMSC, go to the front desk and ask staff person to call ext. 368, phone in the Herbarium. For more information, contact Elizabeth Pixley, herbarium curator (334-0977 or epixley@rochester.rr.com).

Wed 16 RAS BOARD MEETING

7:00 p.m. Brighton Town Hall, Stage Conference Room.

Fri 18 ASTRONOMY STAR PARTY

8:30 – 10:00 p.m. Mendon Ponds Park Youth Camping Area. For more information, contact Jim Seidewand at (585) 703-9876.

Sat 26 LIFE SCIENCES FIELD TRIP

4:00 p.m. BANC Sanctuary, 301 Railroad Mills Road, Pittsford. We will join the BANC for their **ANNUAL PICNIC** at 4:00. The program will be the **THE AUTUMN SKY** with activities for all ages, with potluck dinner at 5:30. Jackson Thomas will be our guide to the autumn sky. Jackson presents astronomical programs at the Thousand Acre Swamp and has been a guide at the U of R's Mees Observatory in the Bristol Hills. We will view Saturn, deep-sky objects such as M31, and the Andromeda Galaxy. If weather conditions do not cooperate, Jackson will present an indoor slideshow on astronomy. Contact Karen Wolf for directions and reservations so we can tell BANC how many LS members to expect. 670-9709.

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