CAS Sky Notes for March 2023

Planets:

Mercury: Mercury is not really visible this month. It reaches superior conjunction on the 17th and might just be seen right at the end of the month. It's probably best to wait until April to see it in the evening sky, when it will be better placed.

Venus: This is now a prominent evening object and becoming increasingly easy to observe. It starts the month with a low declination of +4 degrees, but moves northwards and by the end it is nearly +18 degrees, making it significantly higher in the evening sky. Its magnitude remains around – 4 throughout. The phase decreases from 85% to 77%, although the angular diameter increases only a little to 14 arc seconds.
On the 24th March, Venus will be only 0.1 degrees north of the Moon.

Conjunction: On the 2nd March, Venus is just 0.5 degrees north of Jupiter (a Moon's diameter) and should be an interesting sight for a day or so either side.

Mars is still visible in the evening sky. It reached opposition last December, but is still fairly well placed in Taurus. The disc size is now barely 8 arc seconds. It is still worth trying to observe some surface features though.

Jupiter is still a very prominent object near Venus in the evening sky at the start of the month, but is rapidly descending towards the west and will be lost by the end of the month. It reaches conjunction with the Sun in early April.

Saturn is not currently visible. It will become a morning object later in the spring.

Uranus is hard to see now as it sets too early.
Neptune is now lost in the twilight. Wait for opposition next September

Ceres: This minor planet is at opposition on the 21st March. Email the Coordinator for RA and Dec coordinates if you want to seek it out.

There are no major meteor showers this month.

7th March: Full Moon.	**15th March:** Moon is at last quarter.
21st March: New Moon	**29th March:** Moon is at First Quarter