

## CAS Sky Notes for February 2025

### Planets

#### Mercury.

Mercury becomes an evening object, having passed through superior conjunction on the 9th. On the 25<sup>th</sup> it will be 1.7° N of Saturn in the twilight. The elongation is then only 13° and may be tricky, unless you have a clear western horizon.

#### Venus

Venus is high in the west after sunset. Its phase of 33% near the start of the month decreases to 23% by the end, and its magnitude increases to -4.9. Its diameter increases to around 45" by the end of the month. Being high in the sky makes it easy to observe and it will suffer less atmospheric turbulence.

#### Mars

Mars remains well placed for observing throughout the night. It is a prominent reddish object of near the stars Castor and Pollux and has a magnitude around -1. Its diameter drops to 12". It is now very well placed for observation. **On the 9<sup>th</sup>, there is a grazing occultation by the Moon at 18h 56m UT.** A complete occultation is only visible in the north of Scotland and higher latitudes, but it will be a close approach in the south. Some photo opportunities!

#### Jupiter

Jupiter is well past opposition but remains a prominent object high in the sky as soon as it is dark. It is well placed for observing throughout the night. It is unmistakable, with a magnitude of -2.4, making it a great telescope object, so do get observing!

#### Saturn

Saturn is becoming a difficult object during this month as it heads towards conjunction with the Sun in mid March. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February the Moon is 1.0° N of Saturn. The rings are almost edge on and this makes it dimmer.

#### Uranus

Uranus is still observable throughout most of the night (RA: 3h 22m, Dec +18.3°). It reached opposition in November. Its magnitude is +5.6 and diameter 3.8".

#### Neptune

Neptune is now a difficult object as it is lost in the twilight.

Anyone wishing to observe Uranus, and who would like more details, should contact me at [coord@cotswoldas.org.uk](mailto:coord@cotswoldas.org.uk)

### Moon

#### Phases:

**28<sup>th</sup> February:** New Moon

**5<sup>th</sup> February:** Moon is at First Quarter

**12<sup>th</sup> February:** Full Moon

**20<sup>th</sup> February:** Moon is at last quarter

#### Sun

The Sun is remains active currently, so watch out for large Sunspot groups. Remember to **never look at the Sun directly without a proper solar filter.**

## **Aurora**

The Sun is still around its maximum activity and may produce more aurorae. I suggest you download an aurora alert App, such as *Aurora Pro*.

## **Meteors**

There are no significant meteor showers this month.

## **Dark Sky Objects**

The Milky Way is well placed for photography and the Andromeda Galaxy (M31) is still high in the sky, making it a good target for photography. The Perseus Double Cluster is also high in the sky. The Pleiades and Taurus are getting well-placed for observing and photography, and Orion is now visible in the evening skies, so the M42 nebula is a target again.