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Book Review: Guide to Observing Deep-Sky Objects: A Complete Global Resource for Astronomers

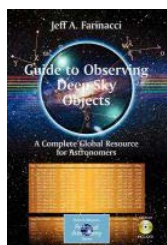T. D. Oswalt

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Guide to observing deep-sky objects : a complete global resource for astronomers

Farinacci, Jeff A. Springer, 2007

189p, 9780387728506 $29.95
LC Call Number: QB802

Farinacci (software engineer) has compiled a collection of charts for all 88 constellations in this guide. Under each map, the reader will find a list of the brightest stars and deep-sky objects in each field (i.e., clusters, nebulae, and galaxies) along with a nomograph that quickly tells whether the field for a particular choice of month and time of night is visible. An accompanying CD-ROM contains software to compute the visibility of objects for any chosen date/time. Together, they provide a searchable list of several hundred objects. However, there really is not much information given on any particular object beyond its basic type (e.g., cluster, galaxy), name, coordinates, and brightness. Furthermore, the nomographs are constructed for an observer in midlatitude (US) states, and they would be of little use elsewhere, especially in the Southern Hemisphere. One can adjust the program for other latitudes, if one knows how to edit the file and adjust the positions, but software today needs to be much more user-friendly than this. Most observers would prefer to use their favorite PC planetarium program or a simple star map. Users should note that the CD-ROM-based program does not appear to run on current Windows Vista platforms.

Summing Up: Recommended. General readers; undergraduates; technical program students.

Reviewer: T. D. Oswalt, Florida Institute of Technology
Recommendation: Recommended
Readership Level: General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Two-Year Technical Program Students
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy
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