Winter Messier List Observing Club

Raleigh Astronomy Club

Version 1.1 24 November 2012

Introduction

Welcome to the Winter Messier List Observing Club. The objects on this list represent many of the most prominent deep sky objects (Globular Clusters, Open Clusters, Nebula, Galaxies) visible from mid-northern latitudes. The Messier list of objects was compiled in the 1700's by the French comet hunter Charles Messier and his associates as a list of objects to not confuse with their primary goal of discovering new comets. What they really produced, was a list of many of the best deep sky objects for astronomers to enjoy. Observing the Messier List is an excellent way for beginning astronomers to learn the night sky.

This club is intended for those who wish to tour the Messier objects while adding more structure to their observing activities. Club members who wish to work their way through the Messier objects, a season at a time, will find this list to be a helpful guide. Two certificate levels are offered, Silver and Gold. The Silver certificate is earned by viewing and logging all objects on the list while using Go-To or Digital Setting Circles to help locate the Messier objects. The Gold certificate is earned by those who view and log all the objects while only using charts and star hopping to locate them. Anyone who intends to use their RAC list results as a stepping-stone to the Astronomlcal League Messier certificate, MUST work to the Gold certificate rules.

Rules

To earn the Winter Messier List certificate, you must:

1. Be a member in good standing of the Raleigh Astronomy Club.

2. Observe all the Winter Messier objects. Objects observed on dates outside of the season may also be counted. Telescopes and binoculars may both be used.

3. Record your observations on a log form that includes:
    a. Date, time, sky conditions and location of observation.
    b. Equipment used – eyepieces, magnification, filters, etc.
    c. A sketch or short description.

4. Use of Go-To and Digital Setting Circles IS permitted for a Silver certificate. For a Gold certificate, and to use this list as a stepping stone to the AL Messier certificate, use of Go-To and Digital Setting Circles IS NOT permitted.

5. Have a copy of your observing record reviewed by the Raleigh Astronomy Club Observing Club Coordinator.

Winter Messier Object List (26 objects)

ID	NGC	Type	Constellation	RA	Dec	Mag	Size
M1	1952	SNR	Taurus	05 34.5	22 01	9.0	6’ x 4’
M31	224	GX	Andromeda	00 42.8	41 16	4.5	178’
M32	221	GX	Andromeda	00 42.8	40 52	10.0	8’ x 6’
M35	2168	OC	Gemini	06 8.9	24 20	5.5	28.0’
M36	1960	OC	Auriga	05 36.1	34 08	6.5	12.0’
M37	2099	OC	Auriga	05 52.4	32 33	6.0	24.0’
M38	1912	OC	Auriga	05 28.7	35 50	7.0	21.0’
M41	2287	OC	Canis Major	06 47.0	-20 44	5.0	38.0’
M42	1976	DN	Orion	05 35.3	-05 23	5.0	85’ x 60’
M43	1982	DN	Orion	05 35.5	-05 16	7.0	20’ x 15’
M44	2632	OC	Cancer	08 40.1	19 59	4.0	95.0’
M45	1432	OC	Taurus	03 47.0	24 07	1.4	110.0’
M46	2437	OC	Puppis	07 41.8	-14 49	6.5	27.0’
M47	2422	OC	Puppis	07 36.6	-14 30	4.5	30.0’
M48	2548	OC	Hydra	08 13.8	-05 48	5.5	54.0’
M50	2323	OC	Monoceros	07 03.2	-08 20	7.0	16.0’
M51	5194	GX	Canes Venatici	13 30.0	47 11	8.0	11’ x 7’
M65	3623	GX	Leo	11 18.9	13 06	10.5	8’ x 1.5’
M66	3627	GX	Leo	11 20.2	13 00	10.0	8’ x 2.5’
M67	2682	OC	Cancer	08 50.4	11 49	7.5	30.0’
M78	2068	DN	Orion	05 46.8	00 04	8.0	8’ x 6’
M79	1904	GC	Lepus	05 24.5	-24 33	8.5	8.7’
M81	3031	GX	Ursa Major	09 55.6	69 04	8.5	21’ x 10’
M82	3034	GX	Ursa Major	09 55.9	69 41	9.5	9’ x 4’
M93	2447	OC	Puppis	07 44.6	-23 52	6.5	22.0’
M110	205	GX	Andromeda	00 40.4	41 41	10.0	17’ x 10’

Type abbreviations:

- GC : Globular Cluster
- OC : Open Cluster
- PN : Planetary Nebula
- DN : Diffuse Nebula
- GX : Galaxy
- SNR : Supernova Remnant

Note:
The following objects on the Winter list are actually better placed in the sky for viewing during Spring, but are still easy to view during late Winter:
M51, M65, M66, M81, M82.

Finder charts:
The Raleigh Astronomy Club’s yahoo group provides access to Telrad finder charts for the Messiers under Files > Messier Marathon > Messier Object Finder Charts.

Checklist and logs:
The following pages provide a checklist and observing logs for your convenience. You may use your own log sheet format as long as it contains required information.

Raleigh Astronomy Club
Winter Messier Observing Club List

Observer: _____

Instruments Used: _____

Messier Object			Location	Date	EP / Mag	Sketch
1.	[ ]	M1				
2.	[ ]	M31				
3.	[ ]	M32				
4.	[ ]	M35				
5.	[ ]	M36				
6.	[ ]	M37				
7.	[ ]	M38				
8.	[ ]	M41				
9.	[ ]	M42				
10.	[ ]	M43				
11.	[ ]	M44				
12.	[ ]	M45				
13.	[ ]	M46				
14.	[ ]	M47				
15.	[ ]	M48				
16.	[ ]	M50				
17.	[ ]	M51				
18.	[ ]	M65				
19.	[ ]	M66				
20.	[ ]	M67				
21.	[ ]	M78				
22.	[ ]	M79				
23.	[ ]	M81				
24.	[ ]	M82				
25.	[ ]	M93				
26.	[ ]	M110				

Notes:
Sketches are not required for this certificate, but consider trying a few. Mark the *Sketch* column (Y/N) to track whether the object was sketched.

Messier Observing Log

Object:	Date:	Time:
Constellation:	Transparency:	
Magnitude:	Seeing:	Temp:
Size:	Telescope:	
Site:	Eyepiece/Magnification:	
Description:		

Object:	Date:	Time:
Constellation:	Transparency:	
Magnitude:	Seeing:	Temp:
Size:	Telescope:	
Site:	Eyepiece/Magnification:	
Description:		

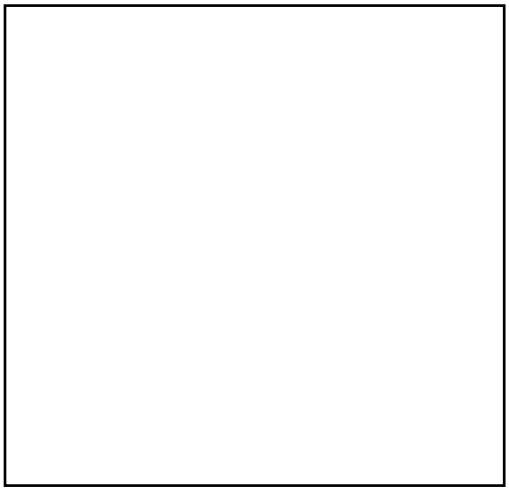
Object:	Date:	Time:
Constellation:	Transparency:	
Magnitude:	Seeing:	Temp:
Size:	Telescope:	
Site:	Eyepiece/Magnification:	
Description:		

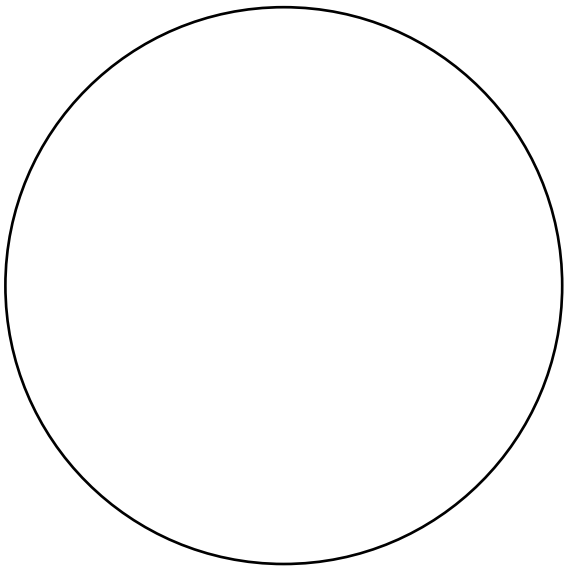
Messier Observing Log

Object:	Date:	UTC/civil
Right Ascension:	Time:	UTC/std/ds
Declination:	Seeing: *Transparency*:	
Constellation:	*Steadiness:*	
Magnitude:	Temperature:	
Size:	Telescope:	
Obj. Dist:	Eyepiece/Magnification:	
Site:	Filters:	

Notes:

Finder Chart: Field Size:





Observer: _____