



The Backyard Astronomer's Guide

By Terence Dickinson, Alan Dyer

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The Backyard Astronomer's Guide By Terence Dickinson, Alan Dyer

The modern classic, completely updated.

The newest edition of **The Backyard Astronomer's Guide** includes the latest data and answers the questions most often asked by home astronomers, from beginners to experienced stargazers. Terence Dickinson and Alan Dyer provide expert guidance on the right types of telescopes and other equipment; photographing the stars through a telescope; and star charts, software and other references. They cover daytime and twilight observing, planetary and deep-sky observing, and much more.

With over 500 color photographs and illustrations, **The Backyard Astronomer's Guide** is one of the most valuable, beautiful and user-friendly astronomy books ever produced.

New and updated for this edition:

- *A 20-page full-color Atlas of the Milky Way* provides location and context for hundreds of celestial objects mentioned throughout the book.
- *A chapter on Astrophotography with Digital Cameras* specifies what equipment works best and how to use it to collect a color gallery of celestial portraits.
- *Telescopes for Recreational Astronomy* features assessments of a wide range of new telescopes, from models for beginners to those for veteran astronomy enthusiasts, with special emphasis on computerized telescopes and how they work.
- *Accessory Catalog* spotlights the best of the accessories and flags the frivolous and irrelevant.
- *Three practical appendices*: Polar Aligning Your Telescope; Optics Cleaning and Collimation; Testing Your Telescope Optics.

Any serious home astronomer must have this superb guide as an ongoing reference.

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Editorial Review

Review

[Review of earlier edition:] I highly recommend this volume for most amateur astronomers and all libraries. I wish I had read it before I purchased my first telescope. (John O. Christensen *Science Books and Films* 2003-10-15)

[Review of earlier edition:] More than any other guide to backyard observing, this excellent book focuses on equipment. (*Astronomy*)

[Review of earlier edition:] Excellent introductory text ... completely revised... it is lushly illustrated in color throughout. (Ursula Ellis *E-Streams*, Vol. 6, No. 4)

[Review of earlier edition:] If an amateur astronomer could afford one book, this would be the one to get ... one of the most attractive practical astronomy works ever produced. (Russ Francis *Monday Magazine*)

[Review of earlier edition:] Lively, accessible style; is comprehensive; and is lavishly illustrated with hundreds of photographs, diagrams, and charts... highly recommended for any library. (Mark Wilson *American Reference Books Annual*, Volume 35)

[Review of earlier edition:] Few books capture the spirit of the hobby so well -- the pleasures and the pitfalls of the equipment you might need, and the simple joy of watching the universe go by. (*American Scientist*)

[Review of earlier edition:] This all-encompassing reference provides practical advice. (*Science News* 2003-01-04)

[Review of earlier edition:] Recommended for all libraries and for experienced or inexperienced amateur astronomers. (A.R. Upgren *Choice*)

[Review of earlier edition:] Big colorful user-friendly book ... I recommend this book for anyone who is contemplating buying a telescope, has one but does not quite know how to use it, or wants to learn more about accessories and fun activities to supplement his or her stargazing. If you teach observational astronomy, run a public observatory, or conduct community stargazing classes, put this magazine down and order it right now ... This book is your passport to the stars. (David Aguilar *Sky and Telescope*)

[Review of earlier edition:] This book is an indispensable tool for any serious naturalist who wants to understand and experience the full expanse of the world and universe around us. (Pierre R. Gauthier *Canadian Camera*)

[Review of earlier edition:] Its nontechnical language makes astronomy an avocation accessible to everyone. (*Library Journal* 2003-05-01)

[Review of earlier edition:] Crammed with practical information that should help you become a better observer, and have fun doing it. (Craig Tupper *Astronomy*)

[Review of earlier edition:] Besides its practical benefits, this book is a real treat for the eyes. It's loaded with

colorful photographs, graphics and information boxes. (John McPhee *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* 2003-02-01)

With over 500 color photographs and illustrations, this book is a valuable, beautiful and user-friendly astronomy reference. (*Lunar and Planetary Information Bulletin*)

A magnificently illustrated and superb guide to astronomy is contained in the newest edition of The Backyard Astronomer's Guide.... Overall, this title is a beautiful and informative resource for the amateur astronomer, both the beginner and the experienced. (Denise A. Garofalo *American Reference Book Annual*)

I fondly remember haunting my favorite bookstore as a college student in the early 1990s, ogling the big, full-color astronomy texts, when I happened upon The Backyard Astronomer's Guide. It wasn't as flashy as the other books, but I was quickly taken by its practical information, covering all the subjects I was interested in as a fledgling amateur. Now in its third edition, Terence Dickinson and Alan Dyer have completely rewritten large sections to keep in lockstep with the evolving trends. Like an old friend who has grown wiser over time, this compendium has become better with age. It's good-looking too--though chock-full of useful information, none of the full-color layouts appear cramped or confused. Immediately from the first chapter the authors' fluid writing style draws you in, casually introducing you to the pursuit of the night sky. As in previous editions, the flow comfortably builds with each page, easing you into progressively challenging subjects without missing a step.

The text builds through each successive chapter, describing today's plethora of binoculars, telescopes, mounts, eyepieces, and other accessories. We then move on to delve deeply into everything of interest in the sky, from the planets to deep-sky objects. The detailed yet accessible explanation of celestial mechanics should be required reading for everyone. The third part introduces digital astrophotography. Yes, digital--it starts out by stating that film is dead. This new section covers everything you need to get started taking pictures, including some useful parts of Adobe Photoshop. The Backyard Astronomer's Guide closes with a set of beautifully rendered charts of the Milky Way by Glenn LeDrew. Opposing pages display a color version and a labeled, black-on-white version plotted to magnitude 9. Dickinson and Dyer have brought their excellent guide further into the 21st century. I can't recommend it highly enough. (Sean Walker *Sky and Telescope* 2009-04-01)

Dickinson and Dyer provide considerable information that amateur astronomers will appreciate... Complementing the informative text are hundreds of colour photographs and illustrations as well as a 20-page, full-colour atlas of the Milky Way that includes 10 charts. This revised and expanded third edition will be of interest to serious amateur astronomers. (Glenn Perrett *Simcoe.com* 2010-10-02)

The Backyard Astronomer's Guide continues to impress, offering a little something for everyone. If you have never seen this book before, now is the time to add it to your collection. It is one book you will never tire of opening, always finding something of interest in the world of astronomy. (*Shelf Life*)

About the Author

Terence Dickinson is the author of *Night Watch* and 13 other astronomy books, among them *The Universe and Beyond*, *Summer Stargazing* and *Exploring the Night Sky*. He is also editor of *SkyNews*.

Alan Dyer is program producer at the Calgary Science Centre Planetarium and a contributing editor to *Sky and Telescope* magazine. An authority on commercial telescopes, his reviews of astronomical equipment appear regularly in major astronomy magazines.

Introduction

Since the publication of the first edition of *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide* in 1991, amateur astronomy has evolved in several important areas. This prompted a major rewrite and redesign for the Second Edition in 2002. Even more rapid developments since then bring us to this Third Edition and another major overhaul, which now expands the book substantially beyond its original 295 pages.

As always, new developments in equipment are behind most of the revisions led by affordable computerized telescopes and the entry of China as a major player in telescope manufacture. More unexpected was the speed of the digital-camera revolution, which opened a new wonderland of astrophotographic opportunities undreamed of in the days of film. That, combined with a wider array of telescopes and accessories at better prices than ever before, meant that every chapter required revisions, ranging up to a complete rewrite of the astrophotography section, Chapter 13.

In response to readers' requests for how-to reference guides to fundamental telescope setup, use and maintenance procedures, we've added two new chapters (14 and 15). More than 200 new photos and illustrations accompany these changes, both major and minor, in every chapter. (Prices given are average U.S. dollar dealer prices.)

To keep the text uncluttered and readable, we have avoided embedding a lot of website addresses throughout. To locate the websites for companies and products described, simply Google the names. Finally, at the back of the book, we've added a beautiful and practical Milky Way atlas, created by Glenn LeDrew.

In almost all cases, we have used photographs of equipment that were taken in the field and in our own studios rather than relying on stock shots from manufacturers. (We've really used this equipment!)

In many respects, this book is a sequel to coauthor Dickinson's *NightWatch: A Guide to Viewing the Universe*, which emphasizes reference material for the absolute beginner. In *The Backyard Astronomer's Guide*, we provide more in-depth commentary, guidance and resources for the enthusiast.

We invite readers to visit the book's website (see below), where updates and links to other informative sites can be found.

Terence Dickinson

NightWatch Observatory

Alan Dyer

Telus World of Science-Calgary

Website: www.backyardastronomy.com

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kristen Blasingame:

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Jamie Wallace:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their particular reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only the story that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the information about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors these days always try to improve their proficiency in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write for their book. One of them is this The Backyard Astronomer's Guide.

Allison Larson:

As we know that book is important thing to add our know-how for everything. By a reserve we can know everything you want. A book is a set of written, printed, illustrated as well as blank sheet. Every year had been exactly added. This guide The Backyard Astronomer's Guide was filled regarding science. Spend your free time to add your knowledge about your research competence. Some people has various feel when they reading a book. If you know how big selling point of a book, you can really feel enjoy to read a publication. In the modern era like today, many ways to get book you wanted.

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