THE LUNAR OBSERVER

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS OF THE MOON — JULY 1997

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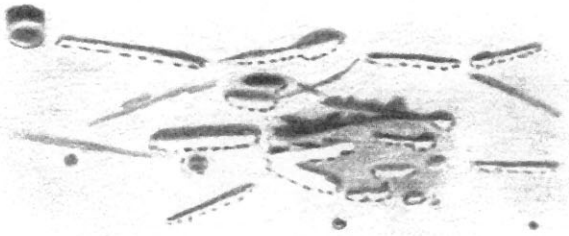
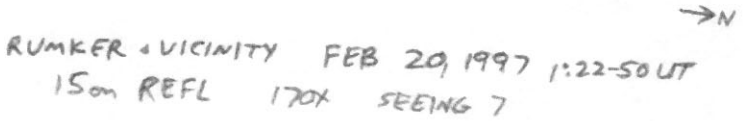
FEATURE OF THE MONTH
MONS RUMKER

Sketch by Robert H. Hays, Jr. - Worth, Illinois





In the Northwest region of Oceanus Procellarum lies the fascinating feature dubbed Mons Rumker. More of a plateau than a mountain it can only be seen when very near the terminator. This complex structure of domes, hills, ridges, and Imbrium ejecta is a real challenge to sketch accurately and is, in fact, depicted on some older maps as a ruined crater.

Robert Hays, Jr. of Worth, Illinois encountered Mons Rumker earlier this year and submitted this report:

"I had seen this large dome many times, and had taken it for granted. I saw it well placed on the evening of February 19/20, so after I timed the occultation of 29 Cancri I tried sketching this feature. It took only a few minutes to realize that this was not a single dome but a collection of domes and hills, and that it was not going to be easy to draw. I went at it anyway. The brightest part of Rumker was a V-shaped area at its south end. I saw a clump of hills and domes to the east and north, while there were serrated shadows to the west. The interior of Rumker appeared darker than surrounding maria. An assortment of linear shadows were noted in the vicinity. Some were definitely ridges, while others were probably just wrinkles. I saw only three craters in this area, all to the south of Rumker. The relatively large one to the left in my sketch is Naumann B according to the Lunar Quadrant Maps. This was indeed a difficult area to sketch."

Mons Rumker can be found on Map 8 of Rukl's Atlas of the Moon and should be well placed for viewing about twelve days after New Moon (try July 16). Why not give it a look and try your hand at sketching or imaging this peculiar feature? All observations will be gladly accepted at the above address.

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Banded Crater Program

A program to monitor craters having dusky bands was initiated in the June issue of The Lunar Observer and several observations have already been received. For those interested in studying these fascinating features, here is a second list of 10 craters to add to your observing program:

Maury	18 km	37.1 N	39.6 E
Rosse	12 km	17.9 S	35.0 E
Burg	40 km	45.0 N	28.2 E
Silberschlag	13 km	06.2 N	12.5 E
Theaetetus	25 km	37.0 N	06.0 E
Aristillus	55 km	33.9 N	01.2 E
Bode	19 km	06.7 N	02.4 W
Nicollet	15 km	21.9 S	12.5 W
Milichius	13 km	10.0 N	30.2 W
Kepler	32 km	08.1 N	38.0 W

And remember, "negative" observations are of enormous value. Did you observe a banded crater and not see any bands? That counts! That goes into the study just as "positive" observations do. One of the important aspects of this program is to establish the limits of visibility of the bands. When do they first appear after lunar sunrise and when are they last visible before lunar sunset?

There is much work to be done and your help is needed!

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Observations Received

During the month the following observations were received:

Harry Jamieson (Memphis, Tenn.) - Sketch of bands within the crater Milichius.
Dave Mitsky - Written account of a sunset ray in the crater Walter.
Bill O'Connell (Whitman, Mass.) - CCD image of band within the crater Pytheas.
Robert Stewart (Norfolk, Va.) - Timings of 20 stars occulted by the Moon.

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The Lunar Calendar for July 1997
(All Times UT)

July 2	18:40	New Moon (Start of Lunation 922)
July 6	02:00	Moon 5 degrees North of Venus
July 9	23:00	Moon at apogee (404, 934 km)
July 12	02:00	Moon 1.8 degrees North of Mars
July 12	21:44	First Quarter
July 20	03:22	Full Moon
July 21	23:00	Moon at perigee (361,571 km)
July 26	18:30	Last Quarter
July 29	10:00	Moon occults Aldebaran (See below)

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Moon Occults Aldebaran

On the morning of July 29 the Moon will occult the first magnitude star Aldebaran, and the event will be visible over much of the United States. Since the star will disappear behind the sunlit portion of the Moon, its reappearance a short while later from behind the dark side should be more easily seen. In some areas of the country (extreme Northwest) the Moon will not occult the star and in others (extreme Northeast) the occultation will occur after the sun rises. To get more detailed information, including timetables and maps, consult the July 1997 issue of Sky & Telescope magazine or their Website at http://www.skypub.com/whatsup/9707alde.html.

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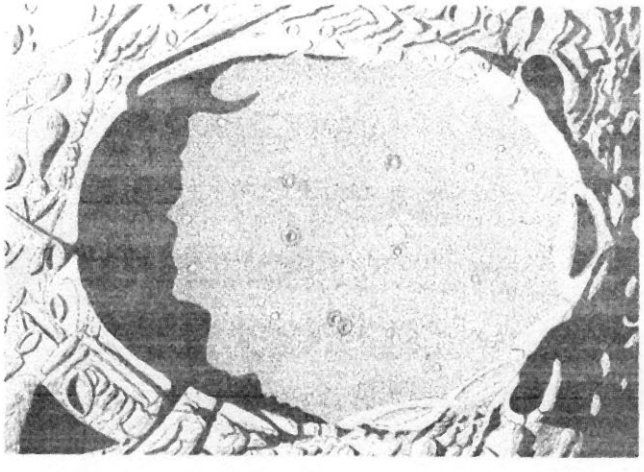
Plato's Hook .... A Reminder



On July 14 at 02:36 UT the lighting conditions on the Moon may be favorable for the sighting of Plato's Hook .... that strange curved shadow drawn by Patrick Moore on April 3, 1952 and which was our "Feature of the Month" in February, 1997. Any observations, positive or negative, will be gladly welcomed.