

Summer 2025 Stargazing Programs at the

John Glenn Astronomy Park



The John Glenn astronomy Park (JGAP) is open at all times (*with the exception of our program nights, see below*) for people to enjoy views of sky, day or night. Just drive up!

On clear Friday and Saturday nights through the weekend before Thanksgiving, we do “guided stargazing” programs starting at sunset. (*Check times listed below.*) These often involve a laser-guided “tour” of the constellations and features of the sky. Volunteers bring, or “adopt” telescopes for the evening and share views in our telescope. Visitors to our programs can get in line for a view through our enormous “Wow!” telescope in our observatory when conditions are favorable. On many nights astro-imagers on site will share live views of celestial objects on their computer screens.

Please note: Because our parking space is limited, **we require visitors to our Friday and Saturday night programs to secure a free parking pass for the early evening hours.** Please respect this requirement to ensure that we do not run out parking space for those who have pre-planned a trip to JGAP. *Space is infinite, our parking area is not.*

Get one at: **registration.jgap.org**

Additional parking passes are frequently posted a few days before each event. Watch for them as the program approaches.

Visitors to the Hocking Hills Lodge and the Hocking Hills State Park Cabins (immediately alongside JGAP) are welcome to walk over without a pass.

If you have your own telescope, binoculars, or just two eyes that love to gaze upon the stars, you are free to drive into JGAP on a *non-program* night without a parking pass. Clear, moonless nights show off the dark skies of the Hocking Hills the best.

Here's what to expect at our programs this Summer:

June 20, 21: The Summer Solstice: Come learn about the movement of the sun across the sky and view it safely through our solar telescopes on this late-afternoon program at JGAP. Stick around later to enjoy a view of a dark summer sky and learn the summer constellations. The summer solstice alignment with our plaza's features occurs this weekend! Telescopic highlight in the evening: Messier 13, the Great Hercules Globular Cluster. 6:30 PM

June 27, 28: The Scorpion and the Snake Handler: The two constellations of Scorpius and Ophiuchus (the 13th constellation of the zodiac) both involve celestial “creepy-crawlies”. They have risen high in the south once it is fully dark. Situated near the center of the Milky-Way, they are filled with brilliant “globular” star clusters. 9:00 PM

July 4-5: Celestial Fireworks: Some stars slowly die out and others go “Boom” like fireworks. Come learn how. We'll be looking at a few dying stars including the Ring Nebula and the Dumbbell Nebula. 9:00 PM

July 11-12: The Moon Illusion: Does the full moon look big to you when it rises? That's a curious optical illusion. Come learn why we see it this way, and then experience it when the brilliant full moon rises after it gets dark. 9:00 PM

July 18-19: Happy Birthday John Glenn (and Brian May): We'll be talking about the life and deeds of John Glenn, the Ohio native who became the first US astronaut to orbit the Earth. He was born on July 18, 1921. Afterwards we'll be learning the constellations from the sky itself under dark summer skies. Guitarist/Astronomer Brian May was born on July 19, rock on! 9:00 PM

July 25-26: Our Home Galaxy: The Milky Way: If you want to know what the Milky Way looks like close up, look around. We live in a great spinning, slightly warped, disk of stars, 100,000 light years across. Telescopic highlights on this moonless “dark sky” weekend include: The Great Hercules Globular Cluster, The Ring Nebula, The Veil Nebula (the remnants of an exploding star) and M8 (a stellar nursery in which new stars are being born). 8:45 PM

August 1-2: The Half Moon Hangs Low, the Swan Flies High: The first quarter moon is low over the souther horizon and sets behind the trees quite early. Those who stick around will see Cygnus the Swan flying along the Milky Way, and dotted with fascinating celestial objects: The “Blinking” planetary nebula (a dying star), Alberio (a lovely colorful pair of stars), and the curious Crescent Nebula (best seen in our big 28” telescope.). 8:45 PM

August 8-9: Summer Moon: The brilliant Full Moon rises in the east at sundown drawing our attention. Come find out how gazing at the moon lets us see the ancient history of our own planet, the Earth. Also, come learn how deep time really goes. 8:30 PM

August 15: The Heart of the Milky Way: The Milky Way is at its best this weekend, It arcs high overhead once it is fully dark. Come learn how astronomers deduced its true shape and size. We'll be looking towards the center of our galaxy at the many nebulae and star clusters dotted across its face. Also, catch few late Perseid meteors as the moon has ducked out of the way allowing us to see this fading, but still moderately strong, shower. 8:30 PM

August 16: SPECIAL EVENT: Celestial Music: Tonight is a special program with the Hocking Hills Community Orchestra who will be performing in our plaza at sundown. Afterwards, we'll follow up with a night under arc of the Milky Way. Event is free, but a donation would be appreciated as this is a fundraiser. Orchestra Starts at 7:00 PM. Arrive early!

August 22: Stellar Nurseries, Stellar Graveyards: The Milky Way is dotted with places in which new stars are being born, and old stars are dying, seeing the cosmos with the new elements that worlds (and entities) like we are made from. 8:15 PM

August 23: Celestial Music: Rain Date in case the program on August 16 was canceled due to wet weather. Otherwise, a great night to see the Milky-Way. Orchestra Starts at 7:00 PM. Arrive early!

August 29-30: The First and Last Apollo Missions: The lunar terminator, the line between night and day, is perfectly situated this weekend to allow us to see geography that surrounds the first and last Apollo Missions (11 and 17). 8:00 PM

September 5-6: Aristarchus and a Rainbow: The Brightest crater on the moon is striking in small telescopes, as is the Sinus Iridium, the "Bay of Rainbows", both of which are seen well this weekend. 8:00 PM

September 12-13: Saturn Rises: The planet Saturn has returned to the evening skies and will rise above the trees at the eastern edge of our field once it is fully dark. Also, the Milky Way arcs high overhead on this dark sky weekend. 7:45 PM

September 19-20: The Little Constellations: Between the more well known star patterns are many diminutive constellations: A wolf, a Dolphin, a small horse, and an errant arrow. On this dark sky weekend, we'll be exploring some of the gems they contain. 7:30 PM

Because our programs are about the stars, they are dependent on weather. They will be called off on rainy or cloudy evenings. Please check the hour-by-hour weather forecast before setting out.

We post notice of whether or not an evening's program will go forward on our website, JGAP.org, and our Facebook Page "John Glenn Astronomy Park", by noon on the same day as the program.

I also recommend checking:

Weather.gov

Put "Logan, OH" into the search bar.

As astronomers say, *Clear Skies!*



The John Glenn Astronomy Park is brought to you by the Friends of the Hocking Hills State Park a non-profit (501c3) membership organization for people who love the Hocking Hills and take special interest in improving Park features and preserving it for the enjoyment of future generations.

If you'd like support the mission of The Friends go to

<http://www.friendsofhockinghills.org/>

or scan the QR code at right.

