



The Astronomical League

A Federation of Astronomical Societies

Astro Note C4 – **Observing Programs**

Introduction – The Astronomical League has many Observing Programs that are available to our members. No matter what the member's experience, equipment, capabilities, and preferences, there is an Observing Program to meet that need.

- There are Observing Programs based on experience level: Novice to Expert.
- There are Observing Programs for all equipment levels: Unaided Eyes, Binoculars, Small Telescopes, Large Telescopes, Radio Astronomy, and Spectroscopy.
- There are Observing Programs for all types of objects: The Sun, the Moon, Planets, Meteors, Asteroids, Comets, Globular Clusters, Open Clusters, Bright Nebulae, Dark Nebulae, Planetary Nebulae, and Galaxies.

The Observing Program Division of the Astronomical League has four overarching Programs:

- Citizen Science – to recognize those members who are contributing to citizen science beyond the existing Observing Programs.
- Outreach – to recognize those members who participate in outreach activities.
- The Herschel Society – to recognize those members who pursue the Herschel Objects and go beyond the Herschel 400 and Herschel II Observing Programs.
- The Master Observer Progression – To recognize those members who pursue increasing depth and breadth in their observing skills.

There are over 65 Observing Programs and associated awards available (<https://www.astroleague.org/al/obsclubs/AlphabeticObservingClubs.html>). They can be divided up into these categories:

- Observing Programs – These include certificates and pins, usually require a year and about 100 observations.
- Observing Awards – These include certificates and pins. They do not normally count towards the Master Observer Progression.
- Special Observing Awards – These include certificates and pins. They do not count towards the Master Observer Progression. They are to recognize rare celestial events.
- Observing Certificates and Challenges – These include certificates only. They do not count towards the Master Observer Progression.