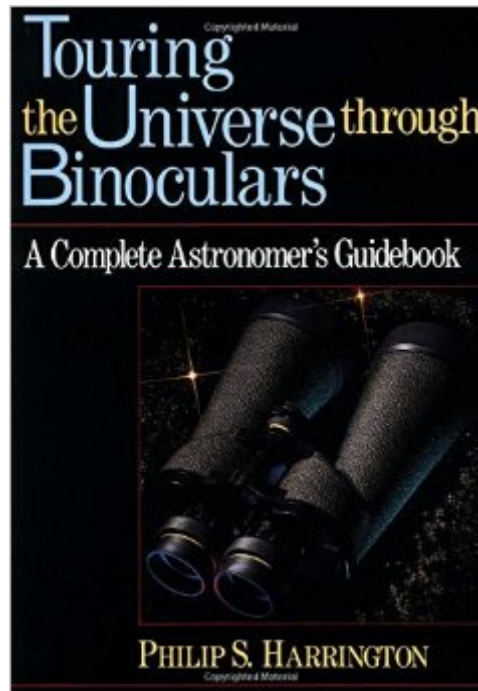


The book was found

Touring The Universe Through Binoculars: A Complete Astronomer's Guidebook (Wiley Science Editions)



Synopsis

This comprehensive work takes you on a personal tour of the universe using nothing more than a pair of binoculars. More comprehensive than any book currently available, it starts with Earth's nearest neighbor, the moon, and then goes on to explore each planet in the solar system, asteroids, meteors, comets and the sun. Following this, the reader is whisked away into deep space to explore celestial bodies including stars that are known and many sights less familiar. The final chapter includes a detailed atlas of deep-sky objects visible through binoculars. The appendices include guidance on how to buy, care for and maintain astronomical binoculars, tips and hints on using them, and detailed information on several home-made binocular mounts.

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Customer Reviews

Touring the Universe Through Binoculars remains the single most authoritative source for people who want to view the night sky with binoculars. Sure, there are other books on the subject, but Touring the Universe stands apart for its thorough survey of the binocular sky. This book lists objects that the other books miss entirely (and that the authors probably don't even know exist!). But readers should keep in mind that Touring the Universe is really aimed more toward seasoned amateur astronomers. Those new to astronomy may find some of the discussion a little beyond them, at least at this point. But you will certainly grow into the book if you stick with the hobby. And thanks to the flowing words from the author, that's an enjoyable task. Readers should also be aware that the book does not have any star charts. That means you will need to get either a star atlas like

Sky Atlas 2000 or the author's companion CD-ROM (which does not offer, but Sky Publishing and Orion Telescope Center do). It's great software even without the book!

This book covers +1000 deep sky objects plus solar system objects for binoculars. It includes many faint objects that can be seen with ordinary binos under very favourable conditions so the observers with large binoculars can use this book better. Although there are +1000 objects given in the book, most of them are not explained but rather their basic data like coordinates and magnitude are given. It does not have maps so you need an atlas with this book. However; this book is very useful with its tabulated data and constellation-based organisation. You cannot find any other complete and well prepared list and data of objects visible in binoculars. The author also groups Messier objects into 4 difficulty groups which is helpful for inexperienced observers.

Anyone interested in binocular astronomy should consider this book (and Binocular Astronomy by Crossen and Tirion too). The book is available through with a good discount (20%), but even so, it still costs \$28 plus shipping. For a paperback book that's not cheap. Harrington's book has a good section on the moon, the planets and the sun but the meat of the book is a blast of information on literally a thousand sky objects to see. Organizationally, the information is broken down alphabetically by constellation, with a table listing the objects and key information about them (Type, Right Ascension, Declination, Magnitude, etc.). I would have liked to have had distance too. Following each table was a brief (maybe too brief) description of each object. For list-oriented people this works well. I was inspired enough to enter them into an Access database, which was much more work than I thought it would be, and I'm not sure how useful it will turn out to be. The sheer magnitude of the list is what sets this book apart. I look at binocular astronomy as a lifelong pursuit but looking at the length of the list makes me think I'd better get started quickly. I'm running out of time! In short, Harrington's book is a solid wealth of information but it doesn't have the same warm and fuzzy feeling of Crossen's Binocular Astronomy. It's more like a cookbook. However, if you're really interested in binocular astronomy, you'll probably want both books. If you only get one, get Crossen's book (see my review of that book too).

I have used this book since it first came out almost ten years ago, and have always found it a big help when planning an observing session with my binoculars. It talks about sky objects that are ignored by just about every other book out there, but that are *easily* visible through binoculars! Guess none of the other binoculars books bothered to really research the topic. But now, the book

has gotten even better with the new Touring the Universe Through Binoculars Atlas CD-ROM. A great value for the price too! I first looked for it on .com, but I guess they don't sell it. (hey, ! hint hint). I ended up buying it right through Harrington's home page. Together, the book and CD are the most complete survey of the binocular sky ever created! My advice is to buy the book here and get the CD separately. If you like binocular observing as much as I do, they make a great team.

The first problem with this book is that for the urban or suburban observer with less than giant binoculars, it is too hard to find objects that you will really have any luck with. You have to sort through long lists of 9th-magnitude star clusters to find anything that would really be visible. The second problem is that a large percentage of the objects listed are pretty dim and crummy open clusters, and in most cases it is extremely hard to tell whether you are seeing the cluster or not. The photos are no help, because they are all long photographic exposures taken through telescopes, nothing like what you actually see through binox.

I never realized just how much there is to see in the sky with binoculars until I read this book! With it, my binoculars, and a star atlas, I've been able to see sights in the sky that most of the people in my astronomy club don't even know exist! For instance, I never knew that the stars in Orion's belt belong to a big open cluster. No other observing book ever mentioned it, except for this one. And that's just the beginning. The book lists over 1,000 deep-sky objects for binoculars, covering the entire sky with a depth unmatched in any other binocular book. It also describes over 100 surface features on the Moon, plus gives advice on viewing the planets, comets, and even binocular meteor showers! I highly recommend Touring the Universe Through Binoculars!

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