

The Virtual Telescope Newsletter



Enjoy The Universe from your desktop

March 2014

ALWAYS SURFING THE SKIES!

ASTEROID RELAY RACE

At night, we are always looking up.

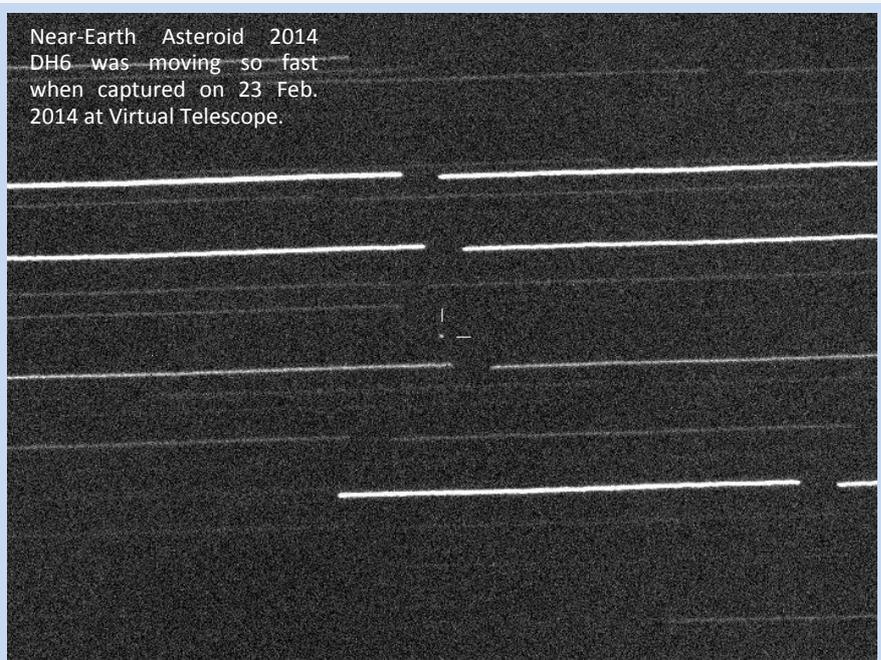
Over the last couple of decades, several efficient surveys started scanning the skies looking for hazardous asteroids, those coming close enough to our planet, potentially posing an impact treat.

Luckily, these rocks are basically flying away after they safely “brushed” us, even if - from time to time - they reach the atmosphere or even the ground.

Asteroid **2014 AA** was just one of them: it, at least, entered the atmosphere at the beginning of the year, showing that lot of things are traveling in the inner Solar System.

Sometimes, an handful of asteroids approaches us within a few days, but this is not weird at all: we improved our capabilities to find them, so apparently they are more and more, but the numbers are always been the same. So, don't worry and enjoy the show!

Near-Earth Asteroid 2014
DH6 was moving so fast
when captured on 23 Feb.
2014 at Virtual Telescope.



Asteroid 2014 DH6 made a close encounter with the Earth soon after it was discovered last 21 Feb. The minimum distance was of just two lunar distances, that is about 800.000 km.

[The Virtual Telescope imaged it](#) while moving at 240"/minute, thanks to its very advanced technology, as the sharp image above shows so well.

At the imaging time, 2014 DH6 was at 830.000 km from us, quite a sight!

What's new. February was, again, a mainly cloudy month. Really, this winter is going to be the worse astronomers can remember of the last decade: hopefully this brand-new March will bring us some clear skies.

Nonetheless, we had good observations, with several possible supernovae confirmed and amazing, public coverage of a few brushing asteroids. Stay tuned!

Questions? Suggestions? If yes, you can reach us at: info@virtualtelescope.eu

We are also on [facebook](#) and [twitter](#)

DISCOVER THE VIRTUAL TELESCOPE

Have you ever wanted to access the sky from you desktop, via the Internet, in real time? The Virtual Telescope makes it possible. Discover what it can do for you and your love for the stars.



THE TECH-HEART OF THE VIRTUAL TELESCOPE



Technology: [this is a very important keyword for the Virtual Telescope Project.](#)

If you followed us since 2006, you have seen amazing changes there. We tested many solutions, but some items were the core of the system since we started.

Mechanics is the most important part: reliability is absolutely mandatory for a truly remote facility.

The software is also critical, both for stability and performance of the whole system.

Optics are another key factor: quality, correction and overall stability of the optical tube make a huge difference.

Detectors and filters, at the end, should be able to take benefits from all the other elements.

SUPERNOVA SN 2014J AFTER ITS CLIMAX: STILL A SIGHT

SN 2014J, the supernova of the moment, was quite timely featured last month, few days after its discovery. Of course, being in Messier 82, a typical Spring gem, it is still perfectly visible.

It peaked in brightness very early in Feb. and now shines at mag 11.5 or so, still visible with small, cheap newbie hobby astronomers scopes.

[We wanted to see it again, including Messier 81, making with M 82 a very beautiful couple.](#)

Cosmic standard candles.

Type Ia supernovae, as SN 2014J, are very precious in Cosmology.

These dramatic explosions are the outcome of a binary system, hosting at least one white dwarf, receiving matter from its companion, until it explodes.

At maximum, they reach a repeatable absolute brightness which, compared with the max measured one, easily leads to an estimate of their distance.

WHAT IS UP IN THE SKY THIS MONTH

In **March**, stars are ready to announce the Spring, with the Winter leaving on the western part of the sky. We will miss the bright stars of those cold, long nights!

Orion is setting, following **Taurus**, with the intense Sirius always helping the Hunter. Overhead, at the beginning of the night, Castor and Pollux in **Gemini**, are framing the brightest light for most of the night, planet **Jupiter**. Capella, in **Auriga**, is still a great sight, with its yellow light.

Ursa Major is ready to dominate around the zenith with its vast figure, with **Leo** under its legs. Mars introduces itself early in the evening, in **Virgo**, while the very extended **Hydra**, will show for many months to come. Welcome, Spring!



SPY LIVE ASTEROID 2014 CU13

Next **11 Mar.**, this 180-meters large potentially hazardous asteroid (PHA) will reach a minimum distance from the Earth of 3 millions of km (8 times the mean distance of the Moon). No risks at all for us, of course.

We will show asteroid **2014 CU13** live, online next 9 Mar., starting at 23:00 UT.

If you want to join for free, just [enter our webTV page at the date and time reported above.](#)

Save the date: you will be impressed by this show!

VIRTUAL TELESCOPE NEEDS YOU

We need you. The Virtual Telescope helps millions of individuals from more than 200 Countries each year to discover the Cosmos, for free.

But there are bills to pay and maintenance to be done and we have no funds. We survive thanks to donations from those trusting our mission.

[If you love what we are doing, you are welcome to support us.](#)

We wish to thank those who supported us since we started in 2006.

STAR WORDS

“For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream.”

Vincent van Gogh

STAR GEM OF THE MONTH

NGC 2392. Among the planetary nebulae, NGC 2392 really stands out. It is bright, easy to find and very enjoyable with any telescope.

Its nickname says it all: the “eskimo” nebula. If you look at it, you will easily understand why!

At Virtual Telescope you can explore this gem thanks to our amazing seeing, fine optics and narrow band filters, unveiling that elegant, cosmic face.

[What are you waiting for to look at it?](#)