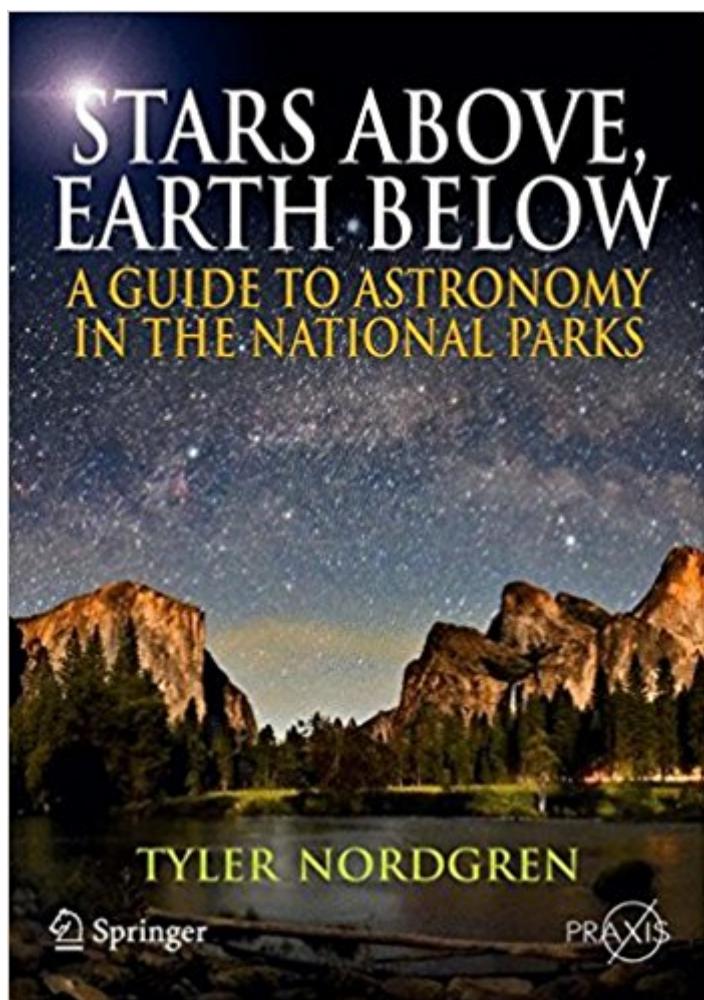


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# **Stars Above, Earth Below: A Guide To Astronomy In The National Parks (Springer Praxis Books / Popular Astronomy)**



## Synopsis

Stars Above, Earth Below uses photographs and sky charts to form a connection between what is seen on the ground and in the sky, and looks at the deeper scientific meaning behind these sights. Nordgren describes other objects in the Solar System with features similar to those on Earth and links the geological features seen in the national parks to the very latest NASA spacecraft discoveries on other planets and their moons. Additionally, historical context is discussed to show why we humans (who have lived in and around our national parks for tens of thousands of years) have always been astronomers. The first book to make direct connections between astronomy and the landscapes, processes and cultures one experiences in the US National Parks. Each chapter ties a specific astronomical phenomenon to a particular National Park or type of park and concludes with a "See for yourself" section that shows you how to see the planets, stars, nebulae, moons, etc. that are described within that chapter. A personal guide showing the reader the astronomical phenomena that you can see for yourself when visiting the U.S. National Parks.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

From the reviews: "A photo essay on a years-long journey to see the natural wonders of dark skies over America's most beautiful landscapes and visions of future exploration of the planets -- Stars Above, Earth Below is all of these. Nordgren's text is accompanied by a truly exorbitant number of photos and diagrams. The book will delight

space fans, but I think that it will do a greater public service by exposing those people who already love the places seen throughout the Space Age. (Emily Lakdawalla, The Planetary Society Blog, December, 2010) "There are numerous field books on astronomy on the market, but this new book stands out. Astronomer Nordgren spent 14 months traveling across the US, visiting 12 national parks and contributing to their nighttime public outreach programs. The result is this beautiful diary of the author's experiences and account of the unique aspects of the night sky at each site. Most chapters are illustrated with beautiful color photos, many of them taken by Nordgren. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries. (T. D. Oswalt, Choice, Vol. 48 (3), November, 2010) "Appeal to readers with a wider interest in wild landscapes. the book is an excellent example of the growing global trend of developing partnerships between astronomers and environmental managers. includes a good number of eye-catching images and illustrations to draw the reader into its themes. As a general introduction to astronomy the style is individual and idiosyncratic. The approach weaves together, for example, personal anecdotes, philosophical observations, and practical seasonal star-charts. (Dan Hillier, The Observatory, Vol. 131 (1222), June, 2011)

In *Stars Above, Earth Below*, Tyler Nordgren examines a range of astronomical topics and makes the connection between them and the landscapes, processes, and cultures which can be seen and experienced within specific U.S. National Parks. For each park and topic the story unfolds in three steps: what does the reader see for him - or herself? What is the scientific cause or explanation of what is seen? And finally, what is the big picture about ourselves, our world, and our Universe? The author takes us the length and breadth of the U.S., from the coast of Maine to the Yellowstone volcano, from the depths of the Grand Canyon to the heights of the Rocky Mountains, exploring the natural links between the features of the parks and those of our Universe.

I've recently gotten into astrophotography, and love the night sky away from city lights. This is a great book for seeing where to go, what to expect, and I hope to travel to many of the places listed.

Being a National Parks enthusiast, biologist, astronomy buff, and teacher, I would have picked up this book anyway. Now that I've read a majority of the pages, a copy of this book is now a new and permanent edition to my home. What initially hooked me were Dr Nordgren's photos. Although the book doesn't do justice to some, most are stunning, and capture a unique perspective of the night

sky. As I read whatever chapter I desired, I found myself caught up in remarkable aspects of astronomy, native history, legends and quotes, and the author's personal experience all interwoven to highlight the awe of nature, and our links to the Universe through the eyes of the human spirit. At one point, naively, I opened the book to Chapter Two: Black Hole Sun. Black holes are cool, I think, and I'm ready for a lesson like black holes, white dwarfs, neutron stars, etc. I read about Moon and Sun eclipses, a special one over Grand Teton, Moon migration, its alignment with the Sun and the Earth, personal experience of the author in the National Park with his hand-made sextant at scenic spots a, how a location is related to Kepler and his understanding of the orbits, the advance of worldly astro-scientific knowledge despite religious resistances, and once again back to the authors personal experience whereby his contemplation of the universe is disrupted by the end of a solar eclipse. Somewhere I read a comment by a person saying, "I'll read this book tonight". My effort to describe a chapter is but a meager attempt to describe the density and richness found in chapters, what experiences and basic insights are within reach, if not already, of the everyday person, and how interdisciplinary each chapter is. Not to mention the excellent photos, diagrams, and supplemental material that is within each chapter if not throughout the book. Not to be read overnight, I think, but chapters are to be savored. This reader appreciates the dialogue, the transitions and the care in a well-knit presentation of the universe represented in the National Park Night Skies.

Good read, more information if you are interested in night photography.

A comprehensive guide to the galaxies above us, comparing the landscapes of our National Parks to what we think are on other planets. An ingenious book which takes us gently through various rolling hills, reverently viewing massive arches formed millions of years ago and glancing down precipitous canyons at our National Parks. At night the Milky Way shows itself above these parks and Professor Nordgren recounts the history of the skies and gives us the ideal months to visit the Parks of our choice. If you like star gazing and enjoying our Parks System, this is a must-have book for you. I bought copies for my family and friends.

I really enjoy this book. As an avid amateur astronomer, I have many dozens of astronomy books, but this one is unique. It not only makes the case for the great resource of dark skies in our national parks, but ties in the geology of the parks to that of neighboring worlds in the solar system. It also addresses the cultural aspects of our parks with respect to astronomy. I have not finished all the

chapters, but it is a very rich read. Well worth the price. I have learned a lot already. The last chapter (Starry Night National Park) is superb.

This book is a joy to read and the gentle astronomical lessons learned will enhance your night sky appreciation. Whether you choose a chapter at random from the theme of the National Park that strikes your fancy, or choose to read the chapters in order, you will still appreciate and be able to use the list of star maps by month. Dr. Nordgren's photography of our National Parks and the beauty they exhibit in displaying the Milky Way are spectacular. The way the author integrates his personal experience in our National Parks as the stars above display their magnificence, is both humbling and enlightening. The book can be enjoyed by astronomer, photographers, and nature lovers everywhere.

Just a great read, highly educational and beautifully illustrated and researched!!

This guy is a great writer and excellent astrophotographer.

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