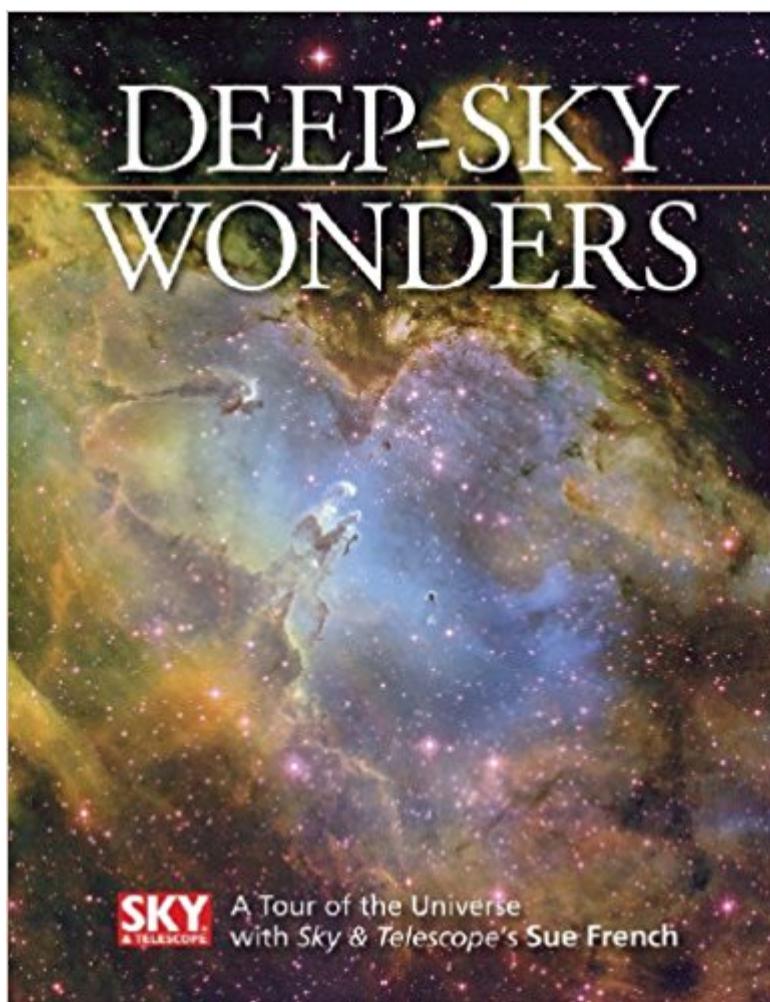


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# Deep-Sky Wonders: A Tour Of The Universe With Sky And Telescope's Sue French



## Synopsis

A new collection from Sky and Telescope's popular columnist. Sue French's elegant, informative monthly columns in Sky and Telescope magazine have won this astronomy writer a passionate following among astronomy enthusiasts. In 2005, French published 60 of these columns in *Celestial Sampler*, a book that garnered rave reviews and earned bestseller sales. *Deep-Sky Wonders* is a welcome expansion of that winning format. A new collection of the best of French's "Deep-Sky Wonders" columns, the book is organized by season and subdivided into months, offering readers a total of 100 in-depth tours of the deep sky with enduring relevance. The book includes: Full-color photographs and detailed sketches of each tour Descriptions of double and variable stars, star clusters, nebulae, galaxies and exotics Historical and scientific background of particular interest A tabular listing of the deep-sky sights Color charts showing the position of each target in the night sky An index to all of the deep-sky objects covered. *Deep-Sky Wonders* also features a variety of challenging objects that encourage observers to test the limits of their equipment and skills. Fragments of poetry and prose enliven the text, while each tour illuminates little-known seasonal wonders that lie off the beaten path. From a January journey down the celestial river Eridanus to an autumnal visit to the den of Vulpecula, the Little Fox, French brings the wonders of the sky to life. Suitable for beginning and intermediate small-scope astronomers as well as large-scope viewers and astrophotographers, this book will be greeted enthusiastically by all Sky and Telescope readers, especially French's many fans. It is also an outstanding introduction to deep-sky viewing for novice observers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A very good guide by an experienced observer and planetarium teacher. Although the book can be used as a reference for beginners, its primary audience is likely to be midlevel and advanced observers. Recommended for all readers who want to take a look at the night sky. (Jack W. Weigel Library Journal Xpress Reviews 2012-01-06)

A very good guide by an experienced observer and planetarium teacher. Although the book can be used as a reference for beginners, its primary audience is likely to be midlevel and advanced observers. Recommended for all readers who want to take a look at the night sky. (Jack W. Weigel, Ann Arbor, MI Library Journal 2012-02-01)

Book reviews are rarely included in Mercury, but some books call out to be an exception to this rule. Sue French's Deep-Sky Wonders is one such volume.... The quality of the deep-sky images is outstanding -- a tribute to the various photographers as well as the book's printer. But it's the written word that will make or break a book like this, and Sue's writing is superb. ... If you're looking for a gift for someone who is an occasional stargazer, a serious observer, or anyone in between, you won't go wrong with Deep-Sky Wonders. This is a great introduction to deep-sky stargazing for novice and experienced amateur astronomers alike. (Paul Deans Mercury 2011-09-01)

French's crisp and conversational writing that makes the process of picking distant nebulae out of the heavens seem simple. Like a science-minded Martha Stewart, she spices up the conversation with tidbits of history (who discovered what and when) to keep readers motivated. Most important, she has a museum curator's eye for detail', helping readers to fully appreciate those tiny flecks of light once they find them. (Aaron Leitko Washington Post 2011-12-06)

[Sue French's] extensive knowledge of the subject is showcased in these 100 detailed tours, including color photographs, descriptions of objects such as stars and clusters and galaxies, historical and scientific background, color charts, and more. The detailed but very readable content is organized by seasons and then by month.... Obscure but interesting astronomical tidbits...are presented with instructions on how to locate the object.... Star maps, a list of additional resources, and an index round out this outstanding book, which is of use to students, both those new to astronomy as well as experienced observers.

(Denise A. Garofalo American Reference Books Annual 2012 2012-04-01) Highly recommended for anyone interested in deep sky astronomy--it makes for a beautiful and informative read. (Astronomy Now 2012-04-01)

French...is well regarded for having extensive knowledge on the subject [and] conveying this in a very readable and easy-to-understand way. (Nicky Gutridge Astronomy Now 2012-10-01)

[French] conveys her enthusiasm for viewing planetary nebulae, constellations, stars,

the Milky Way, and galaxies beyond our home (Book News 2012-12-01)

Sue French has been an avid deep-sky observer for 32 years and has worked as a planetarium educator for 18 years. She sets up her telescope in her backyard near Schenectady, New York, but travels regularly to enjoy the deep sky from different vantage points.

Back in the early 1940's, Walter Scott "Scotty" Houston began writing a column for *Sky & Telescope Magazine* called "Deep-Sky Wonders." He continued to write this column until his death. Then ten years lapsed before Sue French picked the column back up in July of 1999 and she continues to write the column for *Sky & Telescope* today. This wonderful hardbound book is a compilation of her monthly columns and I consider it a terrific source of information for the novice and experienced observer alike. The chapters are arranged by month making it easy for the user to pick out targets appropriate for the time of year. Each month contains eight or nine columns giving a wealth of targets to choose from. Now, many of these objects require a large aperture scope and/or very dark skies, however I have personally viewed a large number of these objects with my 3" and 4" refractors from my suburban home, as I have been following her column since she started it back in 1999. This is a rather massive book, over 300 pages, hard bound, with a glossy paper cover. There are many full color illustrations and images to grab the eye, making this a book that I love to simply browse through as much as I use it for resource material. The chapters are laid out basically the same as in the magazine columns. There is a target chart with magnitudes, angular sizes, and celestial coordinates; star charts; full color photos and illustrations; and of course the text giving the reader full access to these celestial gems in the sky. Sue's writing style is thorough, giving the reader not only information about the objects but instructions on how to find them as well. Still, I might recommend (especially for the novice observer) using a larger star atlas or computer software as an aid in finding the targets. The reader will find Sue's knowledge extensive, and she shares that knowledge in the text about the objects, the constellations they reside in, and often some history as well. I almost always learn something new from Sue, regardless of how commonly known the object is. Sue's choice of objects is highly varied, from galaxies to gas clouds to multiple stars. She uses targets from common lists, like the Messier Objects, but she also pulls from a number of perhaps lesser known lists, such as the Sharpless or Barnard catalogs. I consider this book to be a valuable addition to anyone's personal library, as it is so rare to get such a combination of knowledge, observing experience, teaching skills, and professional writing abilities all from one author. David Elosser Kernersville, NC

Very well, and carefully written articles, with beautiful illustrations. The articles are short enough to consume in a single sitting, and provide interesting sessions to look forward to, for the backyard astronomy hobbyist who already has some experience and knowledge of telescopes. I'm sort of an armchair backyard astronomer myself and actually enjoy reading about things that I may observe in the future more than going out into the cold or bug-infested night. Some people object that the book isn't spiral bound, to make it easier to use outdoors, but personally I think the book is too beautiful to risk water and grass stain damage outdoors. If I need a paper map to take outside (which I often do), I'll print that out using a program such as SkyMap on my computer. Just want to point out one typo that I ran across. On page 203, in the phrase "the components of Epsilon(1) widen close to 2.0" with the secondary..." the word "widen" should be removed so that it reads "the components of Epsilon(1) close to 2.0" with the secondary..." Anyway, great book and well worth the cost.

Ever since the demise of Gleanings for ATMs, the one feature I've consistently read over the past many years in Sky & Telescope has been Sue French's Deep-Sky Wonders. Being a deep-sky observer myself, I've always found her articles not only fun to read, but informative and usually with a surprise or two. With that in mind, this tome combines many years of her articles, by season and month into an absolutely wonderful collection of deep-sky objects. Profusely illustrated along with her extensive notes, it gives the reader an elaborate tour of the night sky. There's a little bit for everyone, from the binocular viewer up through those with larger back yard telescopes. Rather than just a collection of "tourist objects" as I like to call them, which are just the brighter Messiers and a few others that are the fodder of astronomy outreach programs, she delves into the night sky. She's not afraid to dig deeper, providing the reader and potential observer with some of the more obscure objects that you're not likely to find on any regular observing list. That's what makes this book unique. It covers plenty of essentials, but also throws in some challenges to keep even the most hardy observer on his or her toes. Each month includes a list of objects, an astro-photo or two, and a drawing or two. This book isn't overly-saturated with pretty pictures to dazzle the eye (which one can get from any number of books), it's mostly text, describing the objects and how to find them. Told in her breezy and poetic style, she guides you there in a way that makes it fun. She also gives you some perspective on whether you should or shouldn't try for said object with a given telescope. Her advice is sound and can save the amateur a lot of frustration. This is a gorgeous book, well constructed and something that would be fine in any observer's library. At the same time, it's not something I'd take into the field. Then again, at the cheap price of \$25, it would not be that much of

a stretch to see it in someone's eyepiece case. For me, I plan to one day create a Sue French observing list in my Megastar database. There are some objects I'm sure would give me a run for my money, even with my 16" LightBridge. Highly recommended.

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