



# International Dark Sky Week 2021



Tuesday, April 6, 2021

## Zooming in on the Sky

When you look up, especially on a dark night, the stars can be overwhelming! You can see even more through the simple aid of using binoculars. Here are some tips from the Longmont Astronomical Society:

*If you have a pair of binoculars, go outside and look up. It can be hard to hold the binoculars still enough to get a really good look, so try resting them on your elbows on a car hood, a fence, or anything that's solid. Look at part of the sky first with just your eyes, then at the same area with binoculars. You'll be amazed at how many more stars appear through the binoculars. What you are doing is essentially using a small telescope.*

One of the most amazing things to look at through binoculars is the Milky Way. The binoculars will allow you to see countless stars that make up the band of our galaxy. This month, the Milky Way is just above the horizon to the north and west.

### From the International Dark Sky Association:



Lighting that emits too much light or shines when and where it is not needed is wasteful.

Environmental responsibility requires energy efficiency and conservation:

- Installing quality outdoor lighting could cut energy use by 60-70 percent, save billions of dollars and cut carbon emissions.
- Outdoor lighting should be fully shielded and direct light down where it is needed, not into the sky.
- Fully shielded fixtures can provide the same level of illumination on the ground as unshielded ones, but with less energy and cost.
- Unnecessary indoor lighting—particularly in empty office buildings at night—should be turned off.

New lighting technologies can help conserve energy:

- LEDs and compact fluorescents (CFLs) can help reduce energy use and protect the environment, but only warm-white bulbs should be used. Learn more about LEDs and color temperature from our [LED Practical Guide](#).
- Dimmers, motion sensors, and timers can help to reduce average illumination levels and save even more energy.



### Dark Sky Tip:

Replace lights on the outside of your house with those that face down towards the ground. Light shining upwards doesn't do any good, wastes energy, causes problems for wildlife and people, and obliterates the sky. Click here for [lighting basics](#).

# International Dark Sky Week 2021



Milky Way over Walker Ranch Homestead—Mike Lohr

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

## Catch a Daytime Moon

We think of the Moon as Earth's night light, but we often see it during the daytime. Here's a note about that from the Longmont Astronomical Society:

*During International Dark Sky Week, the Moon is rising in the early morning—about 3:40 a.m. on April 5 and a little later each day until about 7 a.m. on April 12. Unless you are a night owl, if you want to see the Moon look during the day. A daytime Moon is much fainter than at night as there is much less contrast against the bright blue sky. But it's fun and surprising to see it then. Myriad sources provide rising and setting times for the Moon.*

It often surprises some people that we can see the Moon during the day. It's all about motion! The Moon goes around the Earth about once a month; meanwhile, the Earth is traveling around the Sun. Here's a nice [demonstration](#) from the National Science Teaching Association that explains how the Moon phases work. But why do we see it during the day? When you see a crescent Moon in the sky before dark, the Moon is still near the Sun with our view from Earth, and is waxing, or getting bigger. If you see a crescent moon in the morning light, it's a waning moon and has made its journey around the Earth, approaching the New Moon phase.

Here's a fun way to tell if the Moon is waxing or waning: *If the light is on the right (side of the Moon), it's getting bright; if it's on the left rim, it's getting dim.*

### From the International Dark Sky Association:

There is no clear scientific evidence that increased outdoor lighting deters crimes. It may make us feel safer, but has not been shown to make us safer. In fact, most property crime occurs in the light of day. And some crimes like vandalism and graffiti actually thrive on night lighting. A dark sky does not necessarily mean a dark ground. Smart lighting that directs light where it is needed creates a balance between safety and starlight.

Outdoor lighting is intended to enhance safety and security at night, but too much lighting can actually have the opposite effect. Visibility should always be the goal. Glare from bright, unshielded lights actually decreases safety because it shines into our eyes and constricts our pupils. This cannot only be blinding, it also makes it more difficult for our eyes to adjust to low-light conditions.

To learn more about lighting, crime, and safety, visit the [IDA webpage](#).



### Dark Sky Tip:

Concerned about street lights and other community lights? Here are [Boulder County's Lighting Requirements](#). To find out more about ordinances in your own community, click [here](#).



