

DR. HOWARD ESKILDSEN – Ocala, Florida

Howard Eskildsen has been interested in the stars, Sun and Moon since childhood. In grade school he learned the stars from star charts in a book and spent hours looking at the sky and watching for meteors. His first telescopic views came from his high school's sadly abused Dynascope, that he restored to working condition. Later he made a 6" reflector and placed it on a pipe fitting mount, per designs by Sam Brown, and used it for observing when time permitted.

In the years that followed, he attended medical school and raised a family, which left little time for stargazing. Finally, after a quarter of a century hiatus, he returned to regular observing in 2002 when his wife, Fairy, purchased him a Meade ETX-125. Since then he has observed the Sun and Moon regularly and anything else in the sky when time permits. He has sent nearly 2,000 observations to the Association of Lunar and Planetary Observers (ALPO) Solar Section and has written a piece on solar photography for their website. He also provided photos and material for Jamey L. Jenkin's recently released book "The Sun and How to Observe It".

Alachua Astronomy Club member Howard also observes the Moon and has submitted several hundred lunar photos to the ALPO Lunar Section. He has also written articles for The Strolling Astronomer, Selenology, and The Lunar Observer. In February of this year, he presented "Hooked on the Moon - A Lighthearted Look at the Joys of Lunar Observing" at the Winter Star Party. His photos have appeared on Spaceweather.com, APOD, Astronomy Magazine's "Photo of the Day" and other websites. Dr. Eskildsen will enlighten us about our closest star's peculiar behavior over the last number of years.