

DIRECTIONS TO BBAE EVENTS/SITES

Sky Watch - Northwest River Park, Chesapeake, VA

36°35'09.4"N 76°09'45.1"W

INFO

The event we call "Sky Watch" is a long standing club tradition. It is a public observing session held in the equestrian area of Northwest River Park in Chesapeake on a *Saturday* night near third quarter moon (when the moon rises at midnight) and starts an hour before sunset and runs about 4 hours after sunset.

In addition to being a public event, Sky Watch is an opportunity for members to get together under the stars, try out their equipment, and work on their observing programs. We also encourage the public to bring their telescopes to this event approximately an hour before it starts if they need help with the operation of it. We encourage all members to attend.

DIRECTIONS

Note: Northwest River Park is located at 1733 Indian Creek Road in Chesapeake. Watch for brown and white signs marking the route to the park. Sky Watch is conducted in the equestrian area of the park, which is about 1/2 mile west of the park's main entrance.

From Interstate 64, take Exit 291-B onto Route 168 south. Stay to the left.

Drive to exit 8B, Hillcrest Parkway East.

At the second light turn right onto Battlefield Blvd

Drive about 4 miles and turn left onto Indian Creek Road and drive 3.5 miles.

Turn right into the equestrian area. Follow the dirt road around and through the first wooden gate. At all times please stay on the dirt road unless parking. You may park along the left side of the road after you come through the entrance gates and beyond the first turn. Likewise you may also continue through the short fence and park to the right (the side the restroom are on) and walk over to the observing area. Please dim your lights as soon as possible if arriving after dark.

The site has clean portable toilets.

Saturday SUN Day - Elizabeth River Park, Chesapeake, VA

36°48'35.8"N 76°17'07.6"W

INFO

Is scheduled for one *Saturday* each month and is held at the Elizabeth River Park, 1400 Elizabeth River Way, Chesapeake. SUN Days start at 10:00 AM and runs through 1:00 PM.

Saturday SUN Day is our only regularly scheduled daytime time public observing session. Members set up specially filtered telescopes to allow safe viewing of our closest star, the SUN!

DIRECTIONS

The Elizabeth River Park (ERP) is located under the Eastern limb of the Jordan Bridge.

Get on I464 that runs between Norfolk and Chesapeake.

Take the Poindexter Street exit (4A/4B) and head toward the Jordan Bridge.

When you approach the last traffic light before getting on the bridge, get in the lane that is second from the right (the right lane takes you back onto I464) and turn RIGHT onto Truxton Street.

Take the first LEFT continuing on Truxton.

Turn LEFT onto Elizabeth River Way, then after a short distance turn left and cross the railroad tracks into the park.

We usually set up the Sun Scopes on the sidewalk near the kid's playground or right in front of the OSPREY picnic shelter.

The park has nice restrooms and a snack bar open every day (except Christmas?)

Boardwalk Astronomy - Virginia Beach Boardwalk, Virginia Beach VA

36°51'09.5"N 75°58'31.1"W

INFO

A summer event is our summertime "Boardwalk Astronomy" held in the Virginia Beach resort near the 24th street stage on the Board Walk from May through September and runs from about sunset until 11:00 PM.

Our member volunteers set up their telescopes and interact with the tourists and beach lovers on the boardwalk. The city of Virginia Beach donates to the club's scholarship fund in appreciation. This event is held on a *Tuesday*.

DIRECTIONS

Take I-264 EAST until it ends, continue straight and turn LEFT onto Atlantic Avenue.

The 24 th Street Stage Park is about 2 1/2 blocks down on the RIGHT.

If you are setting up a telescope for the event, the City provides about six to eight parking passes that allow BBAA participants to park CAREFULLY on the boardwalk itself. DO NOT DRIVE or PARK on the boardwalk without first obtaining a parking pass. There are about five or six parking spots directly behind the stage that may be useable for folks who don't get a boardwalk parking pass.

If you get a boardwalk parking pass it has been suggested to PARK on the Western edge of the boardwalk near the park (don't block the shower or entrances to the park), thus leaving the actual boardwalk open for tourists and the telescopes.

DON'T FORGET TO LOCK YOUR VEHICLE.

Night Watch - Chippokes Plantation State Park

37°08'15.4"N 76°43'11.0"W

INFO

A member's only session held monthly at Chippokes Plantation State Park near Surry, one *Saturday* a month near new moon and runs from Sunset to Sunrise.

Night Watch is an opportunity for members to get together under the stars, try out their equipment, and work on their observing programs.

DIRECTIONS

Take either I-64 or I-264 to I-664 towards Newport News.

Exit on Rt 17 toward the James River Bridge.

Turn west (left) onto Rt 258/Route 32. The sign indicates "to Rt 10"

Turn north (right) onto Route 10 (Route 10 West, Route 258 South) toward Smithfield and continue for approximately 15 miles. Follow the truck route to bypass the business areas along Rt 10.

Option 1: Turn right onto 634 (Highgate Road). Be sure to follow 634 (another right) then turn left onto Alliance Road. The park will be on your right.

Option 2: If you miss the first turn to 634, continue on 10 and turn right onto Alliance Road (Still route 634) There is a sign for Chippokes Plantation State Park. Park will be 4 miles on the left.

Enter the park (be sure to put the parking fee \$7 in the night box and display a "BBAA" sign on your dash) and continue past the admission booth, and the turn to the campground. Turn right at the sign for Cabins and Historic Area. Continue to the end of the road and set up in the mansion parking lot.

Rest rooms are available. Site is available only during scheduled events. Check with the park (757-294-3625) for permission to use the site independently, a camping fee would most likely apply.

Corn Watch - Cornland Park, 2908 Benefit Road, Chesapeake, VA

36°37'47.3"N 76°19'25.4"W

INFO

A member's only session held twice monthly at Cornland Park in Southern Chesapeake and runs from Sunset to Sunrise. The event is currently held on a *Friday* before Night Watch and the *Friday* after Night Watch near new moon. Like Night Watch.

Cornwatch is an opportunity for members to get together under the stars, try out their equipment, and work on their observing programs. The event runs from Sunset to Sunrise.

DIRECTIONS

Take I-64 EAST to exit 291B

NOTE: Exit I-64 splits into multiple lanes. The left two lanes head off to the VA - 168 Bypass and the two middle lanes become Dominion Blvd which is VA - 104 South and US-17S.

Follow the signs for the 168 Bypass.

Take exit 10A for Hanbury road.

Follow Hanbury to Johnston Road and turn LEFT onto Johnstown Road.

Turn RIGHT onto Benefit Road.

Follow Benefit Road until you pass a fire station on the right.

The Corn Land park entrance is immediately past the Fire Station on the RIGHT.

There is a big light in the Parking lot. The City of Chesapeake installed an ON/OFF switch just for OUR use. The key to the lock on the light pole's electrical box is located in the Fire Station. Knock on the Fire Station door and politely explain you are with the BBAA for an observing night in the park and you wish to get the key to turn off the parking lot light. The Key is labeled "Parking Lot" in the Fire Station key box. Once you have the key you unlock the electrical box and shut the switch off. LEAVE THE BOX UNLOCKED. Then return the key to the Fire Station, and ask them to please turn off their outside lights. WHEN THE LAST PERSON LEAVES, THEY SHOULD TURN THE PARKING LOT LIGHT BACK ON AND LOCK THE LOCK ON THE ELECTRICAL BOX. This procedure keeps us from waking the firemen during the wee hours of the morning when the last person leaves.

GARDEN STARS 6700 Azalea Garden Rd, Norfolk, VA 23518

36°54'06.7"N 76°12'00.5"W

INFO

The event we call "Garden Stars" is a joint venture with the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, our volunteers give talks and share their telescopes with small groups of patrons that pay an admission fee to the Gardens.

DIRECTIONS

Take I64 to Norview Avenue and follow the signs directing you to the Norfolk Airport.

At Azalea Gardens Road turn Left.

Turn Right into the Norfolk Botanical Gardens.

At the Gatekeeper, explain you are with the Back bay Amateur Astronomers and you are with Garden Stars.

Follow the road until you reach the large parking lot.

The presentation is usually in the Rose Room.

Night Hike - Northwest River Park, Chesapeake, VA

36°35'04.3"N 76°09'10.0"W

INFO

Night Hike is an occasional outreach event held at the North West River Park in Chesapeake usually on a Friday evening. Members of the park staff provide a presentation and then hike through the park down to the river terminal where they spend time with BBAA volunteers who provide a tour of the night sky and its wonders.

BBAA Volunteers meet at the main Rangers Office and are then escorted to the River Terminal area to set up. Usually after the hikers depart the BBAA volunteers are allowed to stay until after midnight enjoying the darker skies.

DIRECTIONS

From the park's main entrance follow the dirt road behind the park office (note the sign says "Do Not Enter" ... the road is not open to the public). It is about 1 mile to the Terminal. Stay to the left on the way in and to the right on the way out. The "South terminal" is the location for the "Night Hike" observing session. Night Hike is a program for campers at the park and a fee applies. BBAA members participating in the session should meet at the park office, just inside the park's main entrance at 1733 Indian Creek Road. Parking at the south terminal is very limited, so transportation to the site must be coordinated. There are rest rooms available at the site.

Fan Mountain Observatory

37°52'42.6"N 78°41'33.9"W

INFO

Fan Mountain Observatory is the home of the Rapid Response Robotic Telescope (RRRT) which is joint venture between Norfolk State University, University of Virginia and the BBAA. Currently the RRRT is in limited operation and is available for remote imaging sessions. Contact Larry.w.Lawrence@Nasa.gov for more information and access to the RRRT.

DIRECTIONS

Is approximately 190 miles from Virginia Beach.

Take I-64W toward Charlottesville.

Use I-295 around Richmond; take exit 200 "I-295 / US-60 / Washington / Rocky Mt NC" for .5 miles then left onto ramp for I-295 towards "I-295 / Washington" for 23.9 miles and return to I-64 (exit 53A) toward Charlottesville for another 59.8 miles.

At exit 118A, take ramp right onto US-29 (Monacan Trail Road) toward "US 29 / Lynchburg" for 14.3 miles. Look for a very small sign "Fan Mt." at route 805. Turn left onto the narrow dirt road. (Fan Mountain Lane / Lackey Road) Watch for the train at the RR Crossing. It's about 3 miles to the observatory.

East Coast Star Party - KOA Campground, Coinjock, NC

36°25'14.0"N 75°55'31.0"W

INFO

The East Coast Star Party was hosted by Kent Blackwell and has run several decades, however the campground was purchased in 2018 by KOA Resort Campgrounds and underwent significant upgrades and refurbishment. Unfortunately Mr. Blackwell has yet been unable to reach terms with KOA for continuing the ECSP tradition.

This site is maintained here as it is still a VERY GOOD and VERY DARK observing location, however at this time one must make arrangements to camp with:

Outer Banks West / Currituck Sound KOA
1631 Waterlily Rd, Coinjock, NC 27923
Phone: (252) 453-2732

DIRECTIONS

Note: Battlefield Blvd is exit 290 B off of I-64. The 168 bypass is a toll road that will merge with Battlefield Blvd just before the N.C. border.

Take Route 168, (Battlefield Blvd) south continuing on Rt 158 south to Coinjock North Carolina. Cross the high bridge over the intercoastal (Palmer Knapp Bridge). On the south side of the bridge is a left turn lane and a sign for "camping". Turn left (Waterlily exit) and follow signs to Hampton Lodge Campground all the way at the end of this road. (About 10 miles). Immediately after passing through the gate, observe a crop of cedar trees on the left, the observing area is within these trees.

OBSERVE THE 10 MPH SPEED LIMIT.

This site is a commercial campground and camping fees apply at all times. Rest rooms and showers are available near the camp store. Register at the camp store.

Pettigrew State Park

35°47'22.8"N 76°24'41.1"W

INFO

Pettigrew is a very dark and a bit more remote site. Setup is usually limited to the pier or parking lot. Charles A. describes the site: "There are 13 campsites in the park with picnic tables and iron fire grates. They are in the woods mostly but nearby is an open area about twice the size of the open area in the cedars at Hampton Lodge. However, the amount of sky is less because of tall trees with the west and south mostly affected. Still it is a sheltered area with plenty of sky to work with. The nice thing about this spot is that I can generally leave things set up and go to bed when I'm ready. This spot is the drain field for the shower house and cannot be driven on. On rare, calm conditions I opt to observe on the boat ramp with virtually unlimited horizon. I will ask the ranger on duty to turn out the one light there, which is intended for sport fisherman who stay out past dark. I've never had a problem with this except when the ranger on duty flipped the wrong switch and left without checking. If there is any air movement in winter the wind chill and humidity factor are too much for me at this site and I don't set up there. The boat ramp is about forty feet diameter of asphalt and can accommodate about 3-4 vehicles with scopes, and about 10 scopes if vehicles are parked nearby. A special use permit may in future be required for a large number at the boat ramp only because it wasn't intended for this use." "After observing at the boat ramp you have to pack up and drive the short distance back to camp. Nightly rates are \$12.00 and this includes hot showers. December 1st the rate goes to \$6.00 and no showers are available. Fall and winter are generally the times I go because of fewer campers and it's really clear and dark down there in summer."

DIRECTIONS

Pettigrew is located in Washington county NC, about twenty-two miles S.E. of the city of Edenton. It is the favorite site of BBAA member Charles Allewelt.

Take US 17 S. bypass around Elizabeth City and continue past the town of Hertford.

Turn left on Rt. 37 about six miles south of Hertford. Rt 37 becomes Rt. 32 after about 5 miles. You will cross the Albemarle Sound on a beautiful LIGHT-FREE bridge. About a mile after the bridge turn left onto US 64. Exit 64 at the town of Creswell and follow the brown signs to Pettigrew State Park. You'll be on 8th street. Continue on and watch for another brown sign directing you to turn left

onto Main Street (1142). Go about two miles to another brown park sign and turn right on Thirty Foot Canal Rd (1160). Near the end of road (about 4.5 miles) turn left and you will see the park office.

Contact Sid Shearin via email pettigrew_sp@coastalnet.com

Clover Watch - Southhampton County Fairgrounds, Franklin VA

40°02'08.1"N 83°09'00.3"W

INFO

Clover Watch used to be a joint venture with Franklin Fairground 4-H and the BBAA. It has not been active for over a decade.

DIRECTIONS

From I-64 or I-264, take US 58/460 West. Use the Rt 58 Bypass around Old Suffolk. At Holland, bare left and stay on Rt 58 Bypass until you come to the SR 671 exit, also listed as Paul D. Camp Community College. Turn left and go approximately one half mile. Turn right on SR 688 (follow signs to "Fairgrounds"). At the crossroad, be sure to stay on 688. The fairgrounds will be on the left about one half mile from the crossroads. Look for the Fairground sign.