ASTRONOMY BASICS

For background information regarding many aspects of astronomy, Canada's National Research Council (NRC) Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics (NRC-HIA) offers Astronomy Basics at http://hia-iha.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/public/astr_e.html.

Astronomy Websites of Interest

- Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS) at http://www.sdss.org/background/
- SKY-MAP.ORG at http://sky-map.org/
- NASA's SkyView at http://skyview.gsfc.nasa.gov/
- NASA satellite sighting opportunities data at http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/realdata/sightings/
- Explore the Night Sky with Canada's National Research Council at http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/education/astronomy/constellations/html.html

HINTS FROM THE LESSON EO C340.10 IDENTIFY ONLINE STARGAZING PROGRAMS

In this lesson SKY-MAP.ORG found galaxy NGC 4030 in constellation Virgo.

NGC 4030 is at celestial coordinates:

- Right ascension: 12 hours 00 minutes 23.40 seconds
- Declination: -01°06'03.0"

When online, this photographic plate can be found by entering the name NGC 4030 into the "Find Object" text box or by entering the coordinates as right ascension followed by a comma and then declination.

This celestial coordinate data is entered into the "Find Object" text box as one data field: 12 00 23.40, -01 06 03.0.

If coordinates are entered, however, considerable magnification must be applied to see NGC 4030. At this scale, it is magnitude 0 in the real sky, appearing as a bright star.

Star brightness is called magnitude. The lower the magnitude, the brighter the object. The brightest star visible in the night sky is Sirius, classified as magnitude −1.

Sirius, the brightest star, is found at coordinates 06 45 08.90, -16 42 58.0 in Normal Mode.

SDSS does not yet cover this part of the sky, but many astro photos of Sirius can be located through Sirius' Basic Information Window (BIW) by clicking on Sirius when its BIW is open.

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