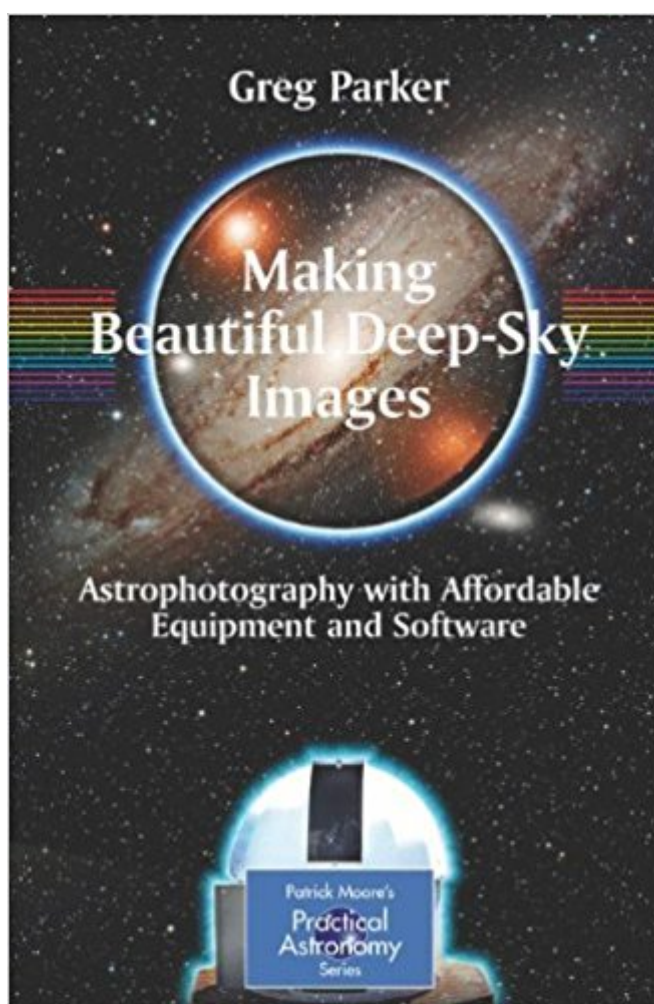


The book was found

Making Beautiful Deep-Sky Images: Astrophotography With Affordable Equipment And Software (The Patrick Moore Practical Astronomy Series)





Synopsis

This book is based around the author's beautiful and sometimes awe-inspiring color images and mosaics of deep-sky objects. The book describes how similar "Hubble class" images can be created by amateur astronomers in their back garden using commercially available telescopes and CCD cameras. Subsequent processing and image enhancement in the "electronic darkroom" is covered in detail as well. A range of telescopes and equipment is considered, from the author's 11-inch with Hyperstar camera, down to more affordable instruments. Appendices provide links to free software not available from a single source and are themselves an invaluable resource.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From the reviews: "This is not a guide to deep sky imaging in general, but more a journey of one man's embarkation into this exciting topic. What I found most impressive was that the topics are kept simple and to the point. I believe this book has a wealth of information for anybody who wishes to pursue astrophotography as a hobby. Would I recommend it? Well the simple answer is yes, there is a lot of inspiration to be gained and put into practice." (Ed Sampson, Astronomy Now, June, 2008) "Parker's book is comprised of fourteen chapters spanning 155 pages and two appendices which make up a further six pages. provides a list of 14 books which give a broad perspective on astronomy and can open doors to the newcomer

with general information on astronomy as well as potential targets. "The book provides a good introduction to astrophotography that would be ideally suited to someone contemplating this addictive aspect of amateur astronomy." (Anthony Ayiomamitis, The Observatory, Vol. 128 (1205), August, 2008)

Amateur astronomers, using commercially available equipment, have taken some beautiful and awe-inspiring color photographs of deep-sky objects. But how? Professor Greg Parker's astronomical photographs are widely known for their excellence, and a selection of them has recently been shown as a public exhibition in the UK. In *Making Beautiful Deep-Sky Images*, he provides a detailed account of how spectacular deep-sky images can be taken by amateur astronomers using CCD cameras, and how they can subsequently be processed and enhanced in the "electronic darkroom" for maximum beauty and impact. You don't even have to own a big telescope. A range of telescopes and equipment is considered in detail, from Greg's 11-inch SCT down to lower-cost instruments. Quite simply, this is a "how to do it" book for people who want to make stunning astronomical pictures.

This book meanders around, often repetitively without coming to grips with any real detail. I also found the author's writing style quite irritating. He loves exclamation marks! Often two or three stacked together!! Even when he makes the most bland statements!!! Such as "thank you Noel!!!"

The author clearly does not understand the relationship between noise and the number of subexposures. On page 33 he states (correctly) that the noise goes down as "something like" the square root of the number of subs. In other words 100 subs of equal exposure stacked together will have one tenth of the noise of one sub. However this is not an absolute: the length of the exposure is also important. The author states that a disadvantage of longer exposures is that you will have fewer of them and hence more noise than lots of shorter exposures. This is nonsense. Twenty exposures of 5 minutes will have a lot less noise than 100 exposures of 1 minute. Shot noise in both will be approximately the same, since the total exposure is the same (100 minutes). However, read noise for the 100 exposures will be greater, since there are 100 reads as opposed to 20. One would expect the total noise in the stack of 100 to be $\sqrt{5}$ times more than in the stack of 20. The subject of noise is well discussed in the book "Astronomical Image Processing" by Berry and Burnell.

The author is also a little confused about "fast" and "slow" telescopes. On Page 21 he states that "Light grabbing power is all about aperture.." On Page 25, after discussing the fact that a large aperture refractor probably needs a permanent setup, he goes on to state that "Of course you can

use smaller aperture refractors for imaging, but you will by necessity be using a 'slow' system..." To me this suggests that he is implying that speed is a function of aperture. He then contradicts this on page 35 where he states that "...the Hubble space telescope with a 2-metre diameter mirror..is very much slower than my Sky 90 3.5" refractor..." The problem is that when astroimaging, the whole system must be considered. It makes no sense to talk of a "fast" telescope in isolation. It does make sense to say that one telescope/camera combination is faster than another telescope/camera combination. For instance an f10 telescope matched with a camera whose pixel size delivers 2 arc sec per pixel will be 4 x faster than an f5 telescope of the same aperture matched with a camera whose pixel size delivers 1 arc sec per pixel, because in the second case, each pixel receives only a quarter of the light than in the first case. This is why we can speed up exposures by binning. Binning 2 x 2 effectively halves the focal ratio of a telescope. You get the same image scale, speed and resolution that you would get from a telescope of half the focal ratio and the same aperture. Of course, there is no such thing as a free lunch. You also get half the field of view, but since most DSOs occupy only the central field, this is often not important. The book is really about "My trials and errors in astroimaging". While some personal reflections are often of interest, it is my opinion that the author overdoes the personal reflections aspect. The pictures in Chapter 11 are the best part of the book, but in themselves do not make the purchase of the book worthwhile. Chapter 12 ("Differentiating your work") also contains some good advice. All in all, I cannot recommend purchasing this book.

I received it early. Its a good book, I recommend it for beginners, the author introduces very good concepts on equipment utilization.

Excellent reference for astrophotographers young and old.

Excellent product, great price and outstanding shipping. Highly recommended.

Lots of good info.

A great deal for the price. A wealth of information for the amateur on a budget. I would recommend this book. Tom

This book does contain some very beautiful DSO images, but other than that it is a unfortunate

disappointment to me. Not only because the 'Affordable' here in this book seems not too affordable - at least to me I'd consider a Stellarvue 80ED is much more affordable than Tak Sky90. Some impression I got from this book was unless you have a Tak 90 otherwise you won't get DSO pictures even close to the author had produced. Maybe you found this book is good for you, but I did not. Sorry.

I was all set on purchasing a CCD camera for my Celestron C14. After much research I was going to go with the Hyper-Star camera. After reading this book I saw that this choice would be fraught with technical problems more suited to a professional or highly neurotic astro-photographer. Just contemplating trying to focus the Hyper Star camera with a tolerance of microns made my choice plain. I wasn't going to spend thousands on a camera only useable on one telescope. This book more than paid for itself. As far as the other data in the book, I glossed over the author's pet products. I also appreciated the fine photos even being in such a small format book.

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