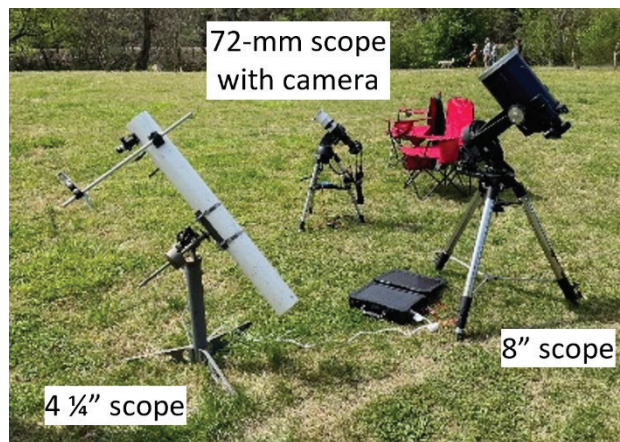


WHAT'S UP?

Did you see it? Some of it? Of course, I'm talking about the solar eclipse that occurred on April 8th. Carolyn and I traveled to Hardy, Arkansas in the foothills of the Ozarks and viewed the eclipse from Loberg Park on the banks of the Sharp River with about 1,000 other enthusiasts. We talked with people from all over the country and shared views of the eclipse through my solar-filtered 8" telescope and projected onto screen attached to my 4 1/4" telescope. Our friend, Pat, took pictures of the eclipse with a camera attached to a 72-mm refractor telescope. Close to the centerline of the path of the eclipse, we stood for 4 minutes



Our setup in Loberg Park

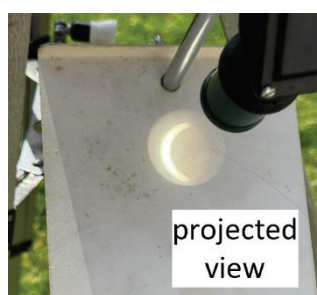
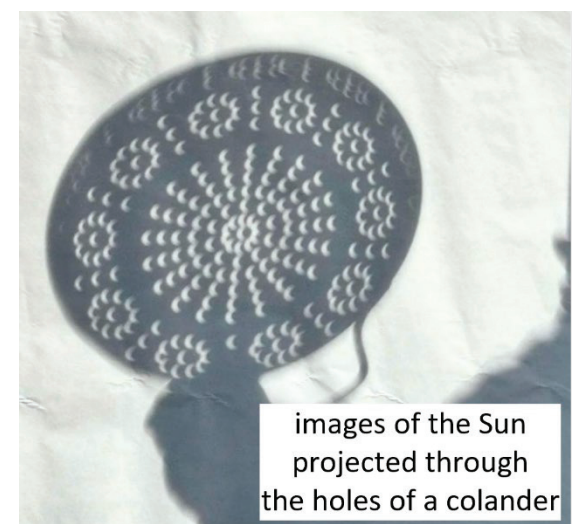
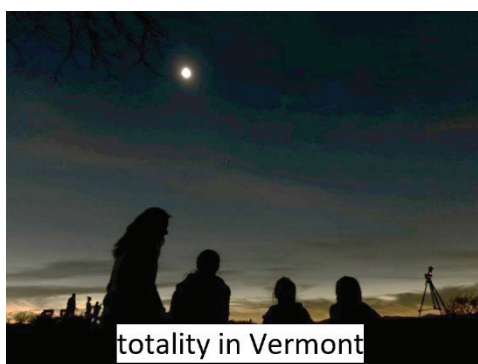
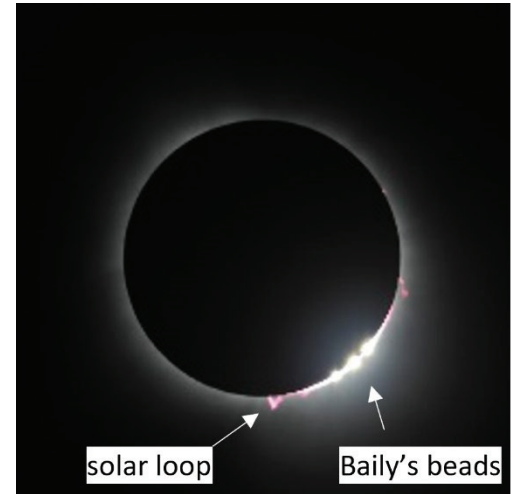
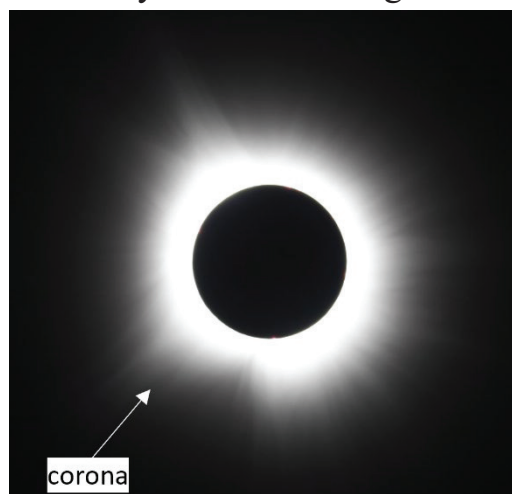
and 12 seconds in the shadow of the Moon. It was a fabulous experience! Here are some pictures from our day. Pat's pictures show the solar corona in all its glory. It's always there, but we can only see it when the Sun's disk is covered up during a total eclipse. Those filaments of glowing gas are close to 1 million miles long. Just before and after totality, while the Sun's disk is still pretty much entirely covered, sunlight peeks through to us between the lunar mountains at the edged of the Moon. These points of light are know as Baily's beads. Changes in the Sun's



projected view

magnetic field allows streamers of gas to shoot up from the bulk of the Sun. Sometimes, these streams also fall back into the Sun, forming a loop. The large loop at the bottom of the disk is about the size of ten Earths.

In my last article, I asked you to send me any pictures of your eclipse viewing experience and you did just that. A big "Thank You" to John, Sarah, Dave, Vicki, and Honey for the pictures from Vermont and right here in Plympton!



Planet Roundup: We're now 18 days past the solar eclipse, which is when the last New Moon occurred. With two and a half weeks having gone by, the next major phase of the Moon we will come to is the Third Quarter. It occurs on May 1st. The next New Moon is on May 7th, the 1Q Moon is on the 15th, the day of Plympton's Annual Town Meeting (a shameless plug, I know), and the Full Moon is on the 23rd. Where did all the planets go? When darkness falls these days, around 8:00 p.m., there are no planets in our sky. Jupiter and Uranus have just set with the Sun. It's not until dawn begins to break, around 4:00 a.m., that Saturn, Mars, and Neptune pop up in the east. A half of an hour later, Mercury rises and Venus rises just before the Sun at 5:00 a.m.

You can email me at astroblog@comcast.net with any questions and comments. This is *What's Up?* installment #84.

Barry