



HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE

NEWS RELEASE

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AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS TO HAVE OBSERVING TIME ON HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE

NASA and the Space Telescope Science Institute (Baltimore, Maryland) today announced plans for American amateur astronomers to participate in many aspects of the Hubble Space Telescope project.

Amateur astronomers will have opportunities:

- (1) To make observations with the Hubble Space Telescope. A few hours of observing time is being reserved for amateur astronomers by Dr. Riccardo Giacconi, Director of the Space Telescope Science Institute, from Director's Discretionary Time, which is set aside for astronomical targets of opportunity.
- (2) To use the Space Telescope data and picture archives.
- (3) To conduct cooperative observing projects in which amateur astronomers would use their telescopes to examine special celestial objects in concert with Space Telescope observations.

NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, scheduled for launch by Space Shuttle when it returns to service, will be by far the largest astronomical telescope ever placed in space. With its 94 1/2-inch mirror unobstructed by the Earth's atmosphere, Space Telescope should be able to detect celestial objects 50 times fainter and see them with 10 times more clarity than any ground-based telescope. Space Telescope will be deployed in Earth orbit 368 miles high and operate as a remotely controlled international observatory.

Amateur astronomers have made significant contributions to astronomy since the telescope was invented nearly four centuries ago. There are more than 300,000 amateur astronomers in the United States.

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