

Astronomy in the Two Dales

August

We always think of space being empty , well , at the moment we have space probes whizzing their way towards comets and planets , as well as orbiting our little earth . Asteroids , comets and rocks the size of cities , plow their own path through the infinite blackness , all this going on as I sit here typing and eating a scotch egg . More of that later.

This month , the new moon arrives on the 2nd , which is good news for observers of meteor showers as the Perseid meteor shower occurs on the night of the 11th and morning of the 12th . Look in an easterly direction after midnight , for the best and brightest meteors.

The full moon occurs on the 18th and has some association with fishing , as large fish , such as the sturgeon , are more easily caught during this time. That does not bode well for the leader of the SNP!

Towards the end of the month , we have a very good opportunity for planetary observation , as Venus and Jupiter will conjunct each other , getting ever closer until on the 27th they will be visible as one bright object , observable in the west after sunset. At the same time , in the southern sky , we have Saturn and Mars in close proximity to each other and the star Antares . All of these planets will set between 8.30pm and 11pm , so the best views would be from a high location with a clear view of the southern and western skies.

And now back to my scotch egg.

Recently , a group of scientists decided to create a 3D model of the universe , in an attempt to discover how two unknown forms of matter and energy react with each other. They took known data from 80,000 galaxies and inputted all this information into a computer , with the intention of simulating the process of the creation of the universe in such a way that it would provide greater understanding of how and why our universe is how it is. One of the results were several images which match what we see in our sky , however these images , being generated in three dimensions allowed for greater investigation of what we now know to be our universe.

There is one startling conclusion , the map of the universe bears an amazing resemblance to the neural pathways and synapses in the human brain . SO..... does the universe think ? Are we and all the other observable objects just the thoughts of a giant brain ?

These are questions beyond me , and my scotch egg for that matter , so I will leave you with a quote from William Melvin Hicks , a comedian and philosopher (b 1961 d 1994)

“ all matter is merely energy condensed to a slow vibration , that we are all one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively , there is no such thing as death , life is only a dream , and we are the imagination of ourselves. Here`s Tom with the weather.”

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