

# 2002



**NEXT MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017**  
**September meeting has had to be cancelled**  
**THE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF HARINGEY**  
**VOLUME 45 : ISSUE 11-12 : September-October 2017**  
**[www.ashastro.co.uk](http://www.ashastro.co.uk)**

# SOCIETY NEWS

## MEETING VENUE

**Music and Drama Block, Ashmole School, Southgate, London N14 5RJ.**

The day for meetings is usually the third Thursday of each month. The exceptions are August, when we do not hold a meeting, and this now currently applies to the July and December meetings, though that may alter in the future.

However, in case of changes it is always advisable to double-check the dates below.

**Doors open - 7.30pm : Main speaker - 8.00pm : Finish - 10.00pm sharp!**

For more on this, and general meeting information, also check the website page:  
[www.ashastro.co.uk](http://www.ashastro.co.uk). Last minute changes will be on the Facebook page



This is a combined September and October issue, as the meetings are very close together

## OBSERVING EVENINGS

Regarding any changes to Observing Evening meetings, this is a continuing message to let Observing Officers : Jim Webb, Alister Innes or Kyri Voskou know your mobile phone number. Last minute changes will be notified via text messaging. The Facebook page will also be used, but we realise not all have (or want!) Facebook access, so it will be secondary to texting. And if you do not have a computer or cell phone, you can be phoned on your landline.

### 2017

**September 21<sup>st</sup>: Cancelled, or rather postponed, until the October meeting**

**October 5<sup>th</sup> : "Darkness Visible" - postponed from September - plus the AGM**

October 15<sup>th</sup> : Observing Evening – details to be announced

November 16<sup>th</sup> : TBA

December : no meeting this month

### 2018

January 18<sup>th</sup> : Dr Simon Drake & Dr Andrew Beard : The Skye Meteorite

This date *may* move to the day before, ie Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>, due to speakers' availability

#### **COVER**

***Totality- as seen from Tennessee***

***- with viewers (actually in Nebraska, but it's the same view!)***

*Photos : Eclipse - Apostolos Filis  
Viewers - Mat Irvine*



## SOCIETY NEWS

For up-to-date information, we are using that 'necessary evil' - Facebook. Go to :

[www.facebook.com/groups/ASHastro/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ASHastro/)

However although originally you could view 'Public' Facebook pages (which ASHastro is), and read posts, without being a member, it now seems you have to be a member of FB to even read them. So, sorry, you'll have to join - *BUT* this does not mean you need to give away information you don't want to give. Although Facebook doesn't go out of its way to tell you, any individual's home page can be blank (as your Editor's is) it does not have to have any information. Even your birth date need not be correct.

However, once a member, if you want to 'interact' - ie post messages – on the ASH Group you will need to ask to join, and you will get 'signed up' by your Chairman or Editor.

The more the merrier!



## MEETING ROOM

We currently meet at Ashmole School, Cecil Road, Southgate N14 5RJ, on the first floor of the Music and Drama Block. This is the two-storey building, (left) with the entrance marked with the red arrow.

We hope the first floor will be suitable for all, as there isn't a convenient lift. If anyone feels they

will have difficulty, please let the Chairman know. Contact details on the back page.

For historical reference the X in the photo was our original meeting room, the original Music Studio. This is now demolished, and the site now has a new building.

## MEETING REVIEW

### 21<sup>st</sup> September : :



Unfortunately we have had to cancel this meeting as, due to an untimely coincidence of work schedules and illness, there is no-one to run the meeting.

The planned round-up on the Solar Eclipse will now take place at the October meeting, which is only two weeks later, which will also be the AGM.

Any nominations for the Committee posts (see back page), will be most welcome. Nominations will be taken from the floor on the day, though remember they need to be proposed and seconded by a full ASH member.

If you can email any proposals earlier, that would help.  
Send to <info@ashastro.co.uk>

# THE ECLIPSE

*A round-up by two who saw it 'live'*

**Mitchell Sandler**



It was always my intention to think big when it came to the 2017 eclipse. I didn't quite realise what I had let myself in for, but somehow all the pieces somehow came together for an Odyssey that took me from Niagara Falls to the Rocky Mountains, encompassing all sorts of extraordinary landscapes in between.



The wonders began in Toronto with a trip to Niagara Falls (left) - one of those places that you can't really appreciate the full majesty of until you've actually been there. If you enjoy getting wet this is a place you shouldn't miss. One site ticked off the bucket list and, after scratching the surface of the city itself, it was off to Chicago to join my fellow tourists.

Aside from Chicago itself - a city that deserves a return visit (*agreed, my favourite US City - Ed*) we had the opportunity to visit Fermilab. We got a VIP tour of the premises including a basement that looked exactly like you'd expect a 1970s scientific facility to look like.

The next stop was the University of Chicago's Yerkes Observatory, (which, confusingly, is in the neighbouring state of Wisconsin). Named after the man who built a large part of the London Underground the Observatory includes the world's largest refracting telescope with a lens diameter of 100 cm (right). The observatory floor can be raised or lowered in order for the operator to reach the telescope.



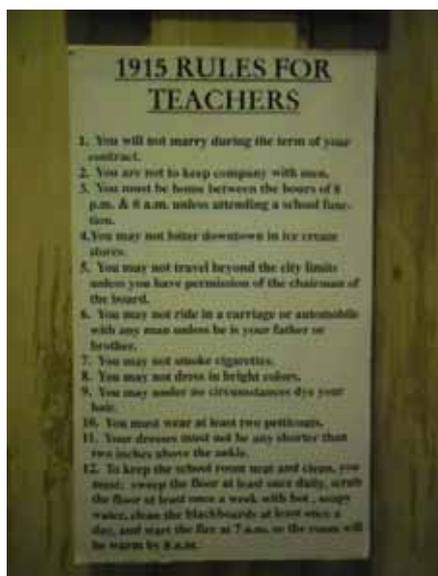
After a trip across the corn fields of southern Minnesota we reached South Dakota where the locals rolled out the welcome mat (heading). Here we left the prairies behind and reached the wonders of the North Western US. This state and Wyoming contained a couple more from the bucket list - Mount Rushmore and the Devil's Tower, as featured in the movie, 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind' .



Two of the National Parks stood out for me - Badlands and Yellowstone. Both contain seemingly endless landscapes of extraordinary formations and colours (left) as well as a massive geyser field featuring Old Faithful itself, not to mention the wildlife (right).



Having reached what was once called the Wild West we had the opportunity to visit those small towns only those people fascinated by that period of history ever go to. But these small towns - such as Sundance, Wyoming - all have their little quirky museums with the emphasis on everyday life (below) rather than what the Sundance Kid actually got up to. (Apparently he was a lousy outlaw who achieved very little before he met Butch Cassidy.)



As our destination, and eclipse day, approached the excitement began to mount. Finally, after 2500 miles or so, we reached Jackson, Wyoming where we had a ranch to ourselves. No photos – but suffice to say that for two minutes twenty seconds time stood still and we saw an eclipse where pretty much everything you wanted to happen, happened. If anything it was too perfect - I always like a few clouds in the sky, as long as their nowhere near the Sun, they add to the experience. As it was the location gave us a mountain range which added to the drama as the sunlight faded and lit up the horizon.

After the eclipse I took the opportunity to drive out to Idaho to visit the Craters of the Moon National Park which was used as a training ground by several of the Apollo astronauts and then doubled back to the Dinosaur Monument on the Colorado/Utah border - anyone who likes dinosaur fossils should head for here. (There's also a town called Dinosaur nearby where all the streets are named after dinosaurs, which is rather bizarre when they appear on the SatNav). So that was the 2017 eclipse, the next two are both in South America so I'm saving up for Argentina 2020.

## Mat Irvine

As with Mitchell's report, I seemed also have let myself in for a 'Grand Tour', incorporating the Eclipse in the middle.

The 'Tour' started in New York City, visiting an old friend, and which also had a very unusual encounter at an exhibition off Times Square, which I will likely go into with more detail at the October Meeting. Then to South Carolina, to meet up with my other half's family and friends, (seeming most of the State came in for the occasion...?) It was a week before the eclipse itself, so an interesting time to look at the Sun and Moon positions. (Left, the Moon and Venus on 16<sup>th</sup>)



Then to Chicago (no, I didn't see Mitchell), to pick up friends who had not seen a Total Solar Eclipse 'for real'. Having done the Turkey eclipse in 2006, I felt like a seasoned hand... We decided to view from Nebraska, as I hadn't been to that State before and it meant I could legitimately add another state magnet to the board of the whole of the USA! Nebraska, more precisely the small town of Minden, is also home to the Harold Warp Pioneer Village, which - rather like Mitchell's 'Wild West townships' - is a microcosm of what the US was like 'in the good (bad?) old days'. That visit was the day before the eclipse, so on that morning, after a hearty American breakfast, we headed for a town on the mid-eclipse line - Geneva. We actually stopped just short, in a lay-by, that was filling with other interested parties, and set up my

projection telescope and the usual array of cameras. The weather forecast however was being frustrating. So far it had run : Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> - clear, Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> - clear, - Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> clear, - Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> ... - well you get the idea. Monday 21<sup>st</sup> though - overcast! And

during the setting up it was indeed overcast, though by the time of first encounter, the skies miraculously cleared. But - at second encounter - ie



the start of the eclipse proper, thin wisps of cloud started to cover the Sun. It was all still visible, but somewhat effected my shots. (Above : left - totality, right - the Diamond Ring Effect.)

After that it was to start back into Illinois, but via the SAC – Strategic Air Command museum, located between Omaha and, capitol of Nebraska, Lincoln. This is primarily aircraft, including an RAF Avro Vulcan, but had some interesting space subjects, including one of the X-38 test vehicles, intended as a Crew Return Vehicle for the International Space Station. More at the October Meet.

Next Total Eclipse over the US is 2024. We will see...

## [SPACE NEWS - compiled by Kyri Voskou](#)

### WESTERN HEMISPHERE RECORDS HOTTEST EVER MONTH

Death Valley has just experienced the hottest month ever recorded in the western hemisphere. July saw average temperatures reach 107.4 °F, upping the previous 1917 high by 0.2°F.

California's famous desert valley is one of the hottest places on Earth and holds the record for the highest temperature ever recorded on the planet when Furnace Creek reached 134 °F in July 1913. The highest single temperature recorded this time around was 127 °F on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Although temperatures during July 2017 didn't reach the 1913 high, the average over the entire month was enough to break the long-standing average record. Daytime temperatures were around 120 °F with night temperatures dropping to a comparatively chilly 95 °F.



### SOON TO BE ANNOUNCED – NASA PLANETARY PROTECTION OFFICER

Unless you've already applied, you're too late – applications for Planetary Protection Officer closed on August 14<sup>th</sup>.

There are two positions up for grabs with a yearly salary of between \$124,000 and \$187,000 a year and a contract for between three and five years. The job will entail visiting space centres around the globe and ensuring that planned missions don't contaminate space, or inadvertently bring anything nasty back home.

As quoted by the Office of Planetary Protection -

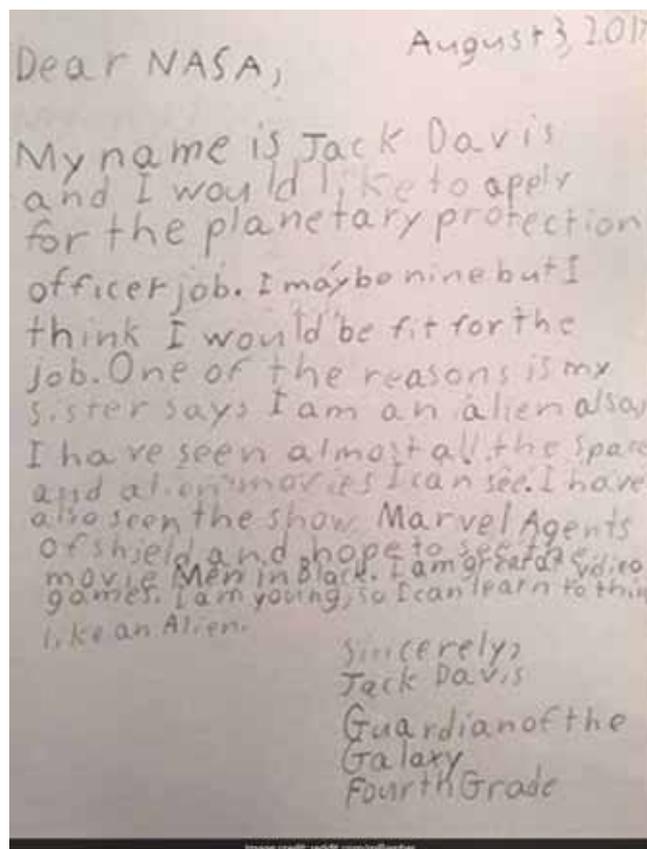
*"The mission (of the OPP) is to promote the responsible exploration of the solar system by implementing and developing efforts that protect the science, explored environments, and Earth. The objectives of planetary protection are several-fold and include:*

- Preserving our ability to study other worlds as they exist in their natural states;
- Avoiding the biological contamination of explored environments that may obscure our ability to find life elsewhere – if it exists; and
- To ensure that we take prudent precautions to protect Earth's biosphere in case life does exist elsewhere."

We've already seen this in action recently when the decision was made to crash the Cassini spacecraft into Saturn rather than risk it contaminating a moon with organic matter carried by the probe all the way from Earth.

The successful candidate will have "broad engineering expertise," and should be an expert in planetary protection, as well as display excellent diplomacy skills.

Right - one of the more ambitious applications



## ONE GIANT THEFT FROM MUSEUM-KIND

A solid gold five-inch replica of the Apollo 11 lunar module has been stolen from the Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Neil Armstrong's home town Wapakoneta, Ohio.

Each of the three Apollo 11 astronauts was given one of the precious models by French newspaper Le Figaro shortly after their historic 1969 moon landing.



The piece, made from 18 karat gold and cast by Cartier, is now being hunted by the FBI.

The museum reopened after a short closure saying "For every day that an item is missing, we are all robbed of an opportunity to enjoy it and our history." The police said the model was priceless but will still be difficult to sell on the black market in its original state. It's more likely to be melted down and sold as gold – especially considering the fact that the robbers ignored other valuable exhibits including a moon rock worth millions of dollars.

## END OF AN ERA

And mention of Cassini, above, brings the fact that one of the most successful space probes ever ended its mission on 15<sup>th</sup> September, when it was purposely directed to burn up in the atmosphere of Saturn. More at the October meet.



**QUESTION TIME...** *A slight change in format this month...*

## ALPHA-QUIZ

The answers begin with consecutive letters of the alphabet.

Passing of one astronomical body in front of another \_\_\_\_\_

Containing iron \_\_\_\_\_

Attraction by mass \_\_\_\_\_

Vertical take-off aircraft, named after a bird \_\_\_\_\_

A colour of the rainbow \_\_\_\_\_

Colonel Glenn, first American to orbit the Earth \_\_\_\_\_

Type of energy due to motion \_\_\_\_\_

Molten rock \_\_\_\_\_

# THE NIGHT SKY

## THE PLANETS

### September – October 2017

**MERCURY** : Currently back in the morning skies in Leo, moving into Virgo on 26<sup>th</sup> September. Magnitude - 0.8. Easier to spot as the month progresses, and the skies are darker. Was close to Mars on 16<sup>th</sup>, but moving back towards the Sun, and lost in the glare by the end of September. Reaches superior conjunction on 8<sup>th</sup> October, when it moves back into the evening skies.

**VENUS** : still in the morning skies, bright at magnitude -3.9 and fairly high in the sky, rising two hours before the Sun. Will be close to Mars, either side, on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October, with around 1/3 degree separation. (Less than a Moon's width, which is 1/2 degree.) Moon close by on 18<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**EARTH** : Autumn Equinox – September 22<sup>nd</sup>

**MARS** : Now in the morning skies and for some time late September, close to Mercury. Magnitude +1.8. Rises higher in the sky at the month progresses and approaches closer to Venus. Moon very close on 17<sup>th</sup> October, with Venus around twice the distance.

**JUPITER** : Well past its best as far as recent viewing is concerned. Very low down in the evening sky, around 10 degrees elevation, in the south / southwest after sunset. Reaches conjunction with the Sun on 26<sup>th</sup> October, so disappears from view. For 2018 it will only reach an elevation of some 25 degrees when south and during 2019 - 2020 just 18 degrees.

**SATURN** : In southwest at night-fall in Ophiuchus. At magnitude +0.5 with an angular size of 16.5 arc seconds. The rings are still as open as they ever are, from our viewpoint, at 26.8 degrees. This will reach 27 degrees, their maximum as seen from Earth, in October. Moon close on 26<sup>th</sup> September and 24<sup>th</sup> October.

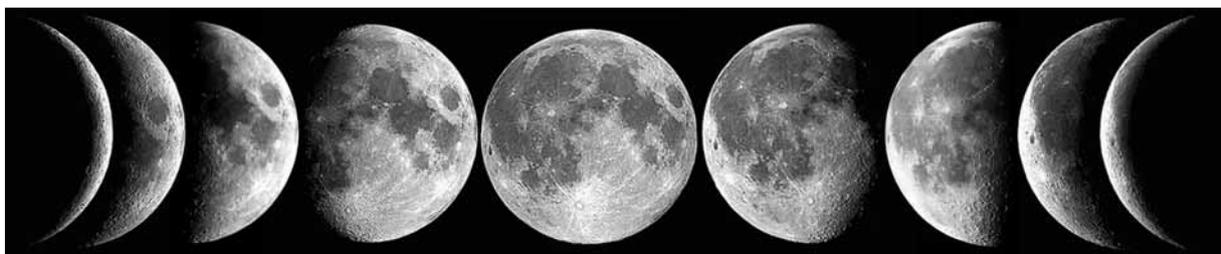
**URANUS** : In the east mid-evening, in Pisces. Uranus is slightly brighter at magnitude +5.7, so still *just* on the theoretical edge of naked-eye visibility. At opposition on October 19<sup>th</sup>

**NEPTUNE** : Was at opposition 5<sup>th</sup> September, magnitude +7.8 in Aquarius. Can be found around 28 degrees altitude in the south, late evenings.

## METEORS

Orionids peak on 21<sup>st</sup> October, and this is two days after a new Moon, so the skies should be dark.

## THE MOON



New 25<sup>th</sup> August  
New 20<sup>th</sup>

First 29<sup>th</sup>  
First 29<sup>th</sup>

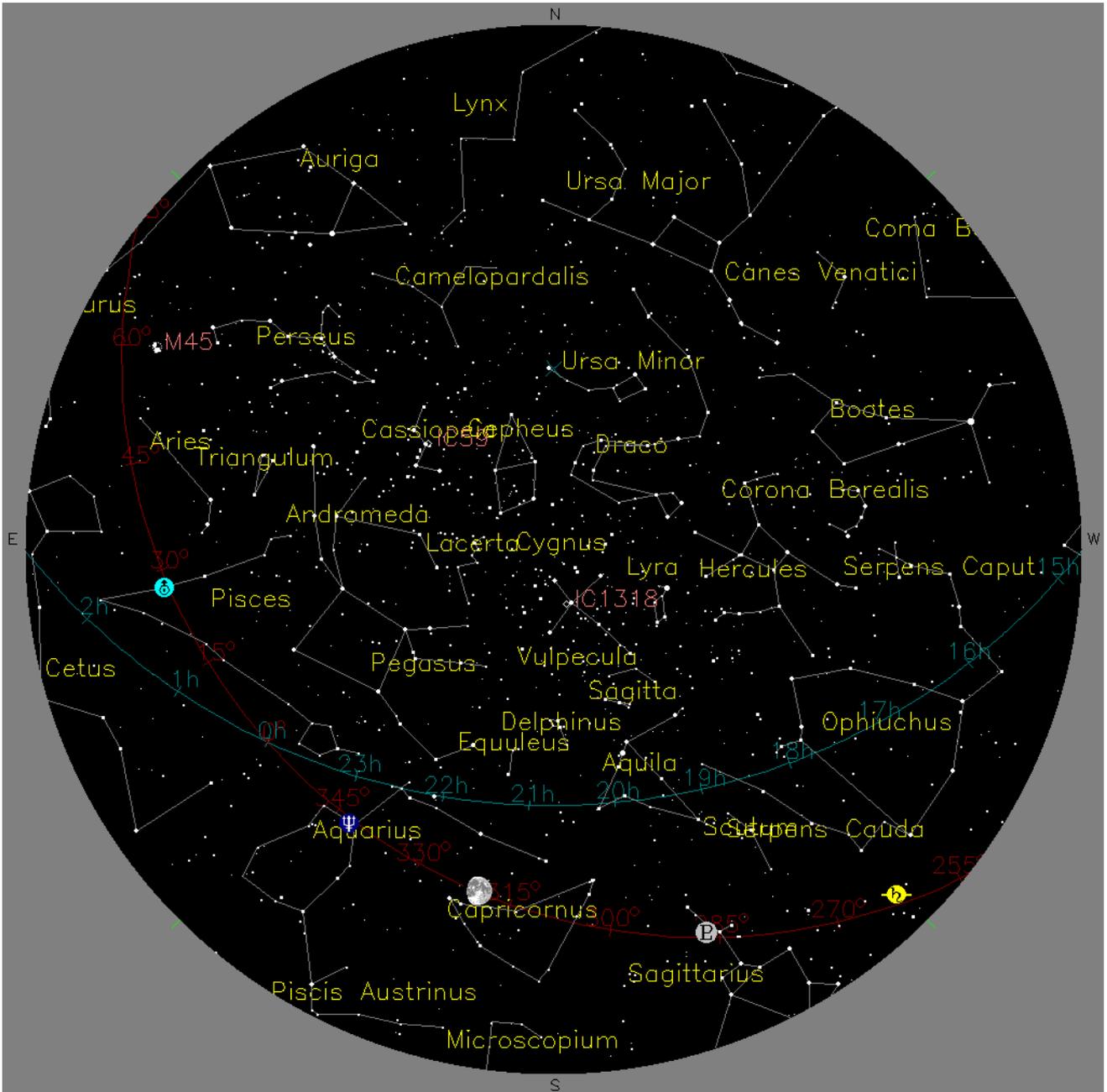
Full 6<sup>th</sup> September  
Full 5<sup>th</sup> October

Last 13<sup>th</sup>  
Last 12<sup>th</sup>

New 20<sup>th</sup>  
New 19<sup>th</sup>

# THE NIGHT SKY : MAP

1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, 20.00hrs UTC-GMT / 21.00hrs BST



KEY	
 <b>MERCURY</b>	 <b>SATURN</b>
 <b>VENUS</b>	 <b>URANUS</b>
 <b>MARS</b>	 <b>NEPTUNE</b>
 <b>JUPITER</b>	 <b>PLUTO</b>



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