

WEEKLY SKY REPORT

January 25 – January 31, 2026

OBSERVATORIES

The Chabot Space and Science Center (chabotspace.org) has some fun programs to brighten up your days—and nights. On Thursday, Jan. 29, there is a course on astrophotography, which is a great opportunity to improve your skills and to send your photographs to the Sky Report where we can post them! There are also some great planetarium shows such as Lunaverse about our lovely moon and Starstruck exploring our mother star.

SPACE STATIONS

The International Space Station (ISS) has a few more good passes visible from Berkeley before it leaves our nighttime sky for a month or so (you can still catch it in the early morning hours). It's a good time to time to catch the ISS. Plans are already afoot to deorbit this ship that sails through Low Earth Orbit. SpaceX is designing a craft to bring the Station to rest where many good ships have gone before: the Indian Ocean. This vehicle will attach onto the ISS and use 46 thrusters to guide it on its final voyage. For comparison, the stalwart rocket that SpaceX uses to launch to the ISS has 16 of these Draco engines. So try to catch the ISS now while the catching is good.

Jan 27 7:04pm North West, Altitude 20°; 7:06pm North, Altitude 62°; Magnitude -3.7

Jan 28 6:16pm North West, Altitude 20°; 6:18pm North East, Altitude 38°; Mag. -3.2

Jan 29 7:05pm North West, Altitude 20°; 7:07pm South West, Altitude 36°; Mag. -2.3

Jan 30 6:16pm North West, Altitude 20°; 6:19pm South West, Altitude 71°; Mag. -3.5

PLANETS

Saturn is easy to spot over as it hangs over the southern sky right after sunset. It is the brightest object in that part of the sky. It will be visible in our night sky until March, so now is a great time to put a hold on our library telescope! And in other exciting news, Jupiter is rising over the Berkeley hills just after 6pm.

Telescopes @ Berkeley Public Library!

We have a Orion StarBlast Astro Reflector Telescope that you can borrow for 1 week. Place a hold on it and then pick it up from your branch when it is ready. It is fairly easy to carry at 13 lbs., and stands about 2 feet tall.

Here's what you get:

"A great compact grab-and-go telescope designed for entry-level and intermediate astronomy enthusiasts. Substantial 4.5" aperture and fast f/4 focal ratio provides bright, detailed views of solar system targets like the Moon and planets, as well as wide-field celestial objects like nebulas and star clusters."

We also have a couple of pairs of binoculars to check out!



Much of the information for this report comes from the wonderful web site, Heavens Above. You can enter your home city location and bookmark it for easy access: <http://www.heavens-above.com>. Other stellar sources include: <http://www.space.com> and <http://www.nasa.gov>. And check spacex.com for launches.

Binoculars @ Berkeley Public Library!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cal Falcons program, we have 9 Vortex-Raptor binocular kits that you can put on hold and pick up at the location of your choice.

Here's what you get:

Porro prism performance in a mid-size, wide-angle design, the Raptors deliver a bright, crisp image with excellent color fidelity - even in low light conditions. With a wide range of interpupillary distance, they can easily be adjusted to fit anyone in the family, making them ideal for serious, hard-core youth hunters. The kit comes with a copy of The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western America and a pocket guide to local birds of the SF Bay Area. But it is also great for looking at planets, the moon and the stars!

