



The Cambridge atlas of Herschel objects

by James Mullaney & Wil Tirion

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After observing the Messier objects the deep sky observer often turns to the NGC for further challenges – a list compiled by Dreyer in the 19th century. These objects, largely discovered by William and John Herschel, are plotted on this atlas with their original Herschel designations rather than the more common NGC ones (early editions of *Norton's Star Atlas* also plotted the Herschel objects). Written by astronomy author James Mullaney and with charts by leading uranographer Wil Tirion, this atlas is a companion volume to the *Cambridge Double Star Atlas* by the same authors and is printed to the same scale and in the same spiral bound format.

The layout is also very similar, with showpiece objects tabulated at the front and a full listing at the rear. Stars are plot-

ted to magnitude 7.5, with some fainter ones shown where appropriate. Similarly with deep sky objects, where the cut-off mag is 12.5, but with fainter objects plotted where they have special appeal. The Virgo and Dorado constellations, where deep sky objects are particularly numerous, have their own larger scale charts. A few non-Herschel discoveries are also plotted e.g. NGC 1499, the California Nebula, along with variable and multiple stars, so in many ways this is also a general purpose atlas.

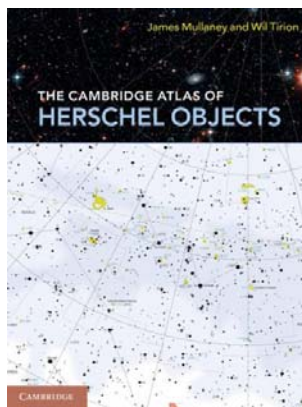
In addition to the star charts, which plot over 2,500 of the Herschel objects, there are sections summarising the Herschels' achievements, their telescopes and classification systems along with practical aspects of deep sky observing. Although necessarily brief these

are well written and the section on observing in particular, is obviously written from experience. There is also a good reference section listing appropriate books and websites. The atlas is intended to be used at the telescope so the charts are printed in red-light friendly colours. Only a couple of minor errors were noted.

The astronomer on a budget and already in possession of a decent star atlas may find this volume superfluous, preferring instead to use their existing atlas along with a conversion list of NGC to Herschel objects. For the person wanting a dedicated Herschel atlas however, this is an excellent addition to their bookcase.

Stewart Moore

Stewart is Director of the BAA Deep Sky Section. He is an enthusiastic visual observer who has observed many of the Herschel objects through a wide variety of telescopes.



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