

Invitation for Nature Lovers

1. International Dark Sky Camp

(family or individual holidays for those who adore dark skies, clear seas, concealed beaches, flora and fauna in a national park)

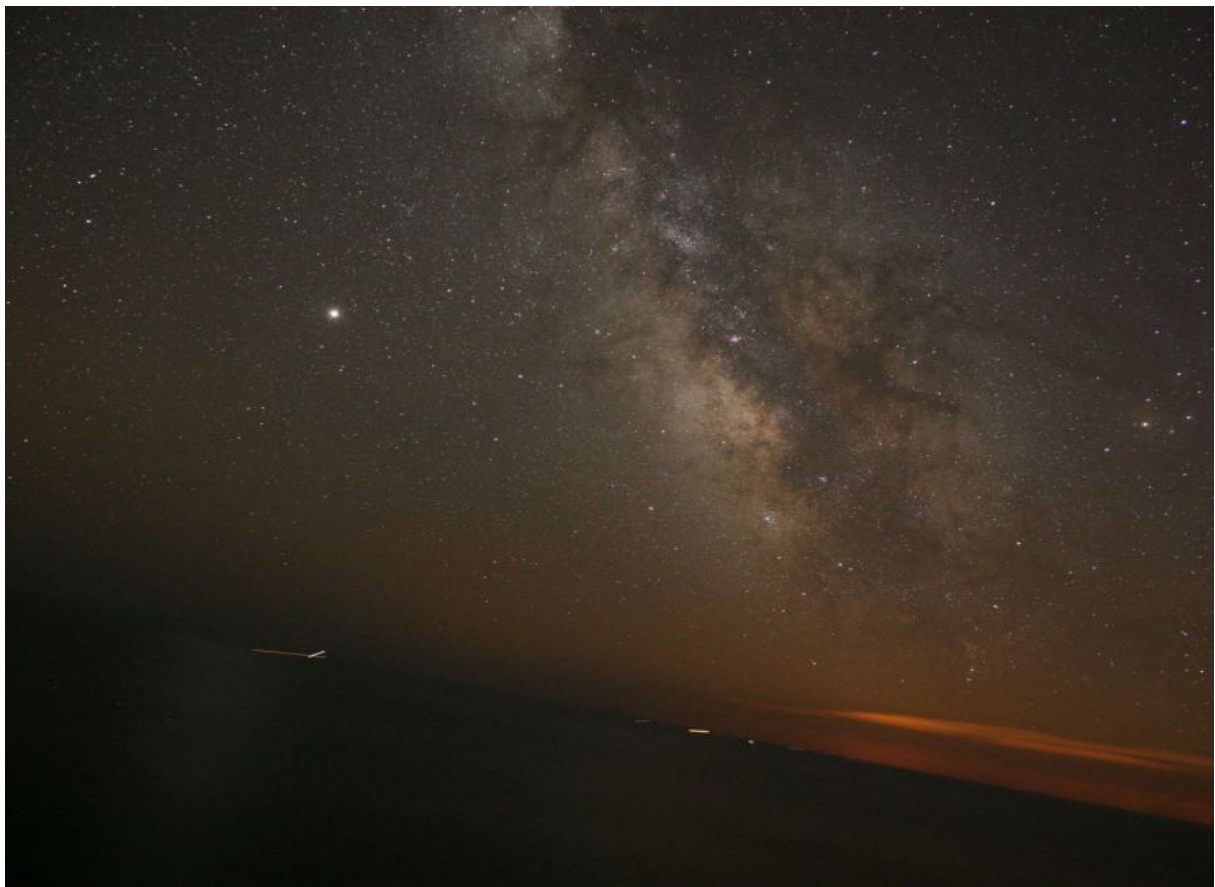
Lastovo 2008

from 25 August to 3 September 2008

1. NATURAL, MAGNIFICENT STARRY SKIES

with a reflection of the Milky Way in the sea

We have long sought the most natural dark starry sky in Europe. Maybe there are some lonely points (islands) in Europe where one can experience a genuine starry sky not polluted by light. One of these gems that civilisation still has not managed to »develop« is the island of Lastovo on the Croatian coast:



Star-spangled sky above Lastovo. The Milky Way can be seen right up to the horizon. In the vicinity there are no large sources of light pollution. The largest town is Split (90 km distant towards the north). To the south is the first town of Bari (in Italy), which is some 180 km distant. (photo: Mohar, Mikuž)

Because Lastovo is an island surrounded by the blueness of the Adriatic, one can see on the sea surface a reflection of an image of the Milky Way. This cannot be seen virtually anywhere else in Europe. The limit of magnitude of the sky above Lastovo is 21.7. This means that on Lastovo there is approx. 30 % light pollution, whereas in the darkest parts of Europe (parks and far from residential areas) pollution is 250 % (loss of 1 magnitude). In the Belgian countryside pollution is approx. 600 %.

Lastovo is surrounded by the sea, so we anticipate a very fine astronomical seeing. A good seeing permits less bright heavenly bodies to be visible – those that cannot be perceived during a bad seeing on the continent.

On Lastovo you can see stars to the 7th magnitude with your own eyes



*All sky photograph of the star-spangled sky above Lastovo. The starry sky is special because it is natural – everywhere else in Europe thousands of stars are lost due to light pollution.
(photo: Mohar, Mikuž)*



The bay of Skrivena Luka. Behind it rises the hill on which Heliodrom (the heliport) is located (far right). At this site, 400 m above sea level, millions of stars will enchant us from above during observations while the Milky Way with mists and mysterious objects will touch the sea below us ... to the south there is only the sea. (photo: Mohar)

2. LASTOVO – NATIONAL PARK

3. CRYSTAL CLEAR SEA

4. CLEAN AIR

5. ABUNDANT FLORA AND FAUNA



Lastovo, Pasadur (photo: Mohar)

On the web site of Lastovo Tourist Office www.lastovo-tz.net one can read:

Green island in the midst of the blue Adriatic open sea, surrounded by numerous small silver islands. An island and archipelago that like by a miracle escaped the blessings of civilization. Lastovo. Maybe the last piece of the former Mediterranean Homer came and Lord Byron took his inspiration from. Lastovo means a vacation in harmony with untouched nature, in the ambience of traditional architecture, a vacation where you will enjoy healthy and fresh island food from the fields and the crystal-clear sea, a vacation with wine already drunk by the Roman emperors. Lastovo. The name of one of some dozen gardens of Eden in the Mediterranean on the list of the prestigious World Wild Foundation - WWF. The Lastovo archipelago was declared a **Nature Park** in 2006.

Everyone who loves primordial nature will certainly appreciate the wonders of Lastovo. The crystal clear sea will enchant us while swimming, diving or boating. There is no industry for miles around so we can enjoy clean air. On the island, which is sparsely inhabited, (there are approx. 600 permanent residents) life is just bursting. Botanists will enjoy the flora, and butterfly enthusiasts the diversity of the animal kingdom.

Observations, telescopes and equipment

We shall observe the stars from the terrace of Heliodrom, which is accessible via an asphalt road. The terrace is 400 m above sea level, and visibility is almost to the horizon in all directions. Many of those attending will bring their telescopes. If you have a telescope, take it with you. Bring your binoculars too – and your star charts. **Lights must be shaded with a dark red filter.** We recommend deck chairs or armaflex rests. The terraces have no electric power sources so those attending should use their own portable sources. On one of the structures close to the terrace there are floodlights, which will be switched off during the event.



Please note: As those attending will perform complex observations, measurements and recordings, any kind of light on Heliodrom is strictly prohibited. Only red lamps/torches are permitted, and the organisers have the authority to limit the power of light emitted from these. **All illumination at the darkest point in Europe can drastically worsen observation conditions!**

In exceptional cases of rescue or night landings by helicopter at Heliodrom, those attending will enable helicopters to land in the shortest time possible.

Common meeting and schedule

Participants will meet each evening at 18.00 at a common lecture and debate that will take place in Hotel Solitudo in Pasadur. There will also be time to arrange possible joint activities over the next few days (diving, fishing, boating, night visits to the isolated island of Susak, gatherings, etc.). Lectures will be in English, and exceptionally in English and Croatian.

Day	Date	Time	Activity
Friday Saturday	23 - 24 August		8th European Symposium on Protecting the Night Sky, Vienna http://darksky2008.kuffner-sternwarte.at/work/default.html We warmly recommend you attend the symposia
Monday	25 August		Journey to Lastovo, reception dinner, settle in Meet at 23:00 in the hotel restaurant in Pasadur
Tuesday	26 August	18:00	Opening Lucija Kapiteli: Lastovo National Park Korado Korlević: Impact of light pollution on people and animals
Wednesday	27 August	18:00	Marjeta Keršič Svetel: National parks & natural night environment
Thursday	28 August	18:00	Jan Hollan: Quality illumination reduces pollution
Friday	29 August	18:00	Herman Mikuž: Research work at the Črni Vrh Observatory and monitoring the night sky
Saturday	30 August	18:00	Jurij Stare: Astrophotography under the natural and polluted sky
Sunday	31 August	18:00	Final evening Petra Drašković: Highlights from my travels
Monday	1 September		departure (if you wish, you may of course extend your stay on the island)

For whom is the event intended?

We welcome: professional and amateur astronomers
biologists
national parks staff
nature lovers
natural scientists
architects
lighting engineers
luminaire manufacturers

Arrival and departure

Arrival by plane: Leave the plane at Split airport, from which there are regular buses to Split harbour.

Ljubljana Airport <http://www.lju-airport.si/>

Vienna Airport <http://www.viennaairport.com/>

Split Airport <http://www.split-airport.hr/>

Arrival by coach and train: There are good road connections to Split; please check the timetables.

Croatian Railways <http://www.hznet.hr/>

Arrival by car: From Zagreb the motorway goes all the way to Split. At Split board the ferry for Lastovo (look for the signs Trajekt/Ferry). The ferry journey takes 5-6 hours. The catamaran is faster, but does not transport cars. Check the ferry timetables here: <http://www.jadrolinija.hr/>

Monday 25 August 2008: Departure by ferry from Split to Lastovo at 10:15 and 17:30.

Monday 1 September 2008: Departure by ferry from Ubli (Lastovo) at 4:30 and 11:30.

Accommodation (hotel, apartments, camping)

All those attending should make their own accommodation booking arrangements. We recommend you select accommodation in the vicinity of Pasadur as that is where the lectures will take place. From Pasadur it is several minutes drive to Heliodrom. The area of Lastovo is distant, and furthermore, accommodation is far from the sea. Skrivena Luka is a beautiful bay, yet it is also far from Pasadur and Heliodrom. There is a ferry port in Ubli. **The first choice, in any case, is Pasadur.**

We propose the following:

The only **hotel** on the island is Solitudo in the vicinity of Pasadur. Most of the lectures and meetings will take place in the hotel.

Telephone: +385 20 80 21 00 Fax: +385 20 80 24 44 Mobile: +385 98 424 552

E-mail: sales.solitudo@gmail.com (the hotel is small and fully booked so we recommend private apartments)

The island has a nice range of **apartments**. We recommend you choose an apartment where you can get food too. Several apartments provide excellent food and this combination is highly recommendable.

Addresses of all apartments can be found on the Lastovo Tourist Office web site: www.tz-lastovo.net

Lastovo Tourist Office is the right address for help in booking accommodation.

Tel/fax: +385 20 801018

E-mail: tz-lastovo@du.t-com.hr

At Lastovo there is also a **campsite**: Camping Skriveni, Skrivena Luka www.camp-skriveni.com

E-mail: info@camp-skriveni.com

Fee

Lecturers and organisers:	free of charge
Participants:	30 euros per person
Family members and companions:	10 euros per person

The fee is paid to the organiser on arrival in Lastovo.

The fee covers project organisation, attendance at the lectures and observations.

Insurance

The organisers do not assume any liability concerning the safety of those attending. The island of Lastovo is a very safe island. Nonetheless, we recommend that you provide for your own safety for sports activities on the sea and on land. Be particularly careful due to fatigue while driving at night and from observations.

Health clinic

Tel: +385 20 801 034, +385 20 801 270

International Association of Dark Sky Parks ©

On Lastovo we intend to draw up plans to found the International Association of Dark Sky Parks. The goal of the association is to reduce light pollution in towns and in the countryside as this is the only way to ensure a naturally dark sky also in national parks.

Further information on Lastovo

Lastovo Tourist Office: www.lastovo-tz.net

<http://www.lastovo-augusta.net/>

<http://www.lastovotravel.com/>

<http://www.lastovo.org/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lastovo>

<http://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lastovo>

<http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lastovo>

Organisers

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Tel: +386 1 2301 707 (Herman Mikuž), E-mail: herman.mikuz@fmf.uni-lj.si

Co-organisers

Triglav National Park, Bled, Slovenia, <http://www.tnp.si>

Creative Astronomical Society, Ljubljana, Slovenia, <http://www.uad.si>

Lastovo Islands Natural Park, Tel. +385 20 801 252, Lastovo, Croatia

Višnjan Astronomical Society, Croatia, <http://www.astro.hr>

Zvezdano selo Mosor (Mosor Star Village), Split, Croatia, <http://www.zvezdano-selo.hr>