

Name: _____

Date: _____

Outdoor Laboratory: Messier Objects - Open Clusters

Introduction

Tonight, you will observe Messier objects. Specifically, you will observe open clusters. The stars in open clusters have relatively the same age and were formed in the same region of molecular gas. The life span of an open cluster can range from a few hundred million to a few billion years. You will notice that the open clusters you observe contain far fewer stars that are spread apart versus the tightly compact globular clusters you have observed. Nebulae can also be observed in several open clusters, such as M8 (Lagoon Nebula). Open clusters are great for both telescope and binocular observing.

Procedures

Set up and align your telescope. Make use of the Messier list and atlas charts in your Peterson Guide for locating targets. You are to find three open clusters. Note the Messier number and equatorial coordinates for each. For each cluster, note details you find interesting about the cluster.

	<u>Messier #</u>	<u>RA</u>	<u>Dec</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____
Notes:	_____		

2.	_____	_____	_____
Notes:	_____		

3.	_____	_____	_____
Notes:	_____		
