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Günter D. Roth
Editor

Handbook of Practical Astronomy



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Günter D. Roth
Ulrichstraße 43a
Irschenhausen
82057 Icking/Isartal
Germany

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Preface

With amateurs, students and teachers of astronomy in high schools and colleges particularly in mind, the *Handbook of Practical Astronomy* comprises an essential source of current trends in astronomy and examines the broad variety of astronomical observations.

Methods used by amateur astronomers have changed significantly in recent years. Classical photography has been superseded by video astronomy and CCD-systems. Telescopes are now computer-controlled. The Internet has become the basis for exchanging knowledge and experience, even providing amateur observers with access to scientific data files. Personal contact can now be made worldwide without delay.

Astronomy online for users of this handbook: To access astronomy data, physical constants, catalogues, maps, and object search visit www.springer.com/978-3-540-76377-2.

The first edition of this book was published in 1960 in Germany with the title *Handbuch für Sternfreunde*, followed by further editions in 1967, 1981 and 1989. The current edition has two English forerunners, *Astronomy: a Handbook*, published in 1975, and *Compendium of Practical Astronomy*, published in 1994.

As the Editor, I wish to thank sincerely all authors for their understanding and friendly cooperation during the planning stages and execution of this work. I would like to add a word of grateful remembrance of Professor Dr. Felix Schmeidler of the University Observatory at Munich, he had been an author in all editions since 1960 and had from the very beginning warmly supported this project, but whose death in the middle of the current edition ended his collaboration prematurely.

I gratefully acknowledge the helpfulness of Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg, where Dr. T. Schneider gave every possible consideration to the authors' and my suggestions.

Irschenhausen, March 2009

Günter D. Roth

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