

New Moon 1 st @ 11:15	First Quarter 8 th @ 03:40	Full Moon 16 th @ 04:53	Last Quarter 24 th @ 05:20
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Note: Times are in Chailey local time – GMT+0

Last month I quoted David H. Levy, a Canadian Astronomer and Science writer, and the co-discoverer of the comet Shoemaker-Levy 9. Shoemaker-Levy 9 was torn apart by the awesome gravity of Jupiter. The fragments of the comet collided with Jupiter between the 16th and 22nd July 1994. The videos of the impact are an easy search away on YouTube. Just enter ‘shoemaker-levy 9’ into the search bar. The scars on Jupiter were larger than the Earth itself!

Levy has so far discovered 22 comets, and has an asteroid named in his honour: 3673 Levy. But even he could not predict the tale of the now ex Comet C/2012-S1-ISON. Or the Zombie Comet – it died several times as the colossal gravity of our Sun tore the nucleus apart.

There are several videos of the demise of Comet ISON available online if you haven’t seen it yet. The Sun appears to tear the comet into a line of objects, which gradually dissipate. The result is something which a lot of amateur and professional astronomers (including myself) have been trying to take a picture of. We want to see the configuration of the remains of ISON itself, and see exactly how it separated, and how much is left.

So far, as I write this at the beginning of December, nothing has been seen. It looks at the moment as if there is nothing left but a slightly denser collection of atoms of poor Comet ISON.

In the sky this month – Jupiter still features very prominently. It will be a beautiful target throughout January and February. See if you can visit one of the many Stargazing Live events being held throughout January and February. The full list is available on the BBC Things To Do website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/thingstodo> - including my event Astronomy in the Pub evening on the Saturday 22nd February.

I am now available to give talks on Astronomy to local groups and schools. Please contact me on 01273 400989 or use the email address below. I am a registered STEM Ambassador, and have been CRB checked accordingly.

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