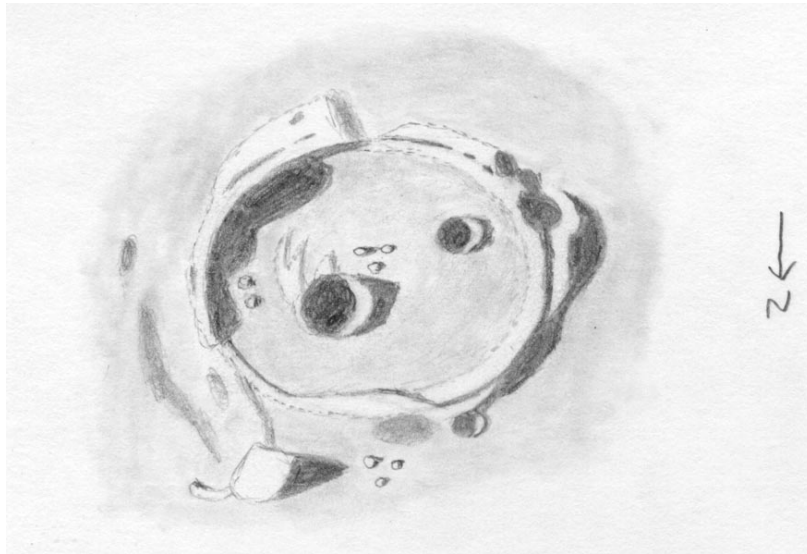


THE LUNAR OBSERVER

A NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS OF THE MOON AUGUST 1999
EDITED BY: Bill Dembowski - ALPO Coordinator, Lunar Topographical Studies - President, American Lunar Society
219 Old Bedford Pike - Windber, PA 15963 - DEMBOW@TWD.NET

FEATURE OF THE MONTH



Cassini - (40.2°N - 4.6°E)

Sketch by Robert H. Hays, Jr. - Worth, Illinois

15cm (6 inch) Newtonian - 170X - March 25, 1999 - Seeing 8/10

Located on the northeastern shore of Mare Imbrium is the 57 km (35 miles) crater Cassini. The crater is named for Giovanni-Domenico Cassini (1625-1712) and Italian-born French astronomer. Robert H. Hays, Jr. of Worth, Illinois sketched this fine crater and submitted the following report:

"This interesting crater was well placed for observation on March 24/25 and I sketched it between three occultations of faint stars. Cassini is dominated by two large craters on its floor; these give the impression of a pair of 'eyes'. Three small hills were noted very near the center of Cassini, and two more were near the east wall. Low ridges were pointing to the south from Cassini A. The walls of Cassini surprised me with their irregularities; the sketch depicts them as well as I could. A crater was just outside the northwest wall of Cassini, and a large peak was to its east. A few more small elevations were seen north of Cassini."

Editor: Cassini can be found on Map #12 of Rukl's Atlas of the Moon. Robert's sketch was made at First Quarter.

RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH

FRANCESCO BADALOTTI - CREMONA, ITALY

Video still of Proclus

DANIEL DEL VALLE - AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO

Sketches of Schiller, Madler, Ray system of Stevinus A (3), Ray system of Madler (3)

ERIC DOUGLASS - SANFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

Video stills of Ray system of Copernicus

FERNANDO FERRI - ANZIO, ITALY

Maps of Proclus ray system (2)

Lunar Calendar - August 1999 (UT)

4 04:00 Moon 3.9 Degrees SSE of Jupiter
4 17:27 Last Quarter
5 01:00 Moon 2.9 Degrees SSE of Saturn
7 24:00 Moon at Perigee (366,695 km - 227,860 miles)
10. . . . 03:00 Moon 1.2 Degrees N of Mercury
11. . . . 11:09 New Moon (Start of Lunation 948)
Total solar eclipse
19. . . . 01:47 First Quarter
19. . . . 24:00 Moon at Apogee (404,251 km - 251,197 miles)
26. . . . 23:49 Full Moon
31. . . . 11:00 Moon 3.7 Degrees SSE of Jupiter

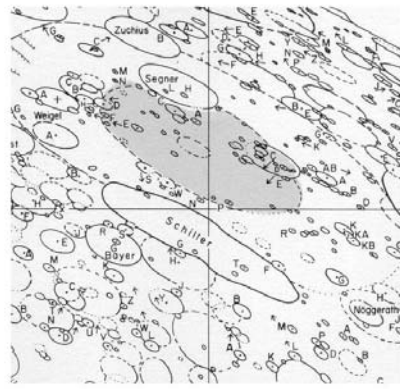
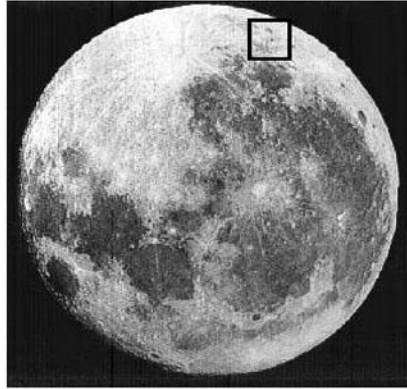
Lunar Prospector Impact

From the Editor:

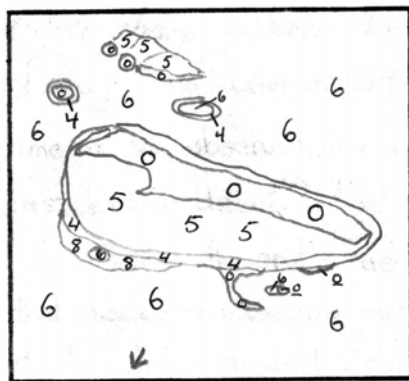
As this newsletter is being written, the impact of Lunar Prospector into an unnamed crater at the southern pole of the Moon has not yet occurred. I would encourage all observers of the event to report their success or disappointment to me. Negative results are as important as positive results as they will help set the parameters of visibility. NASA has established an excellent site at <http://www.LunarImpact.com/> and even provided a direct link into my personal mailbox for those who might have questions on lunar observing. Amateur lunar observers can still make meaningful contributions to science. Keep up the good work and show your stuff!

.....Bill Dembowski

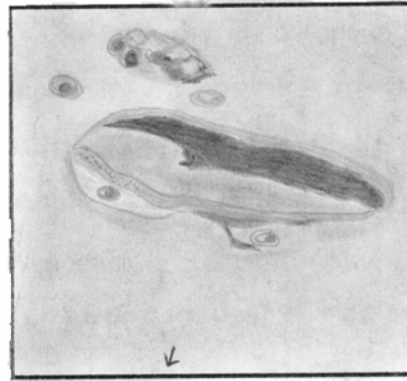
EXPLORING THE MOON



Map used with permission of Lunar & Planetary Laboratory - University of Arizona



Intensity Estimates



Tonal Drawing

SCHILLER

Sketch and text by Daniel del Valle - Aguadilla, Puerto Rico
June 9, 1999 - 8 inch Newtonian - 102X - Seeing 9/10

The lighting angle makes this elongated and oblong crater interesting and challenging to sketch. The terminator was nearby, making contrast rather sharp between dark shadows and the other shades of gray. This crater is 179 x 71 kms. The Moon's age at the time of the observation was 24.885 days, and it was twilight just before dawn.

Above the crater are some hills and a series of small craters that showed an interesting contrast of shadow and light. There is a lot of other detail around Schiller which I did not attempt to draw. What was most prominent was the crater itself, especially its interior.

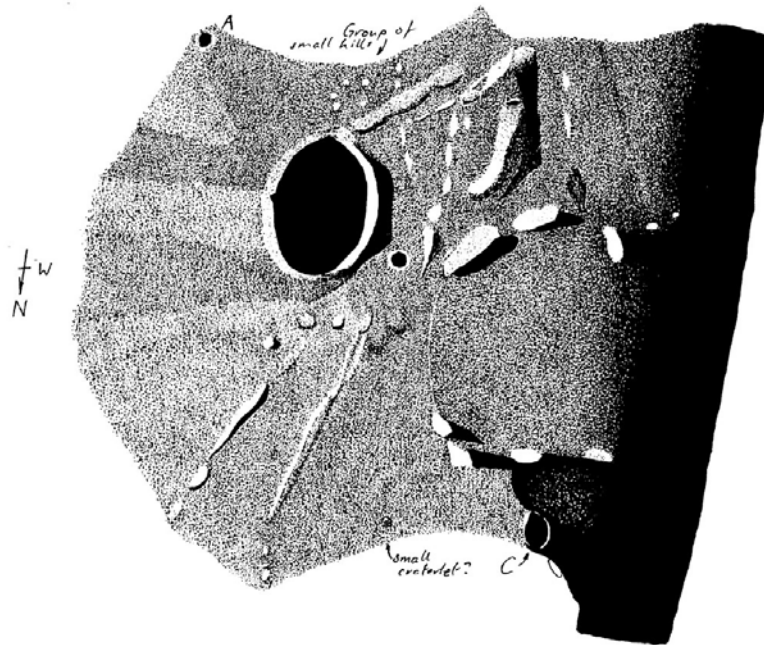
It's fascinating to ponder what kind of event could have made this strange "cucumber" shaped gash in the lunar disk. According to Cherrington (Exploring the Moon Through Binoculars and Small Telescopes), Schiller is a mystery and is probably the result of several unrelated and dissimilar events.

Question of the Month

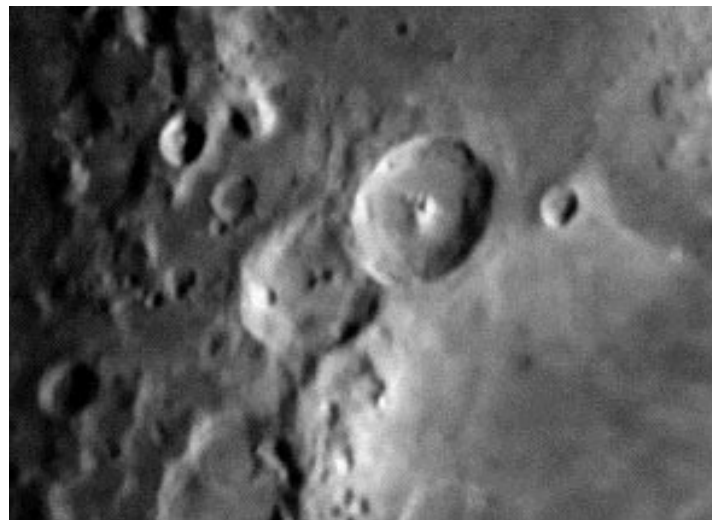
Q: Will I be able to see the debris plume from the Lunar Prospector Impact with my telescope?

A: I don't know!!!!

TOPOGRAPHICAL STUDIES



KEPLER & ENVIRONS AT SUNRISE
Sketch by Colin Ebdon - London, England
November 29, 1998 - 10 inch Newtonian - 183X



MADLER

Video still by William O'Connell - Whitman, Massachusetts
October 27, 1998 - 8 inch SCT