

North Carolina Dark Sky Stargazing Location Recommendations

By North Carolina Starry Skies South members

North Carolina State Parks links to [astronomy events across the state](#).

MOUNTAINS

[Bare Dark Sky Observatory](#)

66 Energy Exchange Dr, Burnsville, NC

IDA-certified Star Park. The observatory has ticketed programs, but visitors are welcome to access this dark sky location anytime for free, even when the observatory is closed. The Observatory has 8 telescope viewing stations located around the building.

Appalachian State University's [Dark Sky Observatory](#)

Info about monthly public nights can be found at [DSO home page](#) and [Public Access page](#).

Brown Mountain Overlook

8176 NC HWY 181, Newland, NC 28657

[DuPont State Recreational Forest's Guion Farm field](#)

[Dark Sky Park - PARI](#)

1 PARI Drive, Rosman, NC 28772

PARI is recognized by the IDA.

[South Mountains State Park](#)

[Waterrock Knob](#) - Blue Ridge Parkway (U.S. National Park Service)

Find more dark sky observing destinations in the NC mountains at this [useful page](#) on the [Forsyth Astronomical Society](#) site.

PIEDMONT

[Three College Observatory](#) in Alamance County

Hosts occasional public sessions. Their site was chosen as a relatively dark outpost, somewhat removed from the lights of the Piedmont Triad, though it's not as dark there now as it used to be.

The Catawba Valley Astronomers offer regular public viewing sessions (twice a month) at [the Lucile Miller Observatory in Maiden, NC](#). Their site is not super-dark, but it's a nice observing destination available to the public.

[GHRO Observatory](#) – Charlotte Amateur Astronomers Club (CAAC)

Actually located in Taxhaw, SC, a bit South of Waxhaw, NC border.

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[Wildacres Retreat](#): North Carolina Conference Center

This location is normally used for CAAC's Southern Star convention each year.

[Cline Observatory](#), at Guilford Technical Community College, in Jamestown (near Greensboro). They have weekly public nights on Fridays.

The [Greensboro Astronomy Club](#) has monthly observing sessions fall through spring at the following locations.

[Haw River State Park: Home | NC State Parks](#)

Iron Ore Belt Access

6068 N. Church St., Greensboro, NC 27455

[Mayo River State Park: Home | NC State Parks](#)

500 Old Mayo Park Road, Mayodan, NC 27027

[Forsyth Astronomical Society](#) has events at this location:

[Stone Mountain State Park: Home | NC State Parks](#)

3042 Frank Parkway, Roaring Gap, NC 28668

The Raleigh Astronomy Club has a web page titled [Where to Stargaze](#) that lists some relatively local moderately-light polluted sites and some farther-afield dark destinations.

The science museum in Greenville, NC has an extension site called [Contentnea Creek](#) that has an observatory and planetarium.

COAST

[Bladen Lakes State Forest](#) near Elizabethtown, NC.

The website states: "Since BLSF is such a large and undeveloped forest, there is little light pollution that reaches this area. This makes BLSF an ideal spot to gaze up at the stars and take in the night sky. **A Special Use Permit is required free of charge** and can be obtained by contacting our office Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m."

[Cape Lookout National Seashore \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)

IDA-certified Dark Sky Park