

Sky News – January 2015

Comet Making Close Fly-by of Earth

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When was the last time you took time to look up into the night sky? Currently, a visitor from deep space has made its way into our inner solar system! Comet Lovejoy was discovered in November of 2011 by Australian amateur astronomer Terry Lovejoy. It is now making its closest approach to Earth providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that will not come again for 8,000 years.



On any clear dark night, Comet Lovejoy is almost bright enough to be seen with the naked eye as a small smudge of light. Through binoculars or a small telescope, it appears as a softly glowing, bluish-green ball.

Like all comets, Lovejoy is a huge chunk of ice and dust. As it nears the sun, it warms and vaporizes producing a magnificently long tail and debris field. Join us at the Oldman River Observatory on Saturday, January 31 at 7:30 for open house and viewing.

Photograph: Alan Dyer/ <http://amazingsky.photoshelter.com/>