Messier 103

Cassiopeia 01h 33m +60º 42' *Christmas Tree cluster*

Data of the sky region at the time of the observation ..... **SQM-L 21.5 IR -35º Temperature 1º**
Data of the night ..... **Sun alt: -43.2º Moon alt: -25.5º**
Data of the objete ..... **Alt: 61.3º Az: 29.2º**
Telescope ..... **Stargate 18"**

Nagler 31mm (70x - 1º 10' - 6.6mm)

The first view of the cluster is quite nice.

M103 is in a very rich field of stars, of varying magnitudes, but it clearly stands out from the rest.

It is a small open cluster, occupying perhaps a tenth of the eyepiece, with a rather characteristic triangular shape.

It is bright and easily resolvable. Despite the small size in this eyepiece several tens of stars are perfectly counted.

I highlight a very bright bluish white star at the end of it as well as another fainter reddish star inside. From what I have read they call it the '*Christmas tree*' cluster. It's a nice allegory although to me it reminds me more of the StarTrek brooch, the one used in the series by touching it to talk to the ship. Maybe I'm too geeky.

Regardless of the object that reminds one is a curious cluster because its shape is clearly triangular, with this star standing out at the apex of the triangle. The image is especially beautiful because, despite its diminished size, the punctuality of the stars and their significant magnitude makes them stand out and, certainly, its nickname does it justice because they could be imagined as the spheres of a Christmas tree, shining in the night.

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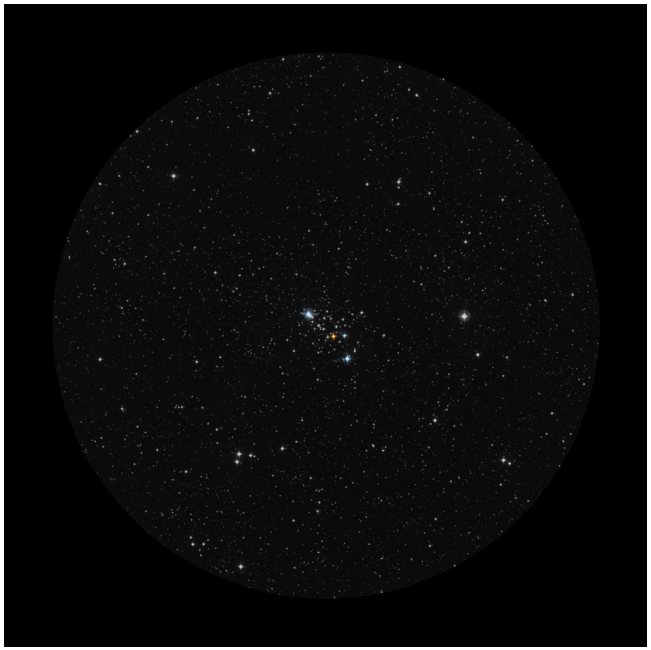

Nagler 22mm (98x - 50' - 4.7mm)

It is worth a little more magnification to enjoy this curious object a little more. The stars still look tremendously sharp at this low magnification and it is a beautiful image. Unfortunately, though, it doesn't have much more to show other than that quiet, beautiful image of a series of stars forming a triangle, which, at a quick count, I estimate to be about 20 or 30.

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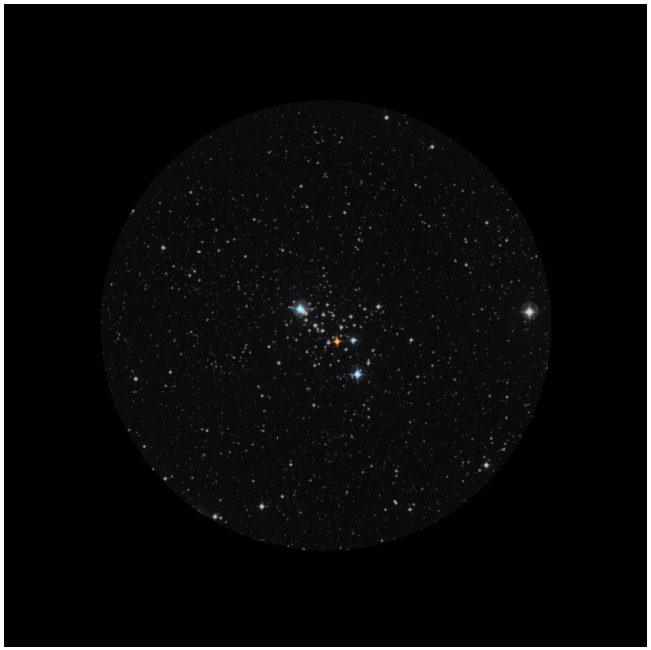

Delos 14mm (154x - 28' - 3mm)

I don't spend much more time on it although going up to 14mm has given me a pleasant surprise.

As usual the object increases in size incredibly in this jump, occupying almost 50% of the eyepiece. The image is nice although simple, but the surprise has been the star that would form the '*canopy*' or '*star*' at the top of the Christmas tree. The brightest of all, it has a much fainter companion. It is clearly a rather nice double star because of the contrast in brightness, however I am unable to differentiate the colors between the two.

This is Struve 131 and I have to admit I am very bad at double stars, it must have a very obvious color for me to be able to identify their difference. It's something I need to work on more. It's a nice extra gift from the object because it's pretty dull to be honest. You don't need to work very hard to enjoy it, but hey that's also appreciated, of course after a few minutes of looking at it you're already thinking about the next object you want to jump to. And that's what I did.

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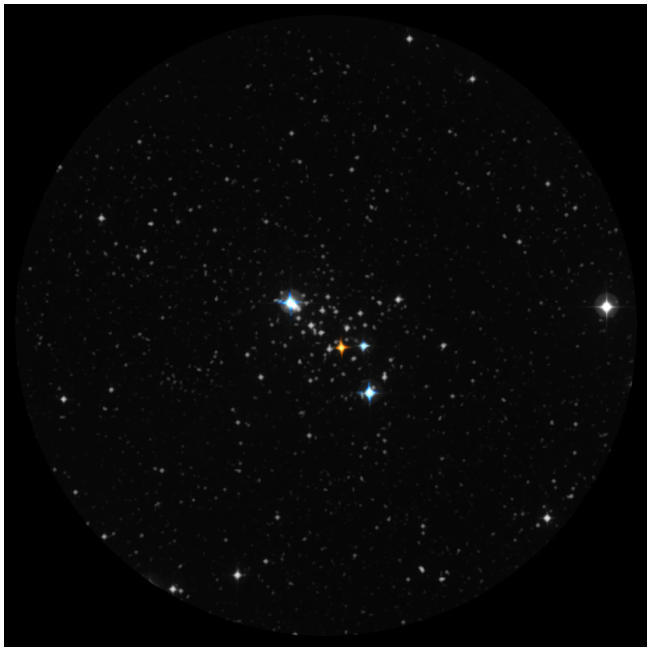

Ethos 10mm (216x - 27' - 2.1mm)

I didn't want to leave the object without going through the 10mm, it didn't bring me much but looking at 100° of apparent field is a different pleasure and thanks to the different colors and the punctuality of the stars it is a delight to stay a few minutes just contemplating something beautiful.

To insist on pointing out something with this eyepiece I emphasize the curved base of the Christmas tree that reminds me of the StarTrek symbol and how beautiful is the contrast of colors of the stars with a deep jet black background.