

## Spreading the passion for scientifically useful planetary observations

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### Abstract

The "March 2015 - Planetary Observation Project (POP)" was a series of talks and hands-on workshops focused on planetary observation organized in March 2015 by the planetary section of the Hellenic Amateur Astronomy Association. Building on our previous experience (Voutyras et al. 2013), which also includes more than 500 attendants in our 2013-2014 series of lectures in Astronomy, we identified that there is a lack of more focused lectures/workshops on observing techniques. In particular, POP's structure included two talks and two workshops aiming to inspire and educate astronomy enthusiasts. The talks tried to stimulate the participants about the importance of ground-based observations by presenting the most current scientific news and puzzling problems that we are facing in the observation of planets. During the hands-on workshops the beauty of planetary observation was used to inspire participants. However, we trained participants on observing techniques and image processing to enable them to produce scientifically useful results. All POP's events were open to the public and free, meaning both out-of-charge and freely available material provided to the participants (through our website). The project offered attendants unique experiences that may have a significant impact with potential lifelong benefits. In this work we present an overview of the project structure that may work as a prototype for similar outreach programs.

### Reference

The Planetary Observation Project POP - March 2015, available in Greek at: <http://www.hellas-astro.gr/articles/astromanos-2015-03-04-2132>



*Figure 1. The first course of the project on terrestrial planets (Image: E.Vakalopoulos)*



*Figure 2. The first workshop of POP. Sharing the passion...and techniques of digital observation of planets (Image: E.Vakalopoulos)*



*Figure 3. An interactive, hands-on workshop of how-to make a scientifically-useful digital planetary observation (Image: E.Kardasis)*