

International Amateur Observatory

The 'International Amateur Observatory' (IAS) association offers access to the magnificent starry sky of the southern hemisphere for its members, with large telescopes well away from disturbing light pollution at one of the best observing locations in the world.



Founded in 1999, the IAS operates two observatories in Namibia for a variety of projects: astrophotography, minor planet observations, occultations, variable stars, and spectroscopy.

The approximately 100 members of the society come from all ages and professional backgrounds. With many different interests, we are united by a passion for astronomy and the wonders of the universe.

New members and supporters are always welcome. Interested parties can find out more about the association's activities on our website, at our biannual general meetings, or at astronomy fairs.

The IAS is accredited in Germany as a non-profit organisation for the promotion of science and research.

Internationale Amateursternwarte e. V.
c/o Hans-Peter Fier
St.-Stephan-Weg 9
82041 Oberhaching
Germany



Web: <https://www.ias-observatory.org/en/>
Phone: +49-89-21895722
E-Mail: geschaeftsstelle@ias-observatory.org

Observatory Hakos

23° 14' 11" S, 16° 21' 42" E, 1853 m
IAU Minor Planet Center codes 221 and M49

Observatory Gamsberg

23° 20' 30" S, 16° 13' 28" E, 2347 m

Both sites are located in the Khomas Highlands south-west of Windhoek, Namibia. The Hakos observatory is located on the premises of the Hakos Astro Guest Farm.

IAS

**International
Amateur
Observatory**

Astronomy under the Southern Cross

The fascination of the southern sky.
Observing, imaging or scientific research
with large telescopes under
pristine dark sky conditions.
Participation in an international
association whose members share a
passion for astronomy.
This is the IAS!

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Gamsberg Observatory

The 2347-m-high Gamsberg in Namibia is considered one of the 'top 10' astronomical sites in the world. The quality of the night sky is only surpassed by the locations of the largest professional observatories - such as the Atacama Desert in Chile or Mauna Kea in Hawaii.

With the support of the Max Planck Society and the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Heidelberg, the IAS operates an observatory here that offers all members of the association some of the best conditions for astronomical observations and photographic results.



The 'Wolf Peter Hartmann Telescope' on the Gamsberg is a 28-inch Newtonian telescope (f/4.4), providing an unrivalled experience, not least of all for visual observing when seeing conditions are at their best.

Other instruments such as a 16-inch astrograph and various Dobsonian telescopes complement the options.

Hakos Observatory

Within sight of the Gamsberg, the IAS maintains another well-equipped observatory on the Hakos Astro Guest Farm. The observation conditions at Hakos are almost as ideal as on the Gamsberg.

The flagship facility here is the 'Carsten Jacobs Observatory' with an Alt-Az mounted 32-inch Newtonian telescope (f/3.8), making it one of the largest amateur telescopes in southern Africa.



In addition, the IAS Hakos Observatory offers access to three 20-inch telescopes: the large dome with a 20-inch Ritchey-Chrétien (f/8), the twin roll-off roof observatory with the 20-inch Newtonian astrograph AK3 (f/3.7) and a 20-inch Cassegrain telescope (f/9 or f/3 in primary focus configuration). Furthermore, a C14 and other smaller telescopes are available for visual and photographic purposes.

The Hakos Astro Guest Farm is run by the Straube family. Hospitality means a lot to them, so astronomers and their families are warmly welcomed.

Remote Observatories

In order to be able to observe the southern sky without travelling to Namibia, the IAS operates two remote observatories in the Hakos network. Configuration varies, so kindly see our website for more information.

The remote telescopes and the resulting data pool are available to all interested IAS members.

Namibia

Namibia fascinates with its monumental desert and mountain landscapes, diverse wildlife and of course the breathtaking night sky. Due to the sparse population, there is virtually no light pollution outside the cities. The dry air contributes to a clear, transparent and calm night sky.

The best observation period is during the dry winter months in the southern hemisphere, from May to September. In June and July, the centre of the Milky Way in the constellation Sagittarius passes through the zenith and shines so brightly that it actually casts a shadow.