

DARK SKY OBSERVING SITES USED BY PAS

The darkness of the night sky can be measured in Bortle Units. In February 2001, John Bortle published his famous scale in Sky and Telescope Magazine.

Bortle 1 is the darkest sky possible

Bortle 5 is where the Milky Way is faintly visible to the naked eye.

Bortle 9 is very bright inner city skies with only a few very bright stars visible.

PAS has taken Bortle readings using a Sky Quality Meter about 2 hours after sunset with no moon or clouds present at various locations. This can help you find a dark sky site near you. The lower the Bortle number, the darker the skies and the more objects can be seen. A 6 or 8 inch diameter telescope at a Bortle 1 or 2 site can look as good as a 16 or 18 inch scope at a Bortle 5 or 6 site.

Bortle 1.0 18 miles south of Jacobs Lake, 22 miles north of north rim of Grand Canyon

Bortle 1.5 Kaibab lodge 18 miles north of north rim of Grand Canyon

Bortle 1.9 Moran Point South Rim of Grand Canyon

Bortle 2.0 Eastern limits of Munds Park about 20 miles south of Flagstaff

Bortle 2.0 Antenna's air field about 98 miles west of Central Phoenix N of I-10

Bortle 2.0 Hovatter Rd Antenna's site about 100 miles west of Central Phoenix

Bortle 2.5 Cherry Road about 70 miles north of Phoenix

Bortle 2.6 Arcosanti about 60 miles north of Phoenix

Bortle 2.7 Chris Johnson's Cutting Horse Ranch near Mayer, Az

Bortle 3.4 Pickett Post trailhead about 60 miles SE of Phx off Highway 60

Bortle 4.0 Buffalo Park in N Flagstaff

Bortle 4.2 Town of Tusayan 5 miles south of Grand Canyon

Bortle 4.3 Cowtrack Ranch in Carefree

Bortle 4.3 Spur Cross Ranch Park Cave Creek

Bortle 4.3 New River

Bortle 4.3 Robbins Butte East of Buckeye 40 miles SW of Phoenix

Bortle 5.0 Paradise Valley Community College Black Mountain Campus North Valley

Bortle 6.6 Desert Botanical Gardens Phoenix

Bortle 7.2 Roadrunner Park NE Phoenix

Bortle 7.5 Arizona Science Center

Bortle 8.0 Bookman's 19th Ave and Northern