

Lunar eclipse dust accumulations

Tom Murphy

Bio:



Tom Murphy cut his teeth as an amateur astronomer in Tennessee, twice traveling to the Texas Star Party and later to Mexico for the July 1991 total solar eclipse. With undergraduate and graduate degrees in physics at Georgia Tech and Caltech, respectively, Murphy traded his 10-inch telescope for 200-inch and 10-meter instruments, building an integral field spectrograph operating in the infrared at the Palomar 200-inch telescope to study colliding galaxies. After graduate school, Murphy went to the University of Washington in Seattle to begin a project to subject General Relativity to the most stringent tests yet via the technique of lunar laser ranging (LLR). In 2003, Murphy carried this project to UCSD where he is now an associate professor of physics. The Apache Point Observatory Lunar Laser-ranging Operation (APOLLO), operating on the 3.5-meter telescope near Sunspot, NM, now routinely achieves one-millimeter range precision between the Earth and Moon.