



## Deep Sky Companions: The Secret Deep

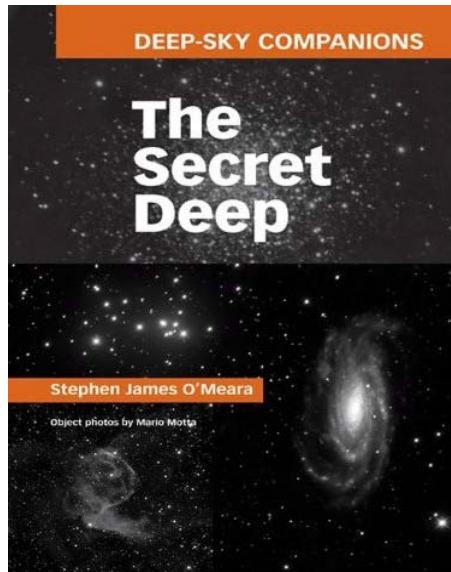
by Stephen J. O'Meara

**Cambridge University Press, 2011. ISBN 978-0-521-19876-9. Pp xiii + 483, £29.00 (hbk).**

Stephen O'Meara is well known amongst amateur astronomers as a respected columnist for *Astronomy* magazine as well as, formerly, *Sky and Telescope*. He has published a number of books in the *Deep Sky Companions* series as well as a guide to observing the Herschel objects.

*The Secret Deep* is very similar to his other books in the series in that he has chosen a list of 109 deep sky objects; a mixed bag including galaxies, star clusters and nebulae. The objects in his previous three books were observed using a 4-inch (101mm) TeleVue Genesis refractor at high altitude in Hawaii. One of the main changes in this book is that he has used a slightly larger, 5-inch (127mm) refractor for the observations, but his observing site is at the slightly lower altitude of 3,500 feet (1,065m). This observing site however is still high by many peoples' standards. Given these observing conditions it is probably worth noting that what O'Meara might think of as easy, is going to be a real challenge for observers at sea level.

Another main difference between this book and his previous ones is that most of the images here were taken by an amateur, albeit using a large telescope. The book opens with a brief introduction on how his observing was done and on the telescope used to take the images. The main part of the book consists of sections covering each object, that each contain a drawing, image and a finder chart along with a visual impression and also up-to-date information culled from the professional literature, as well as historical information.



My overall impressions of this book are that it is well written and well presented. O'Meara has chosen an interestingly eclectic set of objects for observers with medium size telescopes. One can always query some of the choices of object, however in general I think this is a very good resource for deep sky observers with small to medium telescopes and keeps up the high standards of the previous books in the series.

### Owen Brazell

*Owen Brazell has been interested in deep sky observing for nearly 30 years and currently observes with a variety of instruments up to a 22" Dobsonian. He has been assistant director of the Deep Sky Section for almost 20 years.*

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