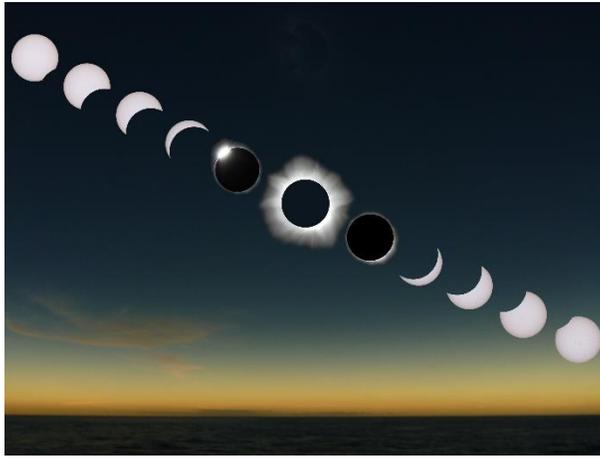


# How to Find an Eclipse Expert

by Andrew Fraknoi (*Fromm Institute, University of San Francisco*)



Total Eclipse of the Sun Sequence. Photo by Rick Fienberg

If your club, organization, or library would like to find a speaker about the October 14, 2023 and April 8, 2024 eclipses of the Sun, here are some resources that may be of help:

## Professional Astronomers

If your community has a college or university with an astronomy department or a physics department with an astronomy program, they may already be making plans for public or community events. Or their faculty or students may be happy to come out to talk as long as you ask sufficiently far in advance. NASA facilities also do outreach. See:

- [College departments offering astronomy degrees](#)
- [Community College finder](#)
- [NASA Centers and Facilities](#)
- [Roster of AAS Astronomy Ambassadors](#) (younger astronomers doing public outreach)

Wikipedia also has entries that list all the colleges and universities in the U.S. state by state. Just search for “colleges in Nebraska” for example.

## Amateur Astronomers

More than 20,000 people in the US enjoy astronomy as a hobby and come together in local astronomy clubs. To find a club near you, consult:

- NASA and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific’s [Night Sky Network](#)
- [The Astronomical League](#) (an umbrella group of clubs nationwide)
- *Sky & Telescope* magazine’s [list of astronomy organizations](#) by location
- *Astronomy* magazine’s [list of organizations](#) (once you get a state listing, click on the name of each organization (even though it doesn’t look like a link) to get more info.

Amateur astronomers often have special telescopes that allow safe views of the Sun and may, with enough notice, be able to bring one or more of these to a community event.

A group of volunteers (many of them with educator background) called [NASA's Solar System Ambassadors](#) are specially trained to provide presentation and information to schools and other organizations.

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific, with support from NASA, is training hundreds of pairs of [Eclipse Ambassadors](#) to do public outreach for the two solar eclipses,. Each pair consists of one amateur astronomer and one undergraduate student.

### **Science Museum and Planetarium Educators**

Many science centers and museums have educators on staff who may be able to help with community programs. A planetarium is a museum devoted to astronomy (with a star theater that shows the sky in the round.) To find these, you can consult:

- The Association of Science and Technology Centers [Finder Tool](#)
- The [World Wide Planetarium Database](#)
- The [International Planetarium Society Finder Page](#)
- The [Loch Ness Planetarium Compendium](#)
- The [List of Nature Centers](#) in the United States

### **High-school Science Teachers**

High-school physics and earth-science teachers often teach units on eclipses, and may be organizing school-wide events or information guides. While teachers are generally very busy and can't take time off during the day, some may organize eclipse projects where they and their students have a community outreach focus.

The National Science Teaching Association will have resources for science teachers on [their website](#) as we get closer to the eclipses.

### **The 2023/2024 Eclipses of the Sun and Libraries**

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation is funding a national project to distribute 5 million eclipse glasses and information booklets through 10,000 public libraries nationwide. The program is named [Solar Eclipse Activities for Libraries](#) and is headquartered at the Space Science Institute in Boulder, CO (part of their STARNet network of libraries.)

You can scroll down their web page to get to an interactive map of the participating libraries.