

# Dana

## Astronomy night with Jupiter

Dana - Moataz Othman



I was invited to visit Dana nature reserve in south Jordan. The Barriya-Jordan, of the Royal Association for the Protection of Nature, in collaboration with the Jordanian Astronomy Society arranged an evening with Jupiter.

For just a Euro, I took the bus to the town of Al-Tafilah. It is the same road that is taken by pilgrims to Mecca and banners inform travellers that a sincere Hajj has its reward in paradise". After two hours we arrived at Al-Tafilah, then travelled to the reserve of Dana, where we saw the tomb of a companion of the Prophet, Al-Hareth Ben Umair Al-Azdi, who was his messenger. After reading sourate Al-Fatiha we continued towards Arromanah camp-site in the reserve of Dana.

We arrived just before sunset and the visitors took several photographs. Half an hour later, Venus appeared on the left of the sunset spot, then Mercury. We saw them both with the naked eye but the view through the telescope was better. After dinner at the campsite, we spent the night scanning the sky to find Jupiter with its four satellites. We could also see stars of the constellation of the Large and Small Bear and the polar star indicating north, located to the right of the Large Bear. One could also observe the clouds indicating the Milky Way.

We were given a detailed briefing by a qualified astronomer who, in reply to a question, informed us that we could see 3,000 stars on the sky borders. We were spared the job of trying to count them and tiring our eyes.

The following day, after breakfast, we visited the village of Dana through the green trees and cascades and returned to Amman inspired by our astronomical adventure. ■