STARGAZERS WANTED TO MAP LIGHT POLLUTION IN BUCKS

Thursday 17 February, 2022

Star-filled skies are one of the most magical sights our countryside has to offer.

But research shows that light pollution from buildings and roads is leaving fewer stars than ever visible to the naked eye.

Not only does it limit our view of the night sky, it also disrupts the natural patterns of wildlife.

The Bucks branch of countryside charity CPRE want to make sure everyone across the county - and the country - can continue to enjoy the wonder of a dark, starry night.

To that end, they are calling on local residents to become “citizen scientists” and help them track how light levels are changing.

The charity’s free, annual Star Count campaign, supported by the British Astronomical Association, is a cosmic census to map light pollution.

Once signed up, all people need to do is choose a clear night between 26 February and the 6 March 2022, look heavenwards and count the number of stars they can spot in the constellation of Orion.

Guidance on how to find Orion and tips for getting the most out of their star-spotting experience will be provided and are also available on the CPRE website.

Paula Buck, Chair of CPRE Bucks, said: “ Buckinghamshire has some of the most beautiful countryside in England and experiencing it on a dark, starry night is truly magical. But light pollution across the county is a growing problem so we’re asking local people to help us measure the effect it’s having on our views of the galaxy.”

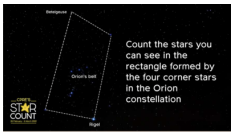
“Star Count is a fun way for family and friends to reconnect with nature. It’s also free, simple to do and can be done safely from your garden, balcony or even bedroom window. You don’t even need a telescope! ”

The results from Star Count will help CPRE to create a map of where star-spotters are enjoying deep, dark skies, and identify areas where light pollution is most serious. The charity will use the data to work with local councils and others to explore ways to tackle the problem.

To sign up for Star Count, visit
https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/dark-skies/star-count-2022/

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