



# THE LAST LUNAR ECLIPSE OF 2008 VIEWED FROM MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

*The eclipse on August, 16 was a partial one.  
From Mendoza we could see the last moments of this phenomenon*

**Report by Leo Cavagnaro**

We had two lunar eclipses this year. The first one was a total eclipse that occurred on February, 20th and was visible from the Americas. On August, 16th there was a partial eclipse.

This was the number 29 of 83 eclipses of Saros Series 138. This Series began with a small eclipse on October, 5 1503 and it will end with a small eclipse on March, 30 2982. The eclipses of this Series occur in the Moon's ascending node. At the time of this phenomenon, our satellite was in Constellation Capricornus, near the border with Constellation Aquarius.

## The Observation from Mendoza, Argentina



*I took this picture with my Canon A570 IS digital camera at 7:19pm local time, with the Moon very low in the sky.*

Yes, it was a rainy and gray day in Mendoza Saturday morning. All of us thought it would be impossible to drive to a place some miles away from Mendoza city to observe the last minutes of the eclipse, with the Moon partially immersed in the umbral shadow. We waited until 7pm to see if it would be possible to aim our binoculars, digital cameras and telescopes toward the East. But why drive so many miles away to see a lunar eclipse? Well, because from Mendoza (latitude -32.9 longitude 68.8W) we saw the eclipse in progress when our

satellite rose at 7:07pm local time (UT-3hours). Moreover, the eclipse ended when the Moon was at only 6.5 degrees of altitude. For those reasons we needed an East horizon without big trees or buildings.



*Picture of the eclipse taken with a digital camera using eye-piece projection with an 8-inch telescope working at low magnification*

It was mostly cloudy at 7pm. However, we could see a clear eastern sky from our observing site situated 15 miles North of Mendoza. The picture here was taken at 7:26pm local time, 18 minutes before the umbral phase ended.

The Moon's trajectory took it through the northern umbral shadow, resulting in a partial eclipse that lasted 3 hours 8 minutes. However, it was a short phenomenon for observers situated in the west region of our country. We could see the eclipse for only 37 minutes (7:07pm to 7:44pm)

Greatest eclipse took place at 6:10pm local time (9:10pm UT) when the eclipse magnitude reached 0.8076.

From these geographical coordinates the Moon was below the horizon for us at that moment. At 7:44pm local time the Moon left the umbra and we saw the usual appearance of a

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bright full Moon. Astronomically, the phenomenon finished at 8:55pm local time (11:55pm UT), when the Moon left the penumbral shadow.

In spite of the low temperatures at the observing site (41F) we enjoyed this amazing astronomical phenomenon. There are four lunar eclipses next year. Three are penumbral eclipses and the last one is a partial eclipse.

