

Solar eclipse spectacular should be viewed with caution

The July 11 eclipse will be among the most spectacular witnessed in memory and will be viewed by nearly 500 million people in Central and South America, Mexico, United States and Canada. Starting at about 3 p.m. EST and lasting about 60 minutes, the eclipse will be visible (weather permitting) to those in Southwestern Ontario (Windsor area) with visibility declining as one travels further north from that area. A partial eclipse of approximately 12%, (in other words, 12% of the sun will be covered during the event), will be witnessed by those in the southwest area of the province.

Although we will not be witnessing the total eclipse and some may not notice the eclipse at all, caution must still be advised when eclipse watching. During a recent eclipse in the U.S. according to the American Optometric Association, 145 cases of eye injury were reported. Forty per cent of these injuries were caused by people mistakenly believing they were taking adequate measures to protect their eyes. The other sixty per cent took no precautions at all. The common misconception that sunglasses, exposed film, most welder goggles, photographic filters and smoked glass are adequate eye protection should be corrected.

We suggest those interested in

viewing this or any other eclipse participate in eclipse watches, organized by astronomy clubs, planetariums or museums. These groups can provide the viewer with clear images of the event through specially filtered telescopes, in safe settings, under the guidance of trained astronomers.

The next best way to view this or any other eclipse is to view it indirectly, using a "pinhole projector" or "sunscope" made of aluminum foil, white paper and a large cardboard carton. Although this basic design dates back to the 1500's, it offers protection while enabling the viewer to see the eclipse. The image of the eclipse passing through a pinhole in one end of the box is projected onto the paper screen on the other end, allowing the viewer to see a small image of the eclipse while remaining with eyes directed safely away from it. Caution should be taken to ensure that the viewer looks at the projected im-

age and not through the pinhole directly at the sun. The sides of the device offer additional protection from the sun's rays and if the user pokes the hole in an upper corner, it is more difficult to turn one's head around and look through it.

Although the July 11 event will not be as large in Ontario as in some other areas, the occurrence of an eclipse stirs the interest in most individuals. The publicity and the accurate prediction of dates of these events encourages many to view eclipses. We in Ontario will be witnessing a major eclipse on May 10, 1994. This event will be visible (weather conditions permitting) to the majority of people living in the province in its entirety.

The Ontario Association of Optometrists and your local optometrist encourage the public to view eclipses as an excellent scientific learning experience but one that should only be taken with precaution and planning.



Taking a break

A dragonfly flexes its wings while resting on water plants along the bank of Silver Creek in Cedarvale Park. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstopfel-Pot)

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The master bedroom is a luxurious retreat. It boasts a vaulted ceiling, huge walk-in wardrobe and sumptuous ensuite. The ensuite is comprised of three separate areas; vanity and dressing room, toilet and spa area with his and her sinks and shower. The fourth bedroom has a private bath with soaking tub. The two additional bedrooms share a main bath with twin vanity. The bonus room provides 295 square feet for future expansion and can be used as a game room or fifth bedroom.

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