



2026 OzSky "CLASSIC" STAR SAFARI

LIGHT POLLUTION RECONSIDERED

A PRESENTATION TO OZSKY 2026

***TOM REINERT, BOARD MEMBER AND FORMER PRESIDENT
DARKSKY INTERNATIONAL***

www.OzSky.org

Light Pollution Reconsidered

A Presentation to OzSky
March 2026

Tom Reinert, Board Member and
Former President
DarkSky International



DarkSky
INTERNATIONAL

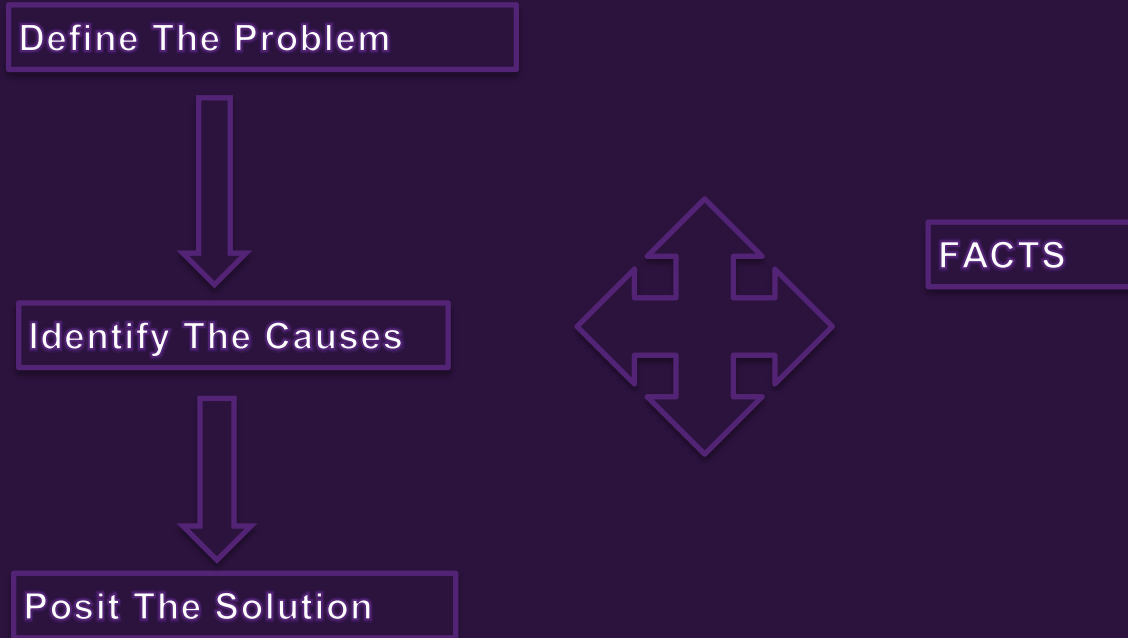


2001 Cinzano P., Falchi F., Elvidge C.D.

Late 1950's



ANALYZING A SOCIAL PROBLEM



(1) It Doesn't Take Much Light To Pollute The Night Sky



(2) The Environmental Impact Of Light Pollution Is As Important As The Astronomical



Impacts of Light Pollution on Migratory Birds

80% of North American bird species migrate at night, relying on the moon & stars to navigate

Artificial light at night can:

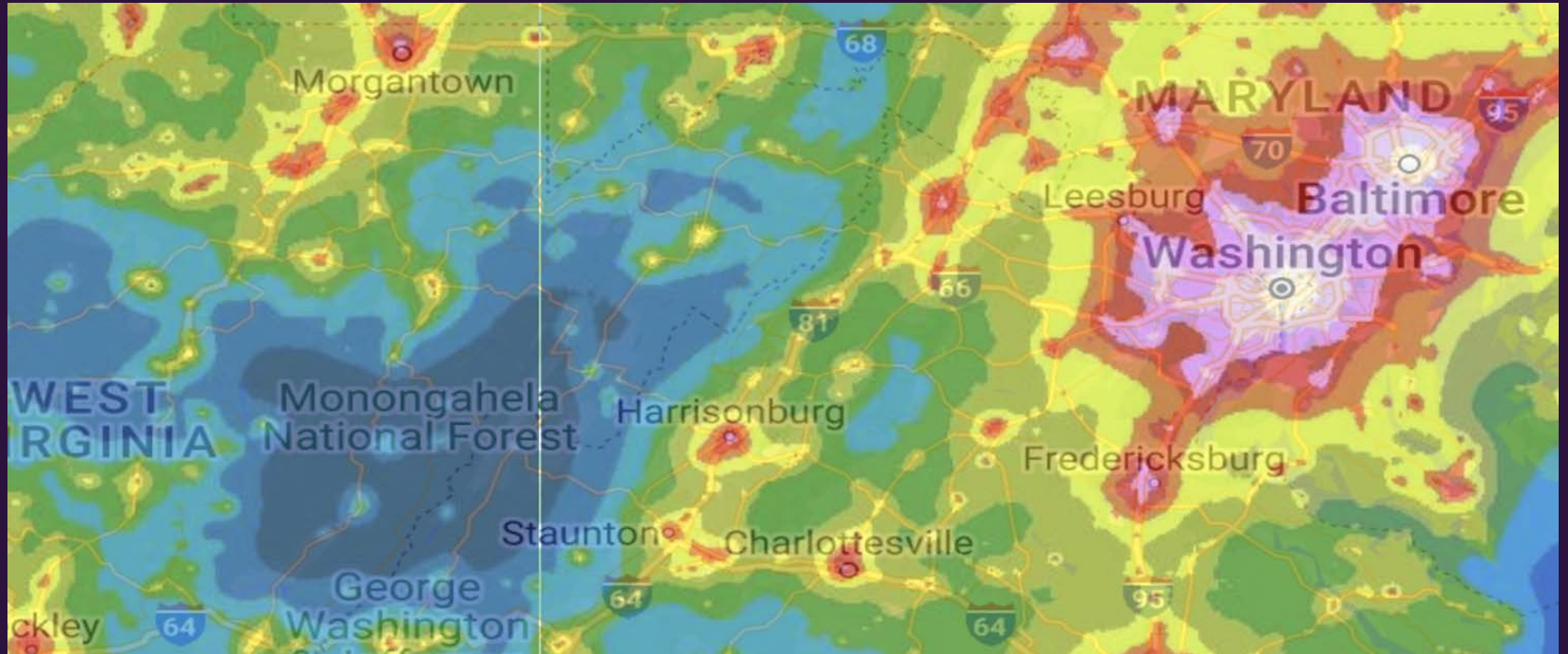
- reduce visibility of the starry night sky and disorient birds off their migratory route
- cause exhaustion as birds circle the lights and lit structures
- alter birds' behaviors, such as migration, foraging and vocal communication
- increase the risk of fatal collisions with glass and other structures
- expose disoriented birds to other threats, such as predators
- impact the survival of insects that many bird species rely on for food
- disrupt the growth of plants that many birds rely on for food and habitat

CORNELL UNIVERSITY WILDLIFE CENTER

(3) Residential Light Trespass Is Not The Problem



(4) Taxpayers Are Subsidizing Light Pollution



(5) The Willie Sutton Rule: Go Where The Light Is



(6) The Dark Sky Movement Is Truly International



(7) But Most Effective Action Is Local



(8) Local Laws Are Important, But Don't Over-rely



(9) Constant Vigilance Is Necessary



(10) Don't Get Lost In Technical Solutions

LIGHT TO PROTECT THE NIGHT Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting



Illuminating
ENGINEERING SOCIETY



USEFUL



ALL LIGHT SHOULD HAVE A CLEAR PURPOSE

Before installing or replacing a light, determine if light is needed. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and the environment. Consider using reflective paints or self-luminous markers for signs, curbs, and steps to reduce the need for permanently installed outdoor lighting.

TARGETED



LIGHT SHOULD BE DIRECTED ONLY TO WHERE NEEDED

Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.

LOW LIGHT LEVELS



LIGHT SHOULD BE NO BRIGHTER THAN NECESSARY

Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.

CONTROLLED



LIGHT SHOULD BE USED ONLY WHEN IT IS USEFUL

Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.

COLOR



USE WARMER COLOR LIGHTS WHERE POSSIBLE

Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.

(11) Focus On “Responsible Lighting” Not “Light Pollution”



Photo by Jim Richardson

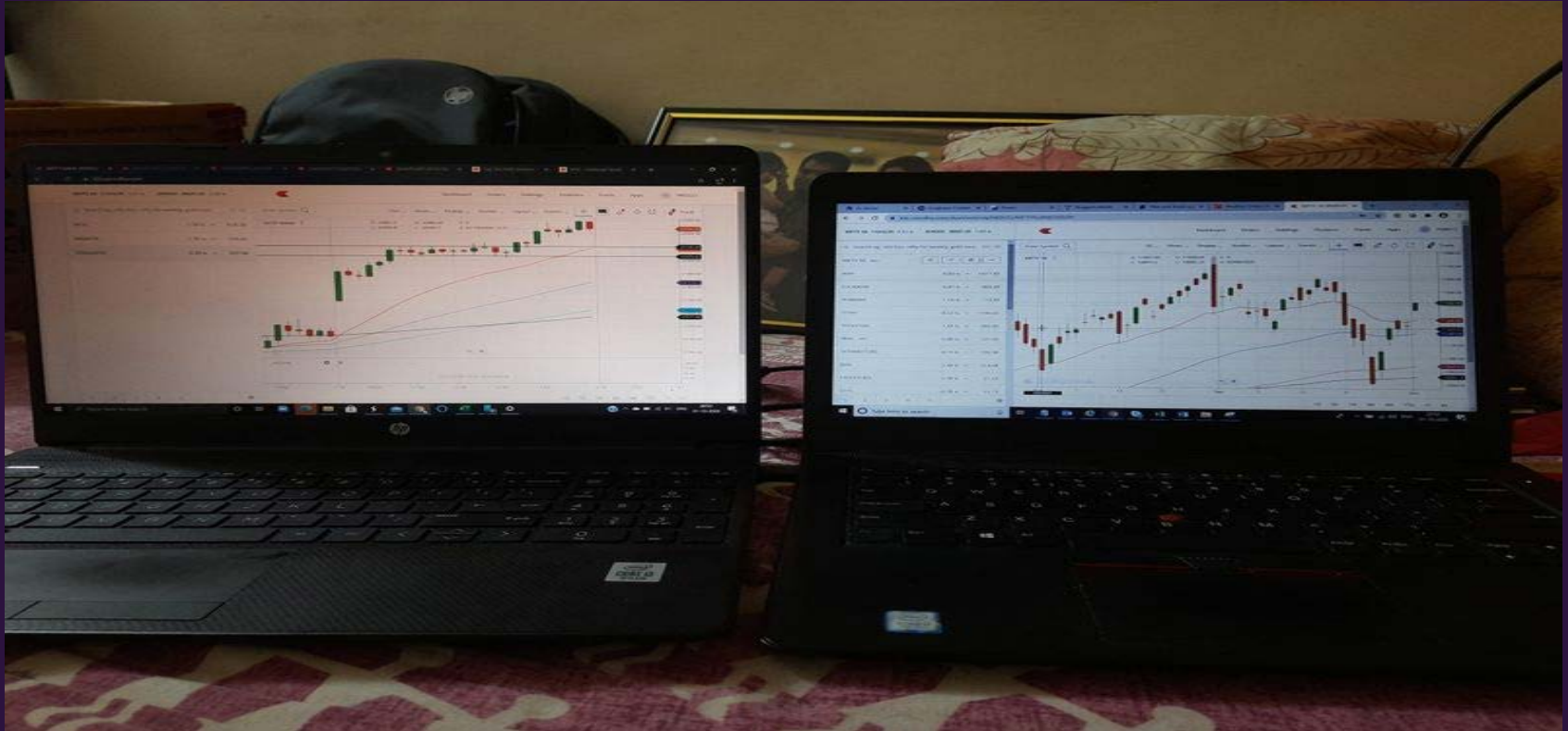
(12) Light Pollution Cannot Be Solved Overnight



(13) Inter-Generational Action Is Necessary



(14) Internal, Personal Light Must Be Self-Regulated



(15) Space Junk Is A Distinct Problem



Near Future DarkSky Developments

- Large infrastructure projects with dark sky lighting
- ROLAN education program for advocates & professionals
- Nationwide public relations campaign further raising awareness
- [DarkSky One][Peter Bray]
- More municipalities & states with dark sky ordinances & database to track
- More outreach and night sky places in urban & suburban locations

The Future Is Looking Less Bright





[Tom Reinert](mailto:thomas.reinert@darksky.org)
thomas.reinert@darksky.org

www.DarkSky.org

