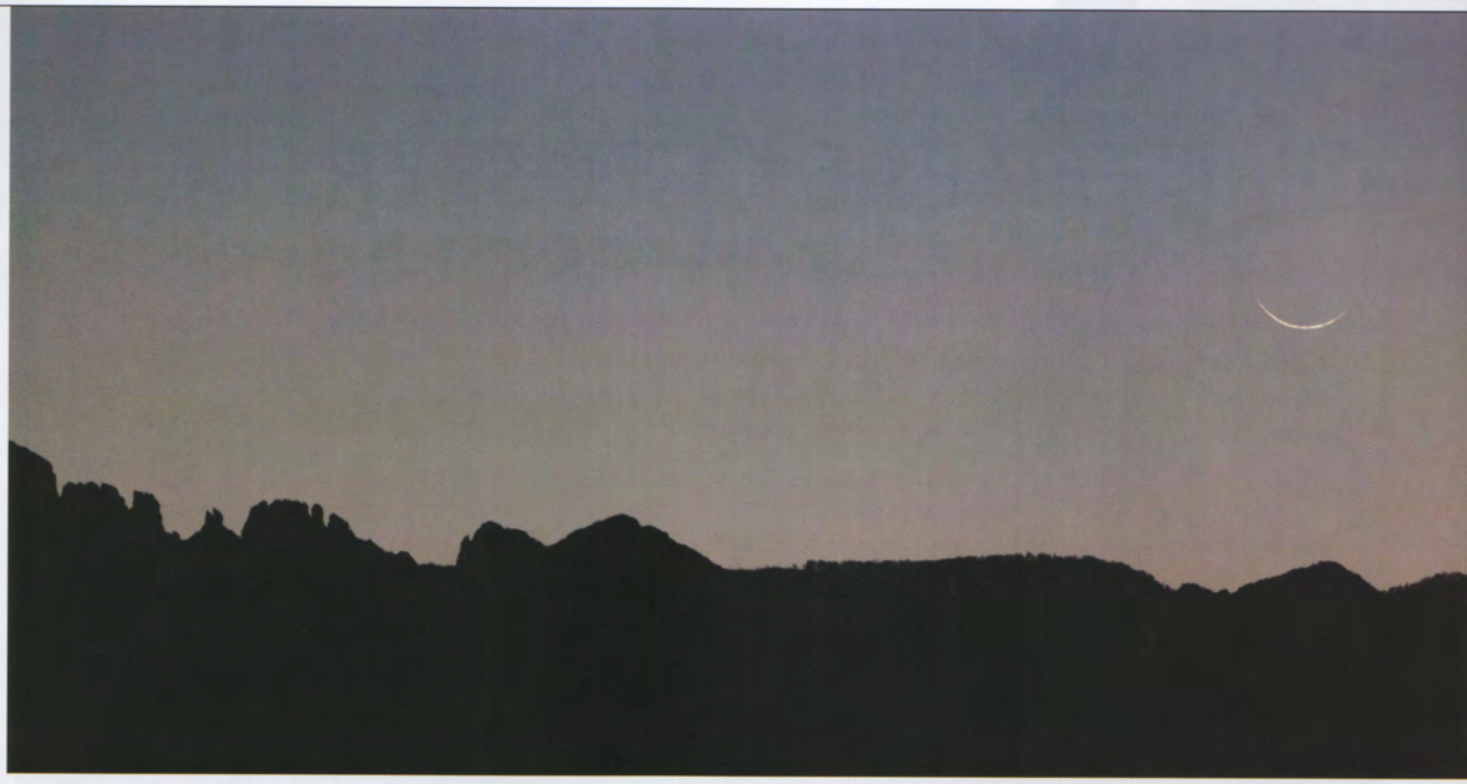

▲ **MERCURY AND CRESCENT MOON** If you think this craggy horizon looks rather un-Canadian, your suspicions are correct. Bob Betenia of Calgary, Alberta, was on vacation near Rodeo, New Mexico, when he recorded the thin crescent Moon and Mercury on the evening of February 22 as the pair was setting over the Chiricahua Mountains on the New Mexico/Arizona border. He used a Canon 5D Mark II with a 300mm lens at f/4, hand-held at ISO 3200 and 1/60 second.

▲ **A QUICKIE AURORA SHOT** On the night of Saturday, February 18, 2012, a brief yet beautiful aurora flickered over much of northern Canada. Adrien Quenville of Thompson, Manitoba, stepped outside his home to find this vivid green veil dancing in the northern sky. He steadied his Kodak EasyShare Z612 digital camera against a trash can and took this 15-second exposure at f/2.8, ISO 400.

BUBBLE NEBULA, NGC7635 ▶ Howard Trottier used a PlaneWave Instruments CDK17 telescope at f/4.5 for this 12-hour CCD exposure of the Bubble Nebula taken over three nights last summer at his observatory in the South Okanagan region of British Columbia. The telescope rides atop a Paramount ME mount; the camera is an SBIG STL-4020M. The field of view is just under half a degree wide. The 10-light-year-wide nebula is expanding from the pressure of stellar winds from the bright, massive interior star. The Bubble Nebula was discovered visually by William Herschel in 1787.