Lunar Occultation of Antares

Thursday, August 24, 2023

For a location of 40°N-75°W, the red giant star Antares will be occulted just before 11 pm EDT by the preceding (dark) limb of the waxing gibbous Moon, 57% illuminated, when they'll be about 7° altitude.

Antares is a double star with components A = mag 1.0, B = mag 5.4, currently 2.6 arc sec separation.

The disappearance times, as determined with SkySafari, will be at… B – 10:54:38 pm
A – 10:54:44 pm

That's a six-second span when component A alone will be visible; however, I would not expect the absence of the fifth-magnitude secondary to have a noticeable impact on the brightness of the primary alone compared to the brightness of the paired stars.

Typically, it's difficult to separate this pair with a telescope; good seeing and near-transit altitude is needed. At 7° altitude, it's likely impossible, so it's at least as unlikely that the occultation of B as a separate entity will be visible.

Antares will emerge from the following (bright) limb about 11:40 pm, at just half a degree altitude, so for all practical purposes, it will be unobservable.

Joe Stieber, August 18, 2023