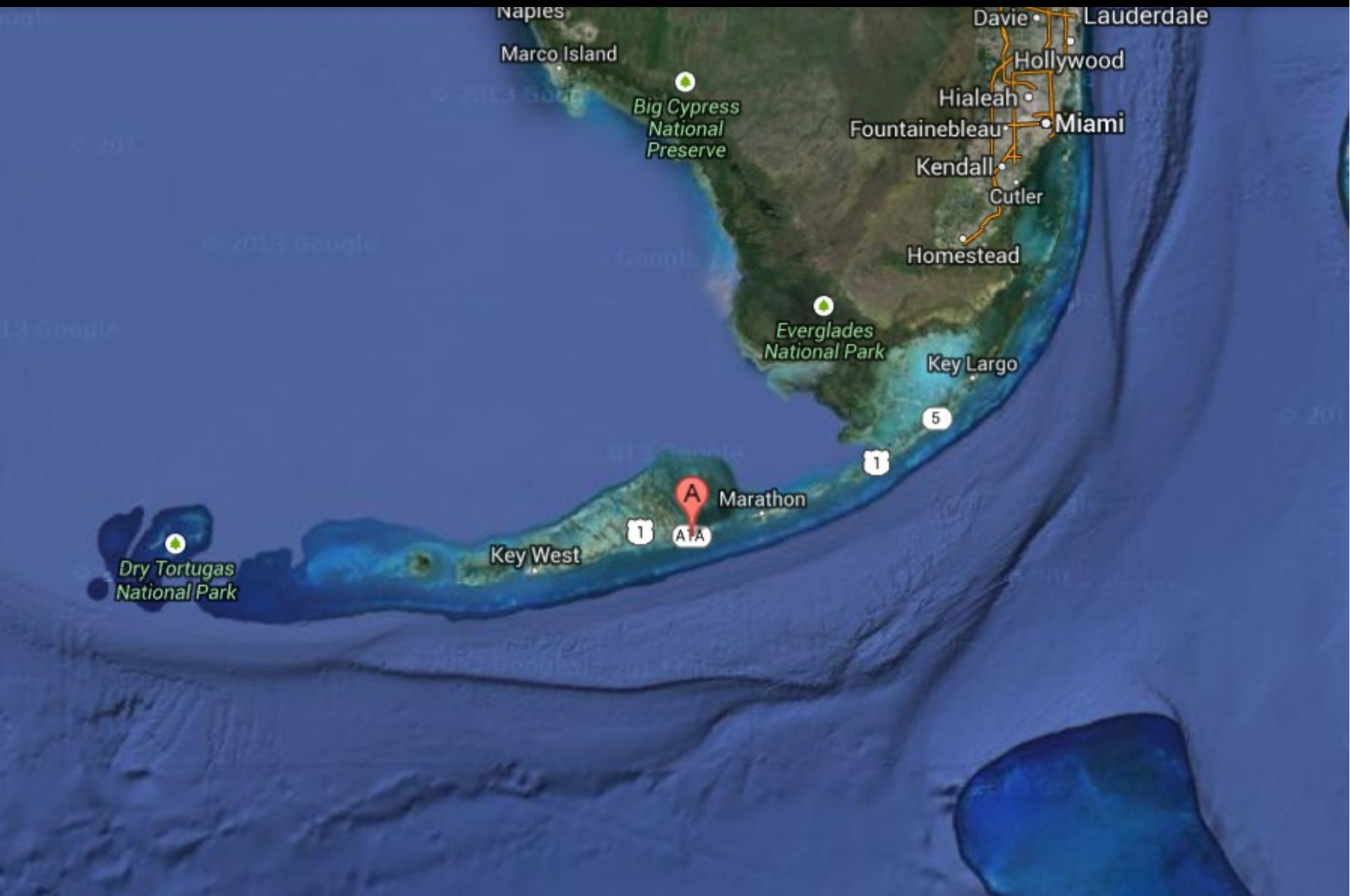


# Winter Star Party 2014



# Winter Star Party 2014

- February 23 – March 2
- Camp Wesumkee on Scout Key
- In between Marathon Key and Big Pine Key
- 45 minutes away from Key West
- About 3 hours south of Miami
- About 18 hours from Maryland



Naples

Marco Island

Davie

Lauderdale

Hollywood

Hialeah

Miami

Fountainebleau

Kendall

Cutler

Homestead

Everglades National Park

Key Largo

Marathon

Key West

Dry Tortugas National Park

A

ATA

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google

© 2013 Google



No Name Key

Doctors Arm

e Key

Overseas Hwy - Big Pine Key

Overseas Hwy

Spanish Harbor

Bahia Honda Key

Overseas Hwy

Bahia Honda State Park

Coupon Bight

Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge

Overseas Hwy

Bight reserve




Overseas Hwy

U

ATA

ATA

Girl Scout Camp  
Wesumke 

# Opening Day

- Gate opens at 12 PM on Sunday
- Cars are lining up the night before
- I was 24<sup>th</sup> in line, arriving at about 4 AM.
- Cars continue lining up to the bridge, then over
- Want a good camping spot. Telescope space is plentiful, though.
- (As long as you don't have a "monster scope")



# Omega Centauri from the Road!



# Lodging

- \$150 registration and \$85 camping fee
- There are chickees you can stay in
- Some people bring RVs
- Hotels in the area are VERY expensive





# Things Provided

- Port-a-potties
- Actual bathroom and shower facilities
- Food vendor open most of the time
- Equipment vendors
- Power all over the field
- Door Prizes
- Security is posted at the entrance









SWEET CORN SWEET CORN

FRESH BREWED  
Lipton  
ICED TEA  
SWEET & UNSWEETENED

Coca-Cola

ICE



# Telescopes

- Attendees bring all kinds
- Homemade
- Gigantic Dobs
- Some people come without one and look through others'









# During the Day

- Key West has lots to do
- Big Pine Key and Marathon have "civilization" in case you need to buy anything
- Beaches all over the place (no waves)
- Third largest coastal reef in the world
- In the camp, they have astronomy talks
- Swap meets

# The Conditions

- Not pristine
- Right next to a highway, but trees prevent direct light
- Miami is to the north, Key West to the west, Marathon to the east, but...
- Cuba is about 90 miles south
- Can have nights with excellent seeing and transparency

# The Weather

- In the 70s and 80s during the day
- Low somewhere around 60
- Not on the berm, it can be very dewy
- On the berm it can be very windy (but outstanding southern views)
- It may rain

# The Skies

- 15 Degrees Further South!
- Constellations like Centaurus, Vela, Carina and Crux visible
- Scorpius and Sagittarius Milky Way are gorgeous
- Omega Centauri at 17 degrees
- Eta Carina at 9 degrees
- Southern Cross fully visible over the water!

# My Astrophotos

- Cameras:
  - Canon 60DA
  - Canon T2i
- Mounts:
  - Astrotrac
  - Celestron CGEM

# My Astrophotos

- Lenses/telescopes
  - Tokina 11-16mm f2.8
  - Canon 50mm f1.4
  - Canon 200mm f2.8
  - Astrotech EQD 65mm refractor

# Six nights

- Nights 1 and 2, mediocre conditions, sucker holes
- Night 3, good conditions most of the night
- Night 4, nice skies early in the night, turning to mostly cloudy around 11
- Night 5, rain
- Night 6, some clouds early, but after 10, spectacular skies until dawn





















