

Conquering a Cairn with a Colander to **Experience the Eclipse | 12 Aug 2026** **@ Loch Ruthven & Stac Gorm, Strathnairn**



Connection with Community, regardless of the Clouds, Conditions or Climb

There was a great turnout from the local community of Strathnairn, Inverness, Beauly and beyond, for an ascent of Stac Gorm; to gain an elevated westward view and experience a rare 90-95% obscuration of the Sun, as the UK came together to witness the Solar Eclipse. A separate body of friends had similar plans to Strathnairn Stargazing Group, and the groups coalesced at the Car Park, to ascend Stac Gorm.

Complete with a couple of pairs of Solar Eclipse glasses to share around, a welder's protective shield, modified cereal boxes, colanders galore (effectively everything but the kitchen sink!) we collectively jangled our way to the top in a steady procession.



As Maria astutely pointed out, in looking up from Croachy “*Stac Gorm was the new Stone Henge*”.



Whilst billowing clouds continued to build - effectively dashing the hope of clearer skies - the spirit remained strong and still. Who cared? Not us. It was a view to marvel at nonetheless, slow down and experience our place in the world.



Overlooking Loch Ruthven & Solar Eclipse | 12 August 2026 | Strathnairn, UK | Photographed by Julie Macrae.

Gathered for 20 minutes or so, on the summit, some people dressed in shorts and tshirts, adopted extra layers as the temperature dropped and wind (associated with the Eclipse)

picked up on what was otherwise a motionless day. Stranger still was the descent, in a steady increasing level of light, akin to the dawning of a new day, as nighttime approached.



A solar eclipse - of high obscurity - is relatively rare from our UK base. 1999 was the last one that came close. Another total eclipse will occur on 02 August 2027, but you'll need to be in Southern Spain, Gibraltar, Tunisia and Egypt to know much about it. It will therefore not be until 2081 that an eclipse of 99% is next experienced in the south west of the UK. One for Strathnairn's children perhaps?

However witnessing it - in any form - messes with your mind, but equally makes for a vivid experience, when shared with friends and community.

What more can you ask for, from a memorable night out?

As Pallab Ghosh, BBC's Science Correspondent stated in the BBC's coverage of the Solar Eclipse *"This reminds us of what it is to be human"*.

See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/c4gwd5rwvx5t?app-referrer=deep-link>

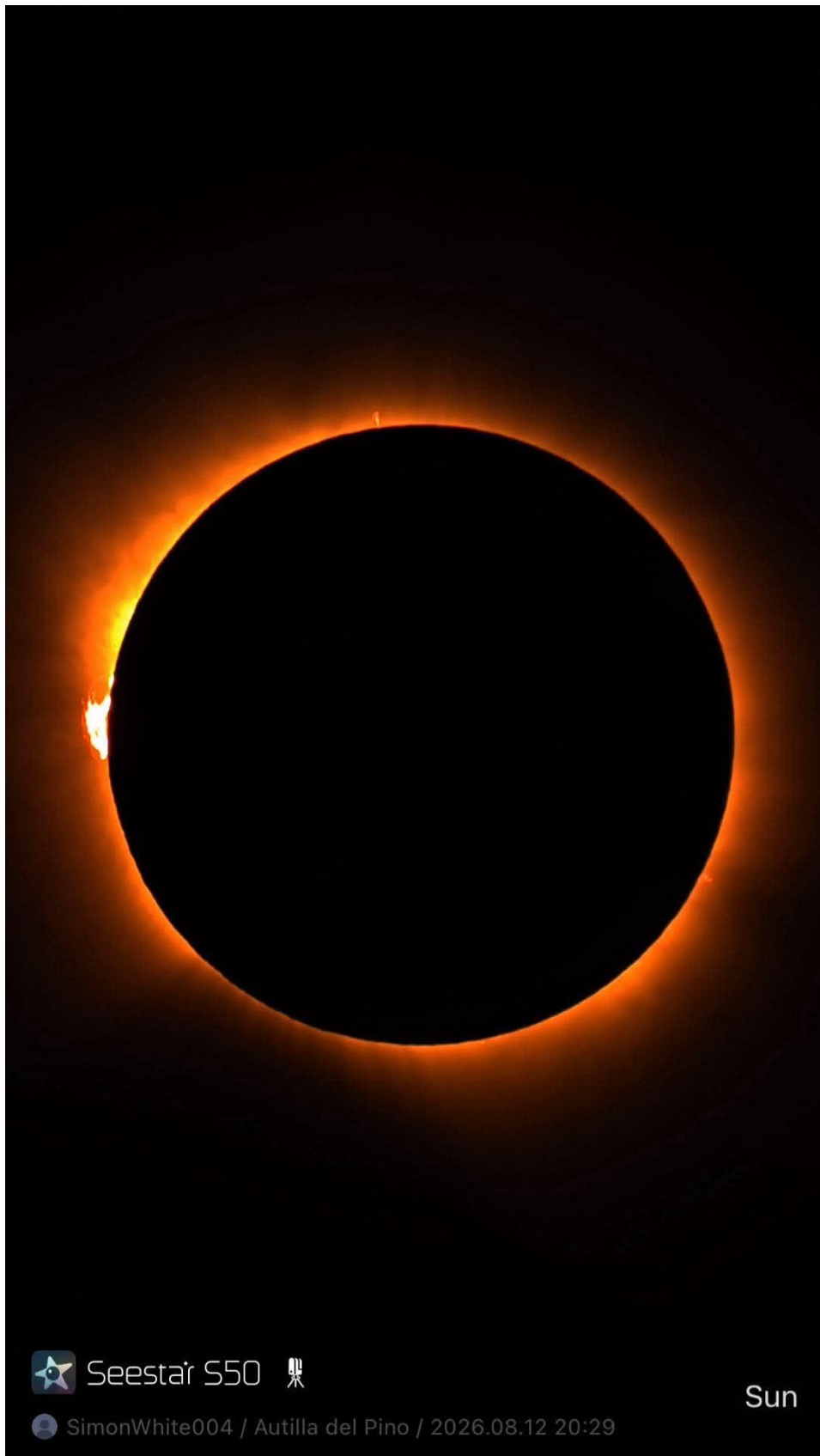


Image of Totality | 12 August 2026 | Autilla del Pino, Spain | Photographed by Simon White.

This image of the total eclipse was captured in Northern Spain with optimum conditions, at the time of event, and shared with Dr Andy McGregor, SSG's Chair.

[Simon (as Andy's friend) has kindly given SSG permission to share his image, for the purpose of this report].



Red Sky at Night, Shepherd's Delight | 12 August 2026 | Strathnairn, UK | Photographed by Amelie Henderson.

All in all, ending a perfect day in Strathnairn, and a reminder that the overhead skies are there to be enjoyed by all and protected.

SPECIAL THANKS > GO OUT TO RSPB @ LOCH RUTHVEN

SNCC & SSG give their thanks to RSPB @ Loch Ruthven Nature Reserve, for kindly enabling the community to gain access to the reserve's carpark outside the normal opening hours. It was a good example of local and wider organisations, working together to open up access to local community and do more.

In return SNCC have invited the RSPB to hold a talk in Farr Hall over Winter 2026, to update the local and wider community on 12 months of Development Work to improve conditions for the Slavonian Grebe at Loch Ruthven. This aligns with the LPP which supports Nature Restoration & Increasing Biodiversity within the Strath.

RSPB have accepted this invite > Watch this space.