

An excerpt from *The Spangled Heavens, An Introduction to Astronomy for Young People* by Lawrence Edwards

The Solar System

As we look round at our world, at the hills and the flowers and the trees, we feel that we are living in a very lovely and interesting place. But there is also something else which is very beautiful and very interesting, and that is the sky, where we can see the Sun and the Moon and the stars. The study of these things is called 'Astronomy', and people who devote their time to it are known as 'Astronomers'.

Astronomers have been able to discover lots of interesting things about the heavens, and in this book we shall try to realize the meaning of some of their marvellous discoveries. But before we go any further, we must find out exactly where we are ourselves. As we cannot fly to the stars in order to find out more about them, the only thing we can do is to look at them very carefully from the Earth; so let us first learn something about this Earth on which we stand.