Jean-Louis Pons Encyclopedia Article

Jean-Louis Pons

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1761-1831

French astronomer who discovered 37 comets during his life. Pons had only a basic education but, as a nonscientific assistant at the Observatory of Marseilles, received instruction from professional astronomers and developed skills that made him a respected astronomer in his own right. He discovered at least one comet yearly from 1801 until 1827, when he was forced to retire due to failing vision. Pons was honored with scientific awards from both Britain and France during his career.