

Dundee Astronomical Society

Sky Notes for August 2017

Sky Map for 15th August 22:00

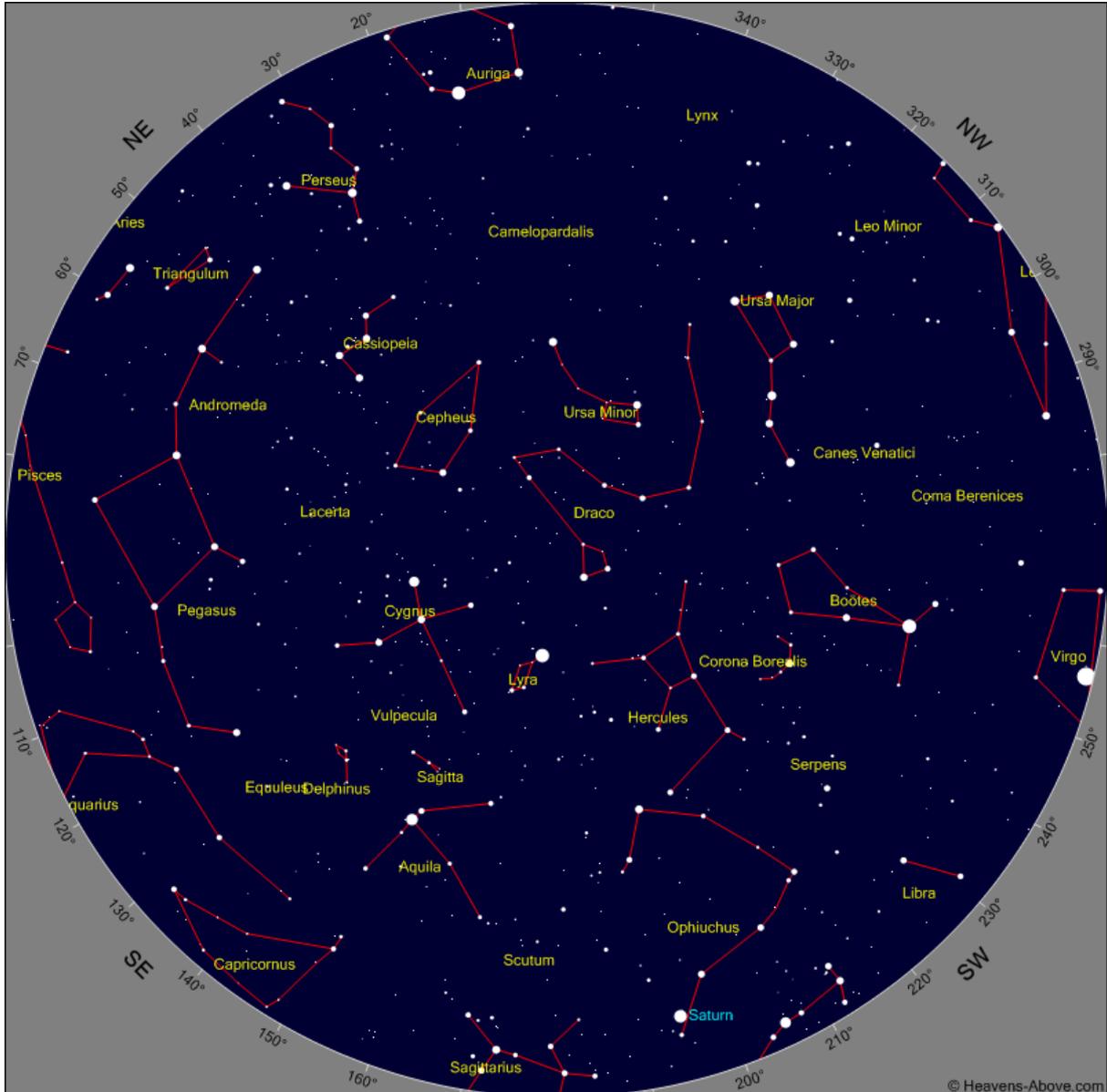


Illustration Courtesy of www.heavensabove.com

Luckily for us this month there are two eclipses to look out for. Unlucky though, they are both going to be difficult to see.

First is on the 7th – the rising moon will be partially eclipsed by the Earth's penumbral shadow. Look out for this after 19:50 UT but, probably will not be easy to see.

Second is on the 21st – there will be a small partial eclipse of the Sun, just visible in the UK. This will show the Moon taking a small bite out of the lower edge of the Sun. Hopefully this should be visible from about 18:40 in the UK. This is the tail end of the total eclipse of the Sun in North America. Keep a good look out for this and hopefully the clouds will keep away. Again, always take the necessary precautions to protect your eyesight when viewing the Sun, you only have one pair of eyes.

Certainly, in my part of Fife, evening/night viewing conditions at night have not been too great with most nights having medium to heavy cloud cover, hopefully for all of us this will clear up for August.

14th August keep an eye open as the moon is showing a favourable Libration on its northwest limb and with a bit of luck you should be able to spot crater Pythagoras.

The Planets

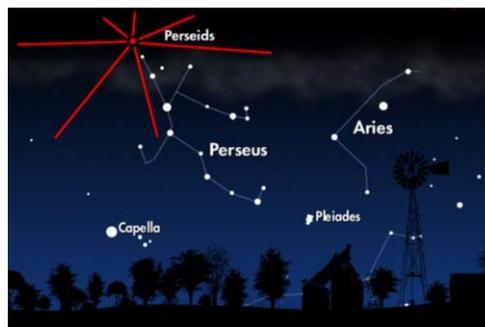
Mercury	This month Mercury is not well placed as it is in conjunction with the Sun. If you do try to view, take extreme caution and ensure you use solar filters etc on your equipment.
Venus	Unfortunately it is a morning planet for us, so not well placed.
Mars	Mars is a morning planet this month and again not well placed for observing.
Jupiter	Becoming difficult to observe in our night sky as it not well placed. On the 25 th of the month it is close to the waxing crescent Moon
Saturn	Quite low in the evening sky, just west of due south.
Uranus	A morning planet for us, so not in an advantageous position.
Neptune	Close to Lambda Aquarii this month, you should be able to see in a large scope with good viewing conditions.

The Moon

Full Moon	7 th August
Third Quarter	15 th August
New Moon	21 st August
First Quarter	29 th August

Meteor Showers

The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by comet Swift-Tuttle. The Perseids are famous for producing many bright meteors, the shower runs annually from July 17 to August 24. It peaks this year on the night of August 12th and the morning of August 13th. The waning gibbous moon will block out many of the fainter meteors this year, but the Perseids are so bright and numerous that it should still be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.



NLC's

Our Secretary, June Gilchrist, managed to capture the first image below on the 2nd. Well done June. Also Ken Kennedy has managed to capture a lovely display on the 17/18th of the month. Well done Ken. See their images below.



Monthly Challenge

Well let's hope the skies keep clear for this month's challenge which should be, hopefully, an easy one. 14th of the month there is a Libration of the Moon on its northwest limb, see if you can take an image of crater Pythagoras.

Jim's Focus of the Month

Delphinus. The constellation represents the dolphin sent by the sea god Poseidon to find Amphitrite, the Nereid he wanted to marry. The neighboring constellations are Aquarius, Aquila, Equuleus, Pegasus, Sagitta, and Vulpecula. Delphinus belongs to the Heavenly Waters family of constellations, along with Carina, Columba, Equuleus, Eridanus, Piscis Austrinus, Puppis, Pyxis, and Vela.

Containing no Messier objects, but Delphinus does however contain:

NGC 6934 – a relatively large globular cluster near the star Epsilon Delphini. It is approximately 50,000 light years distant and has a visual magnitude of 8.83. It was discovered by William Herschel on September 24, 1785.

NGC 6891

NGC 6891 is a small planetary nebula located near the star Rho Aquilae. It has a visual magnitude of 10.5.



Blue Flash Nebula – NGC 6905

NGC 6905 is a small planetary nebula, bluish in colour. Use a six-inch telescope to observe this nebula.



NGC 7006 (Caldwell 42)

NGC 7006 is a globular star cluster located approximately 137,000 light years away in the outskirts of the Milky Way.

The cluster is part of the galactic halo, a region of the Milky Way spherical in shape and consisting of gas, dark matter and the occasional star cluster.

The cluster has a visual magnitude of 10.6. It is located close to the star Gamma Delphini.



Did You Know?

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| 5 th August 2011 | Juno launched to Jupiter to understand it's origin and evolution. |
| 10 th August 1966 | Lunar Orbiter 1 launched. After entering the Moon's orbit, it takes the first images of Earth from that vantage point. |
| 17 th August 1933 | the world's first hybrid liquid-propellant rocket launched by the USSR. |
| 18 th August 1985 | Japanese spacecraft Suisei launched for encounter with Comet Halley. |
| 24 th August 2006 | Pluto officially classed as a Dwarf Planet by the IAU. |
| 27 th August 1962 | Mariner 2 launched on a flyby trip to Venus. |

Jim Barber

Director of Observations

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