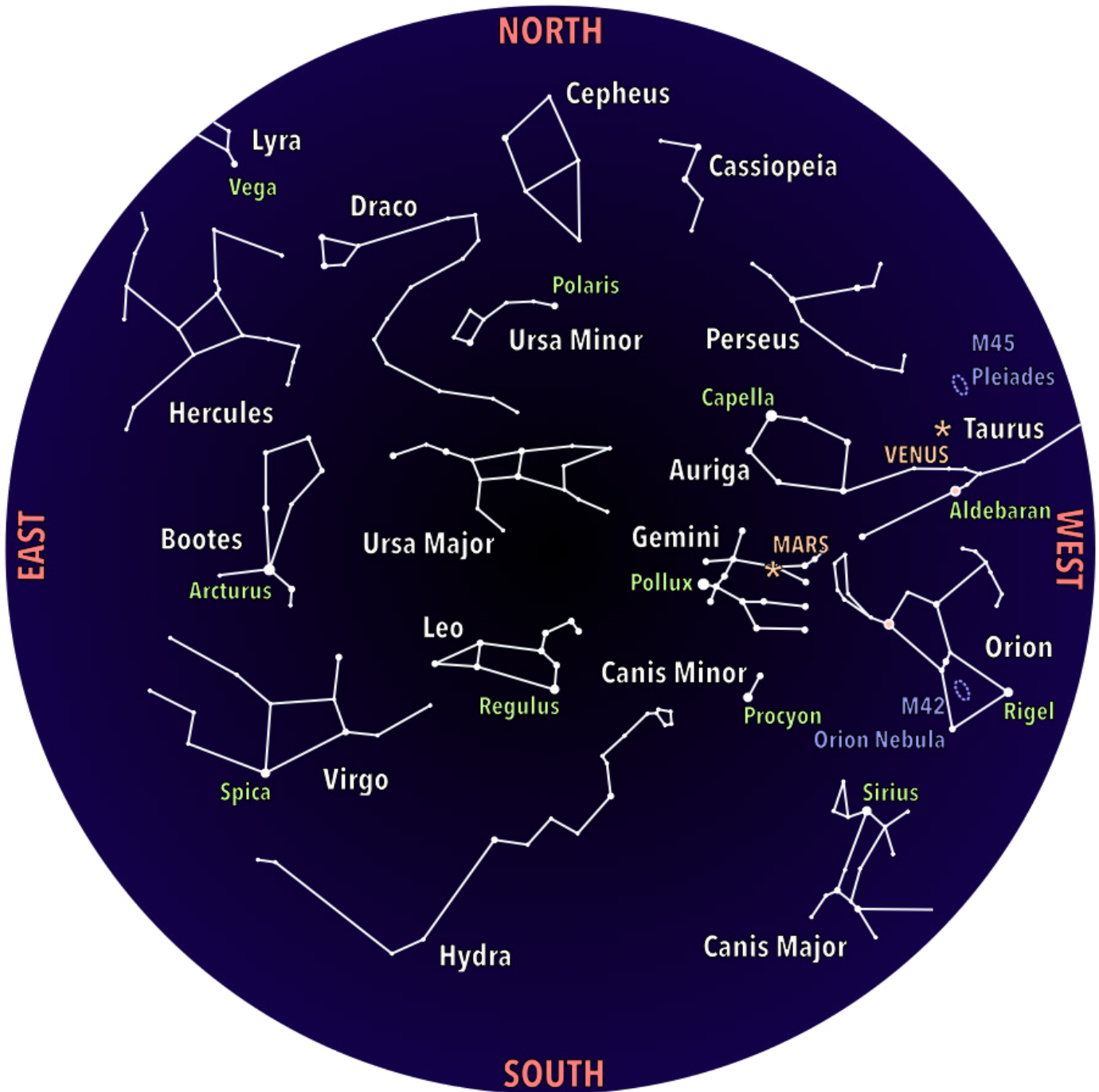


Spring 2023

Buhl Planetarium & Observatory

ASTRONOMICAL CALENDAR & STAR CHART



Night sky from Pittsburgh, PA 10 pm EST April 15, 2023 facing South

SKYWATCH is back! See upcoming dates and register at CarnegieScienceCenter.org.

Presented by



SPRING SKYGAZING: TOP PICKS

March 2 — Venus-Jupiter conjunction. Visible west just after twilight.

March 24 — Moon near Venus in daylight. Visible west near dusk. Uranus convenient to locate. Left of Moon. Requires binoculars.

April 11 — Venus near Pleiades. Early evening. West.

April 14 — Mercury highest altitude at sunset in 2023. West.

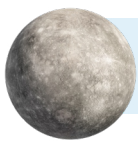
April 21–22 — Sombrero Galaxy (M104) highest altitude at midnight. Requires binoculars.

April 22–23 — Lyrid meteor shower peak. Lyra constellation. Best viewing pre-dawn.

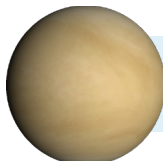
May 12 — Third quarter moon. Best visibility pre-dawn southeast.

May 12–13 — Pinwheel Galaxy (M101) highest altitude at midnight. Requires binoculars.

May 26 — Venus highest altitude at sunset in 2023. West.

SPRING PLANET VISIBILITIES

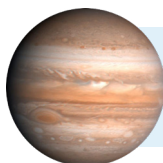
Mercury: End of March through April. Briefly west-northwest at dusk.



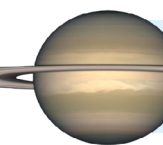
Venus: March through May. West at dusk.



Mars: March through middle of May. Southwest after sunset.



Jupiter: March. Low southwest at dusk.



Saturn: Not visible from March through May.

MOON PHASES KEY

New Moon ● First Quarter ◐ Full Moon ○ Third Quarter ◑

MOON PHASES

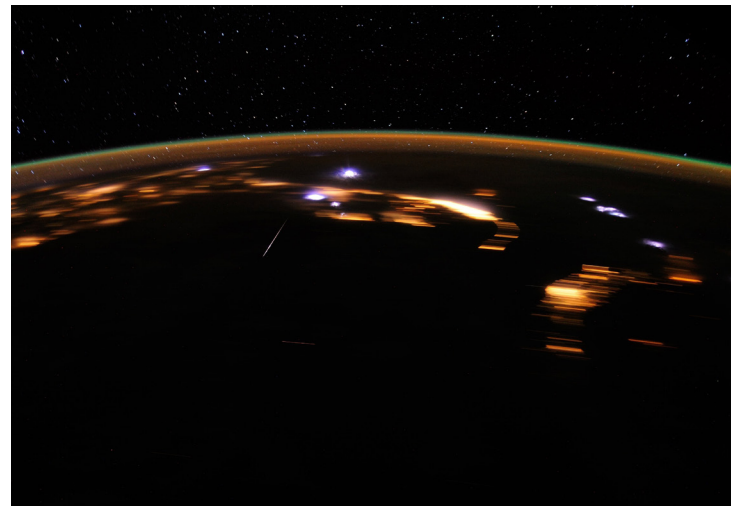
March 7: ○ 14: ◐ 21: ● 28: ◑

April 6: ○ 13: ◐ 20: ● 27: ◑

May 5: ○ 12: ◐ 19: ● 27: ◑

WHAT'S UP?**Lyrid Meteor Shower**

From April 15–29, the Lyrid meteor showers will make their annual visit to the skies above the Northern Hemisphere. At its peak, the shower promises 18 meteors per hour on average. Meteor showers are the result of particles left behind by comets as they orbit around the Sun. When Earth passes through these dust trails, the particles collide with our atmosphere and disintegrate into fiery streaks of light. The comet that causes the Lyrids is called C/1861 G1 Thatcher and was first discovered in 1861. The meteor shower was observed well before the discovery of the comet. The first recorded sighting dates back to 687 BCE when astronomers in China recorded the event.

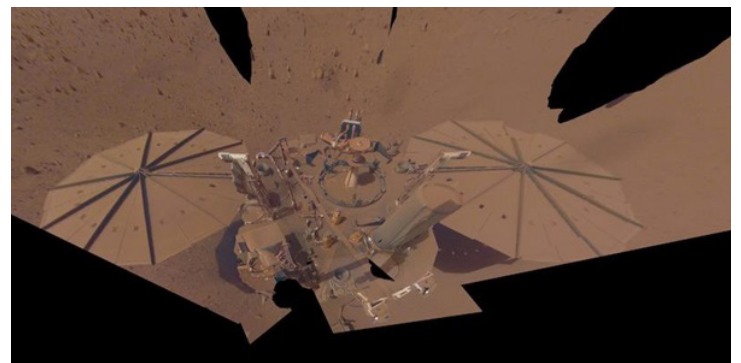


Far above blurred city lights, the Lyrid meteor shower lights up Earth's upper atmosphere.

Credits: NASA/JSC/D. Pettit

SPACE NEWS:**Good Night, InSight**

NASA launched the InSight mission to Mars in May 2018. The mission's goal was to explore and study the interior of Mars. The intrepid lander sent back a wealth of useful and unique data, including the detection of "marsquakes." This discovery was surprising because scientists previously thought Mars was too cold to sustain tectonic activity. Earth's last contact with InSight occurred on Dec. 15, 2022. The mission officially concluded one week later and was deemed highly successful.



After more than three years on Mars, InSight is covered in dust in the lander's final self-portrait.

Credits: NASA/JPL-Caltech

STAR CHART FAQ**How do I use the star chart?**

Hold it out in front of you with the direction you're facing at the bottom of the chart. It works even better if you hold it above your head and look up at it.

Why are east and west switched?

They are only switched because you're used to looking at maps of the ground. Hold it above your head, and you'll see the directions line up just right.