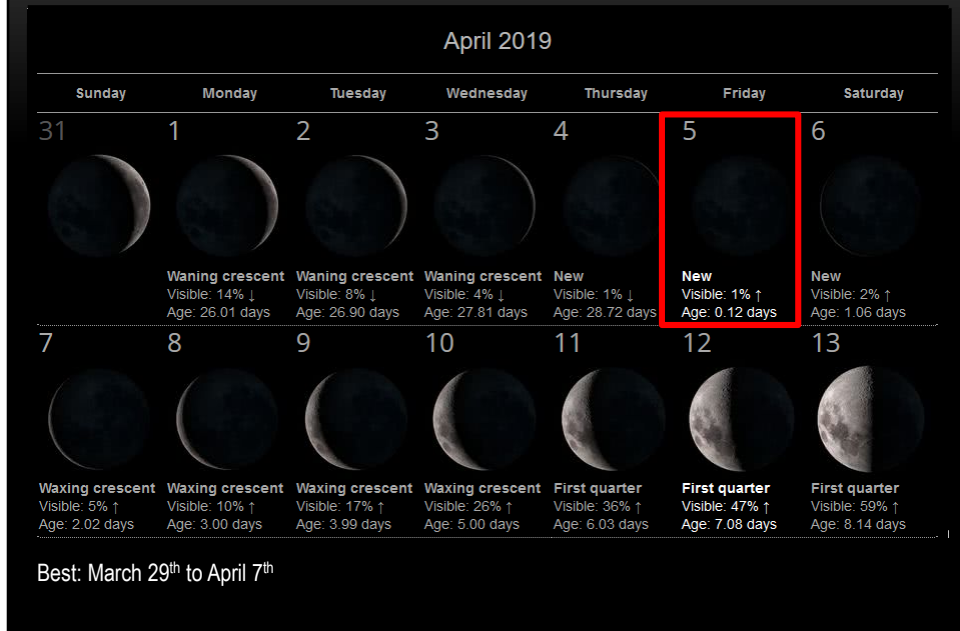


BAS - MONTHLY SKY GUIDE

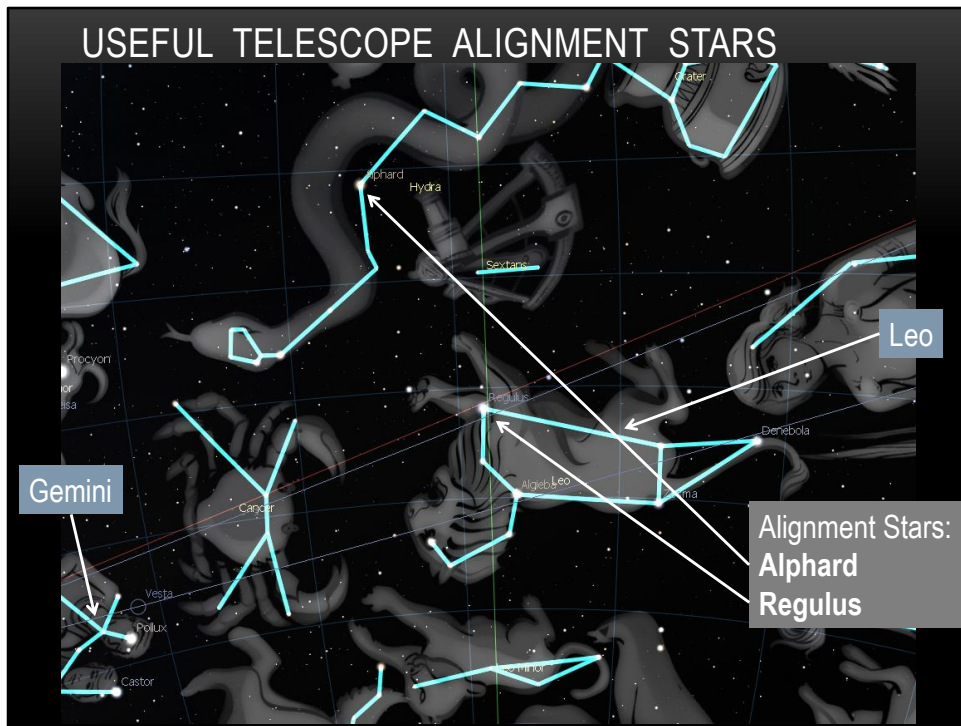
April 2019

The Sun sets earlier now and so we can get some extra observing hours each evening. The outer arms of our Milky Way Galaxy now lie across the southern sky and looking towards the north and Leo we will be looking into deep space – perfect for distant galaxy hunting.

DARK SKY – BEST OBSERVING DATES - APRIL




New Moon is Thursday April 5th. A full evening of observing from sunset through to about midnight can be achieved for about a week prior to the New Moon. So plan your observing dates from about March 29th onwards. The slim waxing crescent of the early New Moon sets around the end of astronomical twilight on April 7th so the setting Moon starts to eat into early evening observing time after that date. So make good use of the period around March 29th to April 7th.



In April there are two stars that are worth learning to recognise and potentially use as alignment stars. The constellation Leo, “the Lion”, even though he is lying on his back for us in the southern hemisphere, is pretty easy to identify. Leo does actually look like a resting lion. Find the brightest star near the front foot of Leo, this is Regulus. But take care in the finderscope and eyepiece as there are many other white stars nearby. Alphard in Hydra is a little more difficult but it is a reasonably bright star in and fairly dark region of the sky. Just find Regulus first and then look even higher in the sky for Alphard.

CONSTELLATION OF THE MONTH - CARINA

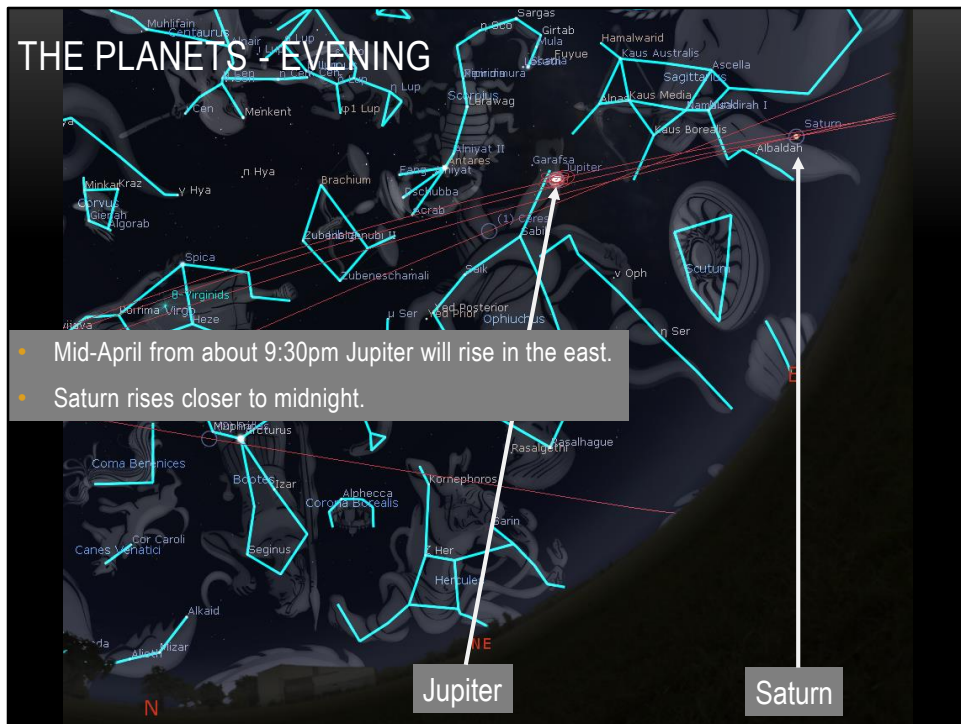


A detailed star chart of the constellation Carina. The chart features a dark background with numerous stars of varying brightness. A network of cyan lines connects the primary stars to form the constellation's outline. A prominent white line, likely representing the ecliptic, runs diagonally across the chart. Various celestial objects are labeled, including stars like α Car, β Car, and γ Car, as well as deep-sky objects such as NGC 4337, NGC 3532, NGC 3372, and NGC 3114. The chart also includes labels for neighboring constellations like Crux, Musca, and Vela.

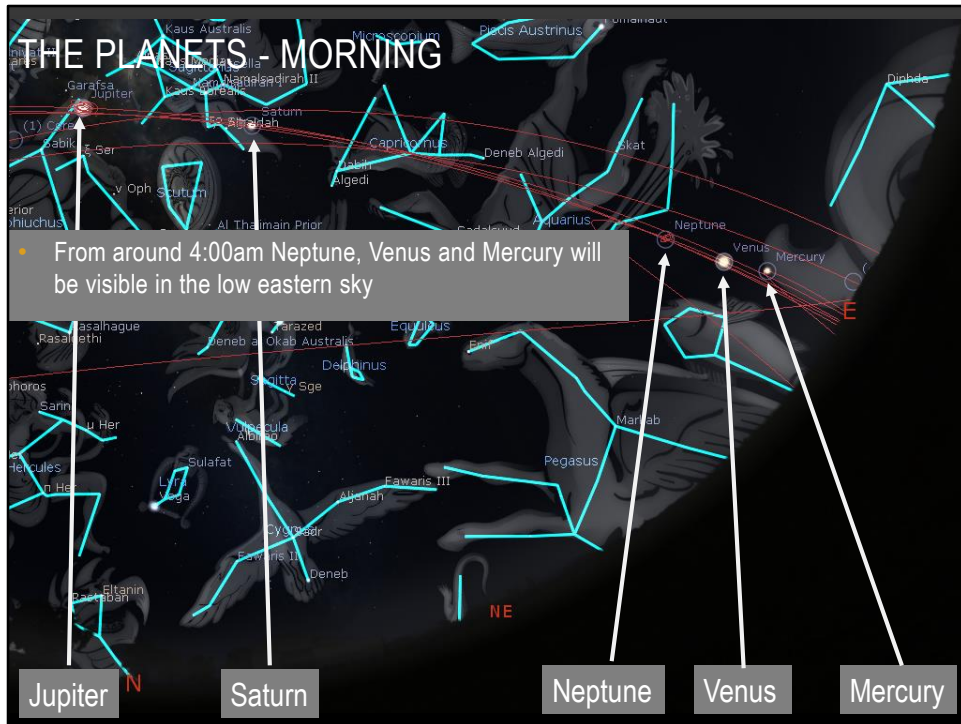
Observing targets:

- The Wishing Well Cluster – NGC/3532
- Carina Nebula - NGC 3372

Carina is the keel of the ancient Argo Navis constellation which was the ship that carried Jason and the Argonauts on their quest for the Golden Fleece. Prepare to be amazed and stunned by two objects amongst many in Carina. Using your lowest power eyepiece, start with the massive open cluster NGC 3532, also known as the Wishing Well Cluster. It looks like bright silver coins in the bottom of a dark well – the best open cluster in all the sky. And then spend the remainder of the night exploring the Carina Nebula, a massive glowing gas cloud located 6,500 light years away. Gorgeous!

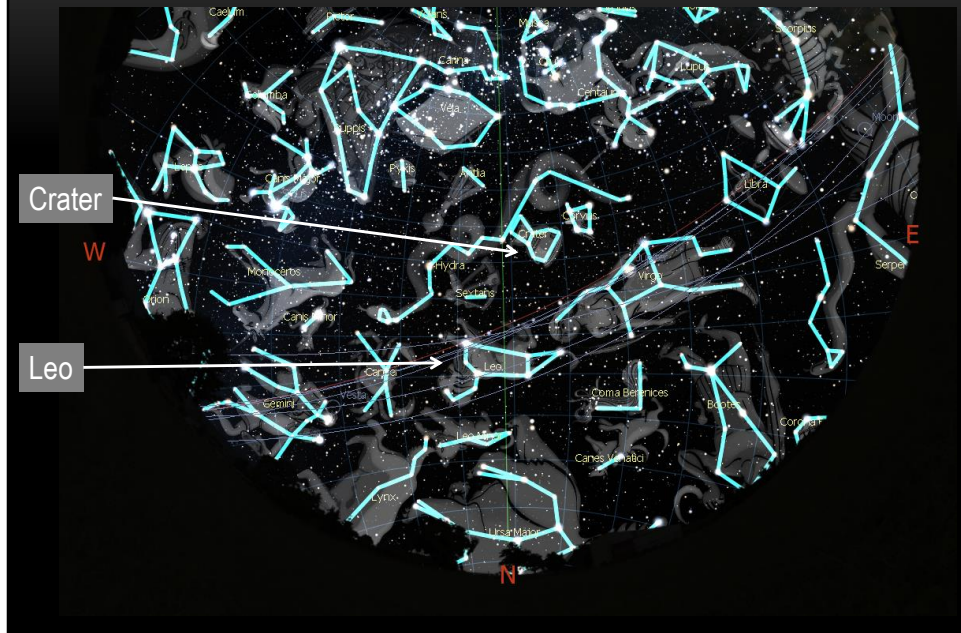


Planet observer must continue to be patient, challenging though that is, as only Jupiter mid-evening from around 9:30pm. A couple more hours of patience will reward with Saturn rising around 11:30pm. Both planets will be the sole planetary objects visible until just before dawn.



In the pre-dawn hours from about 4:00am Venus and Mercury will be visible to the naked eye low in the eastern sky and faint Neptune will be a little high in the sky.

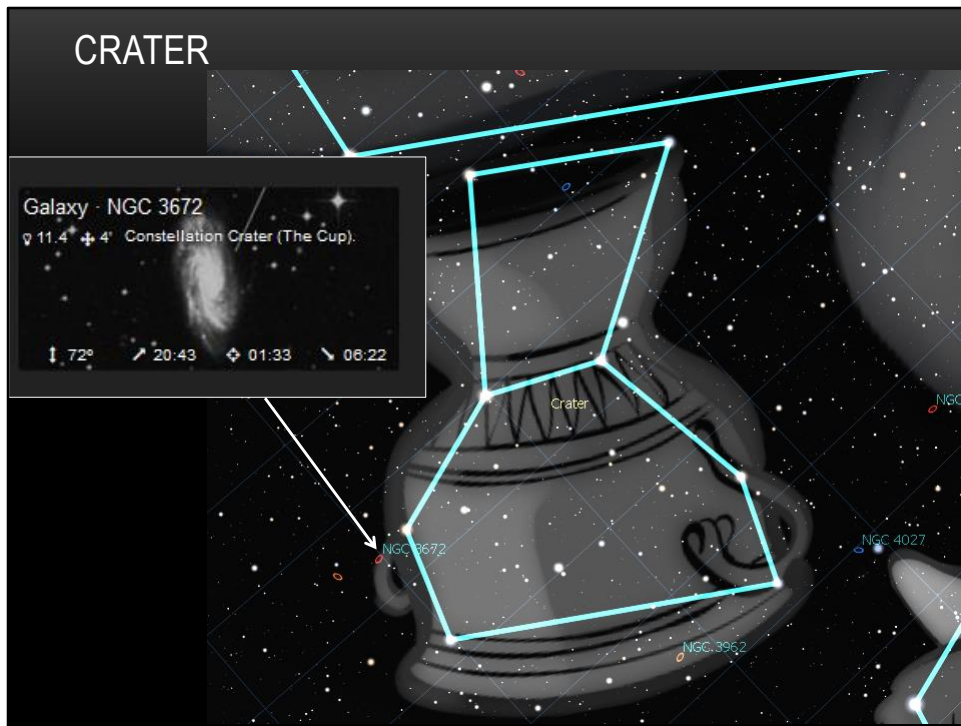
NEW MOON - 9 PM MERIDIAN CONSTELLATIONS



A couple of constellations high in the sky along the meridian at about 9 PM during the New Moon period are Leo, “the Lion” and Crater, “the Cup”. Leo is an ancient Greek constellation defined by Ptolemy in about 100 AD. It is one of the few constellations that actually looks like the animal it is named after. Crater is much more faint and difficult to identify – but its distinctive cup-like shape is not too hard to recognise once you initially find it and know what to look for on future occasions. In ancient Greek legend Corvus, “the Crow”, an adjacent constellation, was supposed to carry a cup of water to Apollo. But he failed on his mission and so Apollo cast Corvus into the sky along with the Cup.



Leo is known for galaxies, and lots of them. Two big bright galaxies to start your Leo observing session with are Messier 66, a big spiral galaxy located 37 million light years away. M66 is one of the Leo Triplet galaxies and makes a wonderful sight in a wide-field eyepiece. Also seek out Messier 95, another big face-on spiral galaxy located 32 million light years away. These galaxies were observed and catalogued by French comet-hunter Charles Messier in 1780 and 1781 respectively.



Crater is also known for galaxies, however they are much farther away from us than the ones in Leo and so are much fainter and harder to find. In a dark sky you might try and find galaxy NGC 3672, a dim spiral galaxy located 76 million light years away.

BUILD YOUR OWN OBSERVING LIST

DSO Browser

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M 38

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THIRD QUARTER
23:20 11:20

New Moon: in 9 days (Saturday 28)
Full Moon: in 23 days (Saturday 11)

Sun, Moon & Planets Information

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Find Objects

Object Type

Select none

- ☐ Asterism
- ☒ Bright nebula
- ☒ Dark nebula
- ☒ Diffuse nebula
- ☒ Galaxy
- ☒ Galaxy cluster
- ☒ Globular cluster
- ☒ Open cluster
- ☒ Planetary nebula
- ☐ Quasar
- ☐ Supernova remnant

Minimum Elevation

Apparent Magnitude

Apparent Size

Surface Brightness

Catalogues

Coordinates

Constellation

Dorado (The Swordfish)

Local time

Reset filters Search

My Observing List (0)

306 results

Print CSV

Large Magellanic Cloud
7.9 + 10.8° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Tarantula Nebula
7.8.3 + 20° Const...

Bright nebula
7.8.5 + 13° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Bright nebula : NGC 1966 / NGC 1962
7.8.5 + 13° Constellation Dorado (The Swo...

Click Find Objects

Select object types

Select constellation

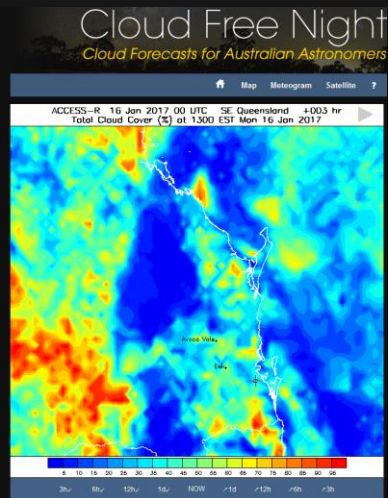
Search

<https://dso-browser.com/>

Make sure you take a look at the great observing planning tool DSO-Browser before the New Moon period. This is a fantastic tool to help you build a list of objects you can try and find each month.

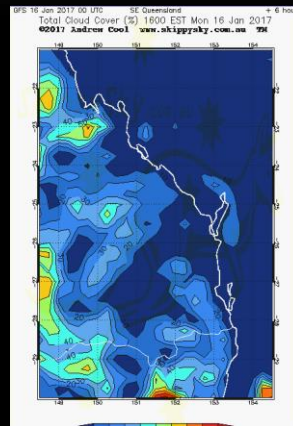
Just a few clicks on [www.dso-browser.com](https://dso-browser.com) can generate a fantastic observing list of object types you are interested in.

AVOIDING CLOUDS
www.cloudfreenight.com



More info: <http://philhart.com/content/cloud-forecasts-australian-astronomers>

www.skippysky.com



And the find the best cloud-free evenings for observing make sure you check CloudFreeNight and Skippysky as you plan your next observing evening.