

JUNE-JULY 2012 NITE SKY

Moon Phases: New 6/19, FQ 6/26, Full 7/3, LQ 7/10, New 7/18, FQ 7/26

Events: 6/15 KVAS Mtg., 6/20-23 Star Quest 9, 7/20 KVAS @ Breezy7 Point

CYGNUS (SIG-nus) The Swan was known as a bird from ancient times and became a swan in Ptolemy's 2nd C A.D. Almagest. It covers 804 square degrees & only 15 other constellations are larger. Its two most famous and brightest stars are Alpha Cygni, Deneb (the tail), a white supergiant type A2Ia with 1.25 visual magnitude (-7.2 absolute mag.), 1500 l.y away and Beta Cygni, Alberio (hen's beak), a double with an orange giant (vis. Mag. 3.1, type K5 II, 380 l.y. away) & a deep blue companion (35" separation, 5.1 mag., type B8 V.) Emission nebulae include NGC 7000 North American 2 deg. across, NGC 6889, 6960 & 6692 Veil Aeb., & 5067-70. Two major open clusters are M29 (7' across & 6.6 mag.), and M39 (32' across & 4.6 mag.).

VULPECULA (vul-PECK-you-lah) The Fox is a small constellation invented by Johannes Hevelius in 1690 and it has no mythological roots. Its best feature is M 27, the Dumbbell Planetary Nebula & the Coathanger asterism (Brocchi's Cluster) with magnitudes 7.6 & 3.6.

SAGITTA (sa-Jit-ah) The Arrow was so named by Ptolemy from ancient cultures and it is the arrow that Apollo used to kill the Cyclops or one that Hercules shot at the Stymphalian Birds. The Constellation is small but easy to find half way between Altair in Aquila and Alberio (Beta Cygni.) Its main feature is M71, a fertile cluster of faint stars. It used to be considered a rich open cluster but now is classed as a poor, uncondensed globular. Use a 10" scope to resolve it.

SAGITTARIUS (sadge-ih-TAIR-ee-us) The Archer was named in ancient times for the mythological centaur but many now recognize it from its teapot asterism. Sgr. Is the 16th largest Constellation (867 square degrees,) located on the ecliptic and part of the Southern Hemisphere. It's so far south we see it near the horizon but it's also one of the best to observe many amazing celestial wonders. Many of its stars are bright but the Alpha & Beta stars are not the brightest. The brightest is Epsilon, a giant 145 light years away, 375 X more luminous than the Sun and almost 4 x as massive. At least 16 stars have planets. One top globular cluster is M 55 & others are M22, 28, 54, 59, 70 & 75. Open clusters M23 (huge) & M 21, 24, & 25. Diffuse Nebulae are M 8 (Lagoon), M 17 (Omega), & M 20 (Trifid), dark nebulae B 86 & 92 and planetary nebula NGC 6818. Very high power must be used to see The Sgr. Dwarf Elliptical Galaxy, 87,000 LY away and one of the closest in our Local Group or the Sgr. Dwarf Irregular Gal, the farthest at 3,4 M LY away

CORONA AUSTRALIS (kor-OH-nah os-TRAH-lis) The Southern Crown was catalogued by Ptolemy in the 2nd Century AD, and is the 8th smallest in area (128 square degrees). Use at least an 8" scope to see Globular Cluster NGC 6541.

N Pole

