DAVIS PLANETARIUM

Starmap

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025

MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER
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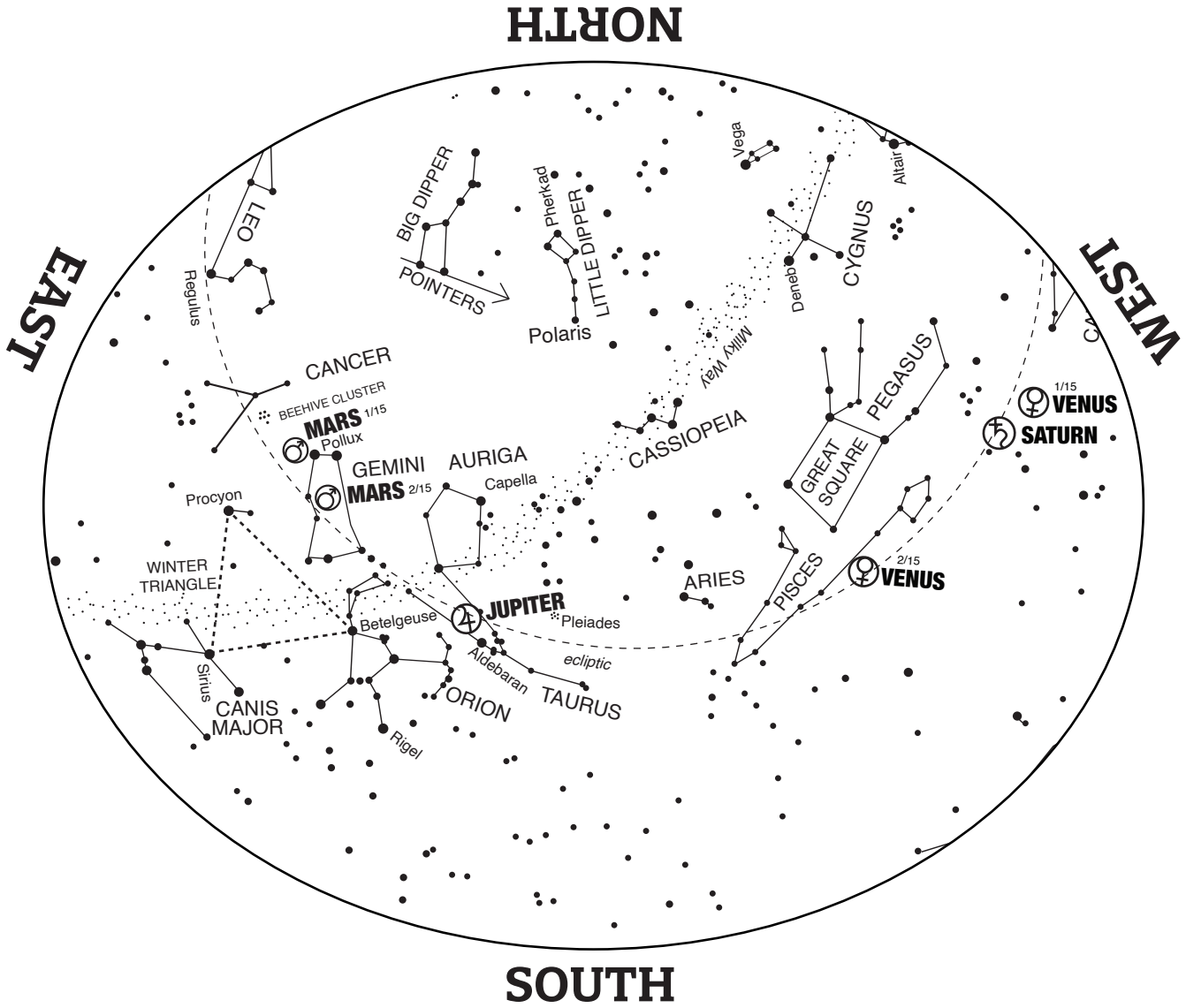

TO USE MAP:
Hold the map in front of you so that the direction you are facing is on the bottom. The stars on the lower half on the map will match up with the stars in the sky. The center of the map is directly overhead in the sky. Constellation and star pattern names are all capitalized. Names of stars have only the first letter capitalized. The map is valid within an hour of:
8:30pm Mid-Jan EST
6:30pm Mid-Feb EST

MAGNITUDE is a measure of a star's brightness. The lower the number, the brighter the star

- 1st or brighter magnitude star
- 2nd magnitude star
- 3rd magnitude star
- 4th or fainter magnitude star

ECLIPTIC:
The imaginary path of the Sun through the year. Constellations of the Zodiac surround the Ecliptic and the Moon and planets appear along it.

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IN THE JANUARY/FEBRUARY SKY

Jan. 3
Moon near Venus,
Quadrantid meteor
shower peaks
(See Celestial Highlights)

Jan. 4
Moon near Saturn

Jan. 6
First Quarter Moon

Jan. 10
Venus at its greatest elongation
Moon near Jupiter
(See Celestial Highlights)

Jan. 13
Full Moon occultation of Mars
(See Celestial Highlights)

Jan. 15
Mars in Opposition
(See Celestial Highlights)

Jan. 18
Saturn near Venus

Jan. 21
Last Quarter Moon

Jan. 29
New Moon

Feb. 1
Moon near Venus

Feb. 2
Venus at its highest altitude
(See Celestial Highlights)

Feb. 5
First Quarter Moon

Feb. 6
Moon near Jupiter

Feb. 9
Moon near Mars

Feb. 12
Full Moon

Feb. 16
Venus at its brightest
(See Celestial Highlights)

Feb. 20
Last Quarter Moon

Feb. 27
New Moon

CELESTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

PLANET AND MOON GROUPINGS – The Moon and Venus appear brightly together in the southwestern sky just after sunset on January 3. Saturn appears below the Moon after sunset on January 4. Jupiter is visible in between the Moon and Aldebaran, the Eye of Taurus, on January 10. On January 18, Saturn and Venus are visible together low in the western sky just after sunset. Venus is the brightest object next to the Moon low in the western sky on February 1. Jupiter is visible again in between the Moon and Aldebaran on February 6. The Moon chases Mars through the night sky on February 9.

LUNAR OCCULTATION OF MARS, JANUARY 13 – Occultation is when one object in the sky blocks another, in this case the Moon covers Mars. On January 13, the Moon and Mars appear together all night; at 9:17 pm Mars disappears behind the Moon and reappears at 10:34 pm.

MARS AT OPPOSITION, JANUARY 15 – Mars is in opposition when it is at the opposite position in the sky from the Sun. Mars is visible the entire night with the planet passing almost directly above around midnight.

VENUS VISIBILITY – Venus has multiple events in January and February that make it easy to view. On January 10, Venus is at its greatest elongation meaning the planet is at its farthest point away from the Sun in the sky, find Venus following far behind the Sun as it begins to set. Venus is at its highest point in the evening sky on February 2, making the planet visible until 11 pm. With the Moon not rising until later in the night, Venus shines its brightest on February 16, making it the brightest object in the night sky.

QUADRANTID METEOR SHOWER – The Quadrantid meteor shower peaks on January 3 with up to 200 meteors per hour. Find the shower next to the constellation Boötes near the northeastern horizon just after midnight. This shower is known for its fireball meteors which are brighter and more colorful than typical meteor showers. These meteors are leftover debris from an asteroid called 2003 EH1. While this Mount Everest sized asteroid doesn't have a fancy name, it is likely a rock comet which is a comet that has shed all its water and other meltable materials due to many passes near the sun, so it no longer has its iconic comet tail.

The bi-monthly STARMAP is available on the web at *https://www.mdsci.org/learn/resources/starmaps/*

THE OBSERVATORY AT THE MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER INFO
Safe solar viewing is offered Saturdays from 1:00pm-4:00pm, weather permitting (admission included with Science Center admission).

MERCURY
When:
Not visible
Where:
Not visible
Constellation:
Not Visible

VENUS
When:
After sunset
Where:
Southwest horizon
Constellation:
Aquarius, Pisces

MARS
When:
All night
Where:
Moving East to West
Constellation:
Cancer, Gemini

JUPITER
When:
Evening sky, January
Visible until midnight, February
Where:
Moving East to West
Constellation:
Taurus

SATURN
When:
Just after sunset, January
Not visible until after mid-February
Where:
Southern sky
Constellation:
Aquarius