

Review of Celestial Targets so far

The areas of sky described below have been chosen as they all contain bright, easily recognised constellations. Being able to locate them will help you to find your way around the night sky

1 The Summer Triangle

Cygnus the **Swan** contains the star **Deneb**. **Aquila** the **Eagle** contains the star **Altair**. **Lyra** contains the star **Vega**. Together these three stars form the **Summer Triangle**. The triangle itself contains some small constellations including **Delphinus** the **Dolphin** and **Sagitta** the **Arrow** together with the small asterism known as the **Coathanger** (This will require binoculars to view)

Lyra contains the **Ring Nebula** a planetary nebula which is easily viewed in a small telescope.

2 The Centre of the Galaxy

Sagittarius the **Archer** lies between us and the centre of the galaxy. It is a zodiacal constellation visible low in the south in summer. It looks more like a teapot than a bowman. It contains a large number of open and globular clusters which are listed in the Messier catalogue.

To right of Sagittarius is **Scorpius** the **Scorpion** only part of which rises at our latitude. It is also a zodiacal constellation and contains more open and globular clusters. It contains the bright red star **Antares** which means "Rival of Mars" as they are both red and bright and are often seen close together when Mars is in that part of the **ecliptic** where Scorpius is to be found.

The planets **Mars** and **Saturn** are in this part of the sky at present.

3 Above the Centre

From right to left are the constellations **Bootis** the **Herdsmen**, **Corona Borealis** the **Northern Crown** and **Hercules**. **Bootis** contains another bright red star **Arcturus** (compare with Antares and Mars). **Corona Borealis** contains the variable star R which is usually about magnitude 6 and can be seen with the naked eye on a moonless clear night. However it can fade to below binocular range and was below naked eye visibility in mid July. **Hercules** contains two of the most spectacular globular clusters in the night sky (M13 and M92).

4 Around the Pole

In addition to **Ursa Major** the **Great Bear** and **Ursa Minor** the **Little Bear** there are 6 constellations that tell a story. Queen **Cassiopeia** and King **Cepheus** had a daughter **Andromeda**. The Queen was so boastful she annoyed the gods who ordered that Andromeda be sacrificed to a sea monster as punishment. Andromeda was chained to a rock to await the monster but was seen by **Perseus** who by using **Pegasus** his winged horse, saved her.

There are many interesting objects in this part of the sky. To start off find binocular objects M31 , the Andromeda Nebula our next door galaxy and the double cluster in Perseus. Perseus also has the eclipsing variable star **Algol**

A small telescope will show M81 and M82 two more galaxies.