



STARRY TRAILS

JUNE 2016

We will celebrate the first day of Summer on June 20th, with three spectacular planets dominating our evening skies!! Now is a great time to break out that backyard telescope or visit a free public star party courtesy of a local Astronomy Club! Jupiter, Mars and Saturn will show off their splendor all month long! Jupiter can be found in the western sky, with the constellation Leo (Illustration 1). Mars and Saturn will shine in the southeast along with the constellation Scorpius (Illustration 2).

With the long days of summer, our Starry hike will not start until 10:00pm. So grab your Starry Trail Map, binoculars, bug spray and a light jacket. Our hike begins in the west or where you see the beautiful sunset colors. Once again, the brilliant object that catches your eye is the planet Jupiter! Pick up your binoculars and focus on Jupiter. If you are steady, you may see a few pinpoints of light around Jupiter. These would be the largest moons of Jupiter! When you view Jupiter through a telescope, you will clearly see the four Galilean Moons. Below Jupiter is a bright star, Regulus, which is a part of the constellation Leo. Below and to the right of Regulus, are the two stars that look identical, Gemini, the Twins (Illustration 3).

Turn to the right or direction north and you will see the Big Dipper, high in the sky. Take the two stars at the end of the cup and draw an imaginary line to the next bright star. You have reached the North Star! The North Star, or Polaris, is at the end of the handle of the Little Dipper. Queen Cassiopeia, the w-shape, is very low in the north (Illustration 4).

Hike back to the Big Dipper. Arc off of the handle to the orange-yellow star, Arcturus. Turn to the right or east. Continue to look high overhead. Slightly down and to the left, of Arcturus, you will come upon a semi-circle of stars. It looks almost like a necklace, but actually it is the Northern Crown or Corona Borealis. I think it looks like a smiley face! Hike down and to the left from Corona Borealis. There you will see a keystone shape. This is the body of Hercules, the bravest and strongest hero! Binocular time! Take your binoculars and scan around the part of Hercules facing Corona. Do you see the fuzzy object? This is the finest Globular Star Cluster (M13) in the northern skies! Look for the bright blue, white star down and to the left of Hercules. This star is Vega, which is a part of the Summer Triangle (Illustration 5).

For our final stop, turn right once more to face south. The brilliant red, orange object is the planet Mars! To the left of Mars, is a golden colored object which is Saturn! Down and slightly right is a red, orange star Antares, which is the heart of Scorpius. By the way, Antares means rival of Mars. Notice the similar colors of Mars and Antares.

What a great way to kick off summer! Take a few minutes to enjoy fireflies twinkling!

Next month.... the summer Milky Way!

Highlights

June 3 – Saturn at opposition or biggest through a telescope.

June 4 – New Moon.

June 10 & 11 – The Moon and Jupiter in the west, southwest after sunset.

June 12 – First Quarter Moon.

June 16 - 18 – The Moon joins Mars, Saturn and Antares in the south, southeast.

June 20 – Full Moon. According to folklore it is the Full Strawberry Moon, Rose Moon or Flower Moon.

June 20 – The longest day of the year! Summer solstice occurs at 6:34 pm.

June 27 – Last Quarter Moon.

Brightest Stars

West - Castor, Pollux, Regulus. **Overhead** – Arcturus. **South** – Spica. **East** – Vega. **Southeast** – Antares.

Binocular Highlights The Moon, Jupiter, Hercules Globular Star Cluster M13

Telescope Highlights The Moon, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter, M51, M13, M57, M3, M81, M82, M10, M12, M92, M94

Starry Trails is a fun & easy way to explore the night sky as it appears from your own backyard! Journey over to **StarryTrails.com** & get everything you need to navigate the night sky! Starry Trails is a free publication & your able to make copies to pass along to your friends & family so they can learn and enjoy the night sky with you!

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Written by Suzie Dills – Remember to download your Illustrations & Star Map!

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