



Newsletter of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society

Mid Summer 2010 June July and August

The Next Meeting of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society will be August 9, 2010 at 7 PM. We will be meeting at the Highland Road Observatory. The meeting starts at 7 PM.

Program Notes: *The Tyche Conjecture*
John J. Matese, Emeritus Professor of Physics
University of Louisiana-Lafayette

We discuss the possibility that there exists a Jovian mass solar companion orbiting in the Oort comet cloud. The putative companion has been dubbed Tyche, the good sister of Nemesis, by the WISE group (Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer) who have recently launched a satellite capable of detecting such an object for the first time. Observational evidence for, and against, the conjecture will be discussed.

Vice President's Message

I hope Summer is going well for you! It's been pretty buggy and muggy, but there have been a few nice viewing opportunities despite that fact. (Did anyone besides Art, Chris, Trevor and myself see R1 McNaught? That was a tough one!)

I have two things. First, in case you haven't heard already, B.R.A.S. now has a Facebook page. If you have a Facebook account, come check it out.

Second, we finally got around to getting some updated pictures into the Member Astrophotos section of the website and I believe to the Images section on the HRPO website, as well. It's been a few years since anything new was posted, but I'm sure you'll agree that these new images show that considerable work has been done in perfecting the techniques of astrophotography.

Thanks to Charles Genovese for so many wonderful images! (*Photo - Perfect pass of the International Space Station- about 360 miles away at the nearest point. Captured with C8 at f/11 to Mallincam recorded with an Arcos 605. Single frame grabbed with Imagegrab4.*) I know we have several members that are currently active in astrophotography. We would love to post some of your work, too.

That's all for now.

Ben Toman, Vice-President

<tomanben@gmail.com>



Presidents Message

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

For those of us accustomed to Louisiana weather, the heat and humidity of July and August is normal and we like it (I hope you believe that). This time of the summer is referred to as the Dog Days of Summer and the Romans referred to the dog days as *di'es canicul~ar'e* and associated the hot weather with the star Sirius. They considered Sirius to be the "Dog Star" because it is the brightest star in the constellation Canis Major (Large Dog). Sirius is also the brightest star in the heavens besides the Sun. Sirius is in the daytime sky and it would only make sense that Sirius is the cause of the heat and humidity. What else could possibly account for it?

The term "Dog Days" was used earlier by the Greeks (see, e.g., Aristotle's Physics). The Dog Days originally were the days when Sirius rose just before or at the same time as sunrise (heliacal rising), which is no longer true, owing to precession of the equinoxes. The Romans sacrificed a brown dog at the beginning of the Dog Days to appease the rage of Sirius, believing that the star was the cause of the hot, sultry weather. Dog Days were popularly believed to be an evil time *"when the seas boiled, wine turned sour, dogs grew mad, and all creatures became languid, causing to man burning fevers, hysterics, and phrensies"* according to Bradys *Clavis Calendarium*.

Hopefully, our seas will not boil (unless with BP oil) and our wine will not turn sour. Notwithstanding the heat and humidity during the days, I have found the nights to be very pleasant. On those nights when we have had clear skies, we have had some good viewing at the Observatory on Friday and Saturday nights. Although we are taking a summer break from BRAS meetings, there is no reason to take a break from good viewing. Right now, we still have Saturn in the sky and several great targets are available in the east, namely, the Ring Nebula (M57), the Double Double (*Epsilon Lyra*) and one of my favorites, Alberio, the double star that has adopted the two colors of LSU and Southern.

Want you join us on Friday or Saturday nights to keep up the viewing during these Dog Days of Summer?

Marvin E Owen, President
marvin@meocpa.com

Thursday>July 22, 2010 6:30<Dutchtown Library

Louisiana and the Space Race *(A History of the Michoud Assembly Facility)*

Free and open to the public.

MESSAGE FROM HRPO

BRAS's extended loan, the wonderful HDTV, is now installed on the northwest wall thanks to BREC Maintenance. Tom Northrop is working diligently to create an extended slideshow which will include BRAS slides (member astrophotography, joining information, star party information).

Ben Toman, Trevor McGuire, Art Barrios and I *just* glimpsed Comet C/2009 R1 McNaught early the morning of 20 June at the levee in Ramah, thanks the Art's 8" Dob. Boy, it was low!

I am practicing altering *Sky & Telescope* predictions for transits of Jupiter's Great Red Spot to Baton Rouge viewing times. Please take advantage of this and if anyone notices a mistake, please let me know.

Although this is way in the future, I wanted to pass on to anyone considering going to next year's Hodges Gardens Star Party that the deluxe (double) cabins are all filled for that Wednesday and Thursday. So book fast if you want a cabin. If you want to stay at the quaint and scenic Emerald Hills Golf Resort across the street, you have a few months.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: ON-SITE

Evening Sky Viewing: Saturdays from 7pm to 10pm.

One or two volunteers. To work physical science demos and telescopes and campfire. NOTE: We really do not need volunteers on Friday night on a regular basis.

Perseid Meteor Shower: Thursday, 12 August from 9pm to 1pm *Two volunteers needed each for a three-hour shift.*

CALLS FOR VOLUNTEERS: OUTREACH

Pennington Balloon Championships: Saturday, 7 August from 4pm to 7pm (*One volunteer needed for a three-hour shift.*)

HRPO FRIDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES

*13 AUGUST: "An Introduction to Venus"

*27 AUGUST: "NASA Spinoff Technology"

Chris Kersey HRPO Manager, <ckerseyobservatory@brec.org>

B.R.A.S. Meeting Notes for May 10, 2010

Start 7:10 Ben Opens Meeting - Marvin is in New Orleans

Old Business

Craig - Celestron 8 has problems, needs a Tech

New Business

Wally got 2 volunteers to substitute for him while he take trip.

We eat & watch 'Blue Planet' on the Club's new 40" Samsung & Blu-Ray player. It came in at approx. \$800, including wall mount.

New Members

Lisa Chumney

Christan Troxclair & Brett Bodin

Raffle

Viewing starts at 8:40, available to 10 P.M.

Next Newsletter is combined June/July. No Meeting, but, activities will be announced.

Dave Thomas, B.R.A.S. Secretary, <dthomas11@cox.net>

IDA Associates in the News

International Dark-Sky Association

IDA in the Washington Post

Want to see better? We'd have to turn out the lights.

by Ben Harder, Washington Post -

USA, 08 June 2010

It's not the stars themselves that have vanished, but rather the inky-black backdrop against which they used to be visible. Artificial light, cast upward from our cities and roads, has washed out the natural darkness. It has obscured the obscura. It has made the night false...

Men Have Hormones, Too

by Heather Hurlock,

MSN Health & Fitness - USA

Mounting evidence suggests that exposure to light at night-whether you're asleep or awake-might play a crucial role in cancer, diabetes, and obesity. The World Health Organization classified "circadian disruption" as probably carcinogenic, and light at night is considered by some to be an endocrine disruptor that may affect melatonin, cortisol, ghrelin, leptin, and testosterone. "Most people think, and the drug companies want you to think, that waking up at night is bad for you," says Richard Stevens, Ph.D., a cancer epidemiologist at the University of Connecticut health center. But that's not the case, he says-it's exposure to light at night that's the problem. "If you wake up at night, as most of us do, that is a period of quiet wakefulness-stay in bed, in the dark, and enjoy it," Stevens suggests...

Dark Sky Comment

Some stargazing ideas while camping out

by Paul Derrick, Sam Saba News and Star -

TX, USA, 17 June 2010

Depending upon how near to a city you are camping, you will likely encounter light pollution. Point this out to the kids, especially if you can see more light pollution in one direction than another. Show how the more light pollution there is, the fewer stars one can see. If you happen to be far from city lights, show them the Milky Way which they can't see from town...

Your support helps us continue the fight to save the night!

BRAS Observing Notes

June /July / August 2010

Boötes: The Herdsman

The name of the constellation Boötes, (pronounced Boh-oh-tease), comes to us from the Greeks. In fact one of the earliest references to it can be found in Homer's *Odyssey*. The word Boötes means header or ox-driver. Just whom or what is the herdsman herding? It could possibly be Ursa Major, the Great Bear because of the proximity to that constellation. It might even be said that Boötes herds the Great Bear around the celestial pole and in addition keeps the entire sky in motion.

Boötes contains the star Arcturus which is the fourth brightest star in the night sky at magnitude minus 0.04 and is 37 light years away.

The Boötes void is a spherical area located near the constellation that is curiously devoid of galaxies. This area is nearly 250 million light years in diameter and was discovered in the 1980s via a galaxy survey.

Position in the Sky

Right Ascension: 15 hours

Declination: 30 degrees

Named Stars

ARCTURUS (Alpha Boo)

Nekkar (Beta Boo)

Seginus (Gamma Boo)

IZAR (Epsilon Boo)

Mufid (Eta Boo)

Asellus Primus (Theta Boo)

Asellus Secundus (Iota Boo)

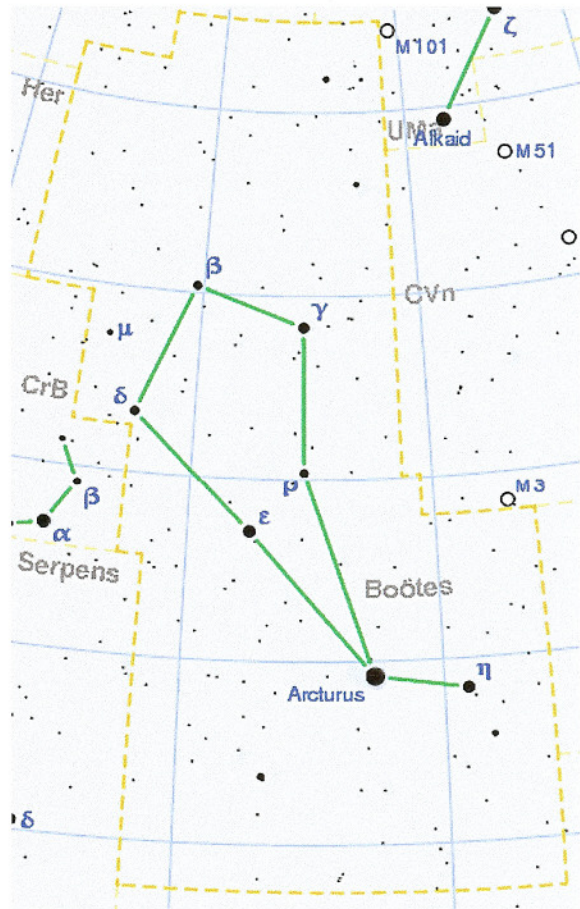
Asellus Tertius (Kappa 2 Boo)

Alkalurops (Mu 1 Boo)

Merga (38 Boo)

Messier Objects

None



Hercules:

The constellation Hercules is an ancient one. So much so that no one really knows the true origin of it. The Greeks named this constellation Heracles and described him as being worn out with toil, hands upraised, with one knee bent and a foot on Draco the dragon.

Heracles was a great Greek and Roman mythological hero, surpassing all other men in size and strength. He is well known for the twelve tasks given him by Eurystheus, the king of Mycenae.

A traditional order of his twelve labors is:

Slay the Nemean Lion.
Slay the 9-headed Lernaean Hydra.
Capture the Golden Hind of Artemis.
Capture the Erymanthian Boar.
Clean the Augean stables in a single day.
Slay the Stymphalian Birds.
Capture the Cretan Bull.
Steal the Mares of Diomedes.
Obtain the Girdle of the Amazon Queen.
Obtain the Cattle of the Monster Geryon.
Steal the Apples of the Hesperides.
Capture and bring back Cerberus.

Position in the Sky

Right Ascension: 17 hours

Declination: 30 degrees

Named Stars

RASALGETHI (Alpha 1 Her)

Kornephoros (Beta Her)

Sarin (Delta Her)

Marfik (Kappa Her)

Maasym (Lambda Her)

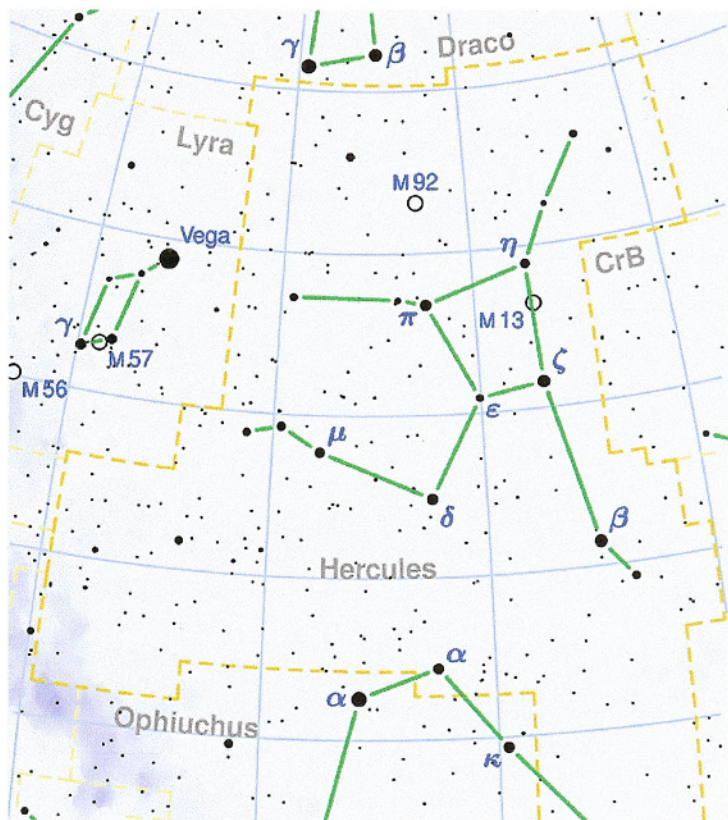
Kajam (Omega Her)

Messier Objects

M13 The Great Hercules

Globular Cluster

M92 (globular cluster)



BRAS Dark Sky Site Viewing Dates

July 10th and 17th 2010

August 7th and 14th 2010

A map of the BRAS Dark Site can be viewed at

[http://www.bing.com/maps/?v=2&sp=Point.p1wwxc7c69n1 BRAS%255fDark%255fSky](http://www.bing.com/maps/?v=2&sp=Point.p1wwxc7c69n1%20BRAS%255fDark%255fSky)

For more information check out the BRAS website at <http://www.braastro.org>

Directions to BRAS Dark Sky Site:

From Baton Rouge take I-10 west about 19 miles from the Mississippi River Bridge. Take exit 135, LA Hwy 3000, to Ramah-Maringouin exit. Go north about 100 feet. You will see a bait shop on left, turn left here. Go about 200 feet, you will see a gas station on right, turn right. Go about 400 feet until you come to the levee, turn left (south). Go 1.6 miles down the gravel road along the levee. You will see a road on right going up onto the levee, turn on this road and either stop on top of the levee or directly on the other side.

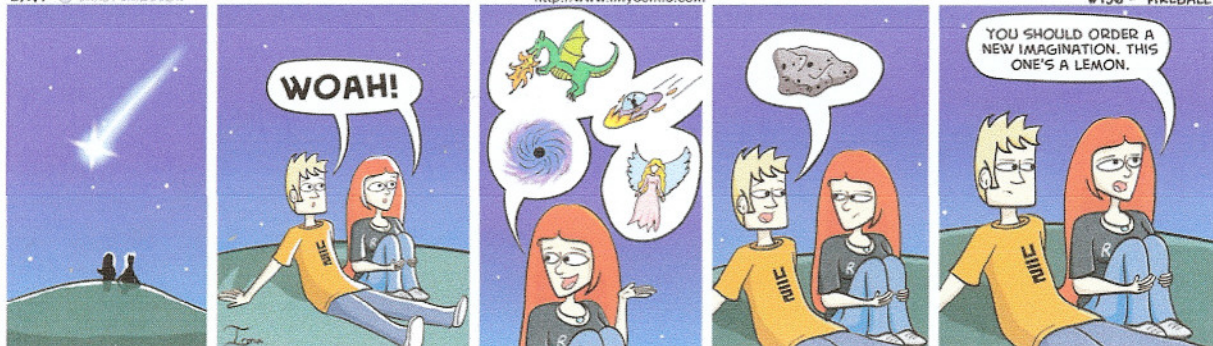
Art Barrios

BRAS Observing Chairman

art.barrios@cox.net

COSMIC COMICS

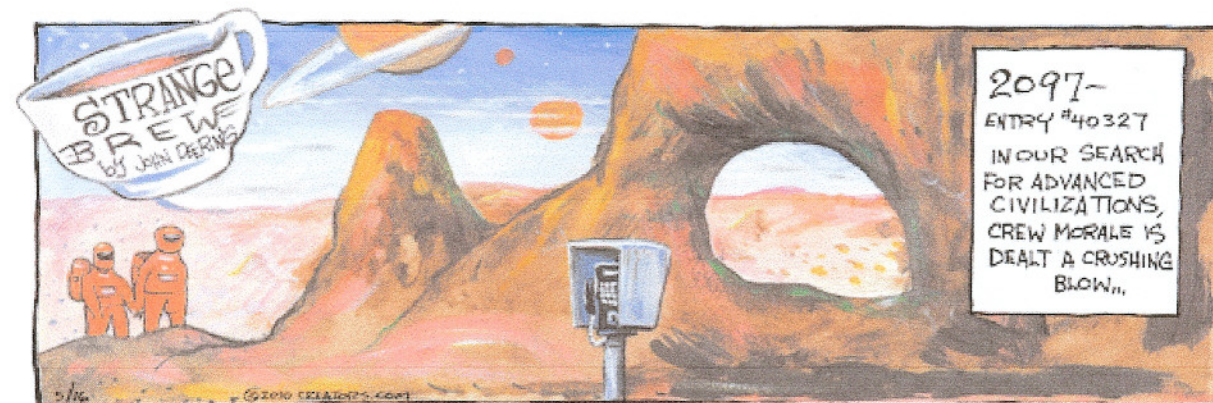
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The Evening Sky Map

FREE* EACH MONTH FOR YOU TO EXPLORE, LEARN & ENJOY THE NIGHT SKY

Sky Calendar – July 2010

Get Sky Calendar on Twitter
http://twitter.com/skymaps

- Moon at apogee** (farthest from Earth) at 10h UT (distance 405,036 km; angular size 29.8').
 - Moon near Jupiter** (morning sky) at 20h UT. Mag. -2.5.
 - Last Quarter Moon** at 14:35 UT.
 - Earth at Aphelion** (farthest from Sun) at 11h UT. The Sun-Earth distance is 1.01670 a.u. or about 152.1 million km.
 - Moon near Pleiades** (morning sky) at 6h UT.
 - Moon near Aldebaran** (morning sky) at 2h UT.
 - Venus 1.0° NNE of Regulus** (evening sky) at 12h UT. Mags. -4.1 and 1.4.
 - Total Solar Eclipse** visible from South Pacific Ocean. Path of totality includes parts of the Cook Islands, Tahiti, Tuamotu Archipelago, Easter Island, and southern Chile and Argentina. Greatest totality (5m 20s) occurs in open ocean at 19:34 UT.
 - New Moon** at 19:40 UT. Start of lunation 1083.
 - Moon at perigee** (closest to Earth) at 11h UT (361,115 km; 32.1').
 - Moon near Regulus** (evening sky) at 13h UT.
 - Moon near Venus** (evening sky) at 22h UT. Mag. -4.1.
 - Moon near Mars** (evening sky) at 0h UT. Mag. +1.4.
 - Moon near Saturn** (evening sky) at 14h UT. Mag. +1.1.
 - Moon near Spica** (evening sky) at 6h UT.
 - First Quarter Moon** at 10:11 UT.
 - Moon near Antares** (evening sky) at 20h UT.
 - Full Moon** at 1:37 UT.
 - Mercury 0.3° SSW of Regulus** (25° from Sun, evening sky) at 22h UT. Mags. +0.1 and +1.3.
 - Moon at apogee** (farthest from Earth) at 0h UT (distance 405,955 km; angular size 29.3').
 - Moon near Jupiter** (morning sky) at 2h UT. Mag. -2.7.
 - Mars 1.8° SSW of Saturn** (evening sky) at 6h UT. Mags. +1.5 and +1.1.
- More sky events and links at <http://Skymaps.com/skycalendar/>
All times in Universal Time (UT). (USA Eastern Summer Time = UT - 4 hours.)



SAVE ON RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS • <http://Skymaps.com/store>

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- All sales support the production and free distribution of The Evening Sky Map.

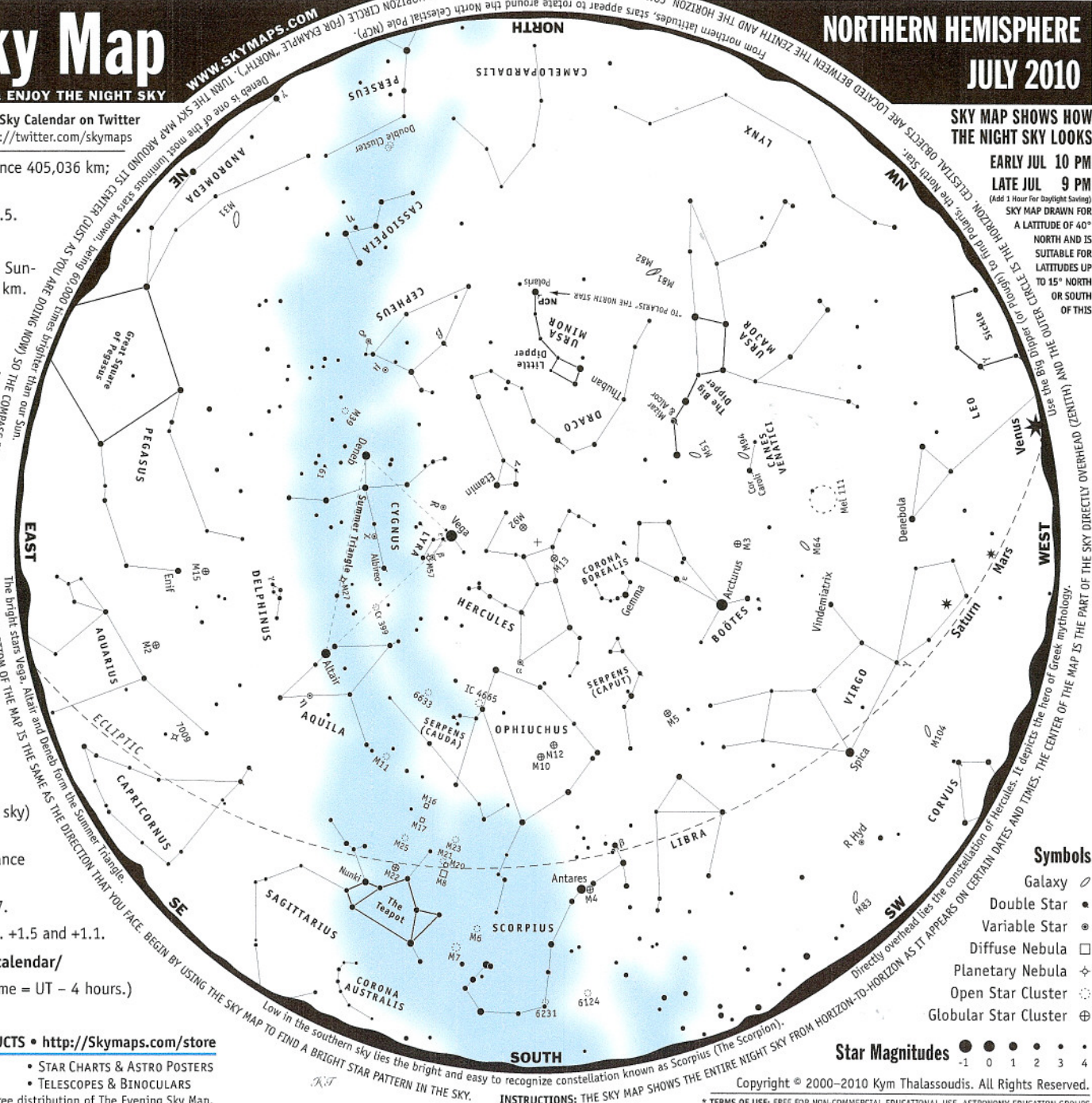
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
JULY 2010

SKY MAP SHOWS HOW
THE NIGHT SKY LOOKS

EARLY JUL 10 PM

LATE JUL 9 PM

(Add 1 Hour for Daylight Saving)
SKY MAP DRAWN FOR
A LATITUDE OF 40°
NORTH AND IS
SUITABLE FOR
LATITUDES UP
TO 15° NORTH
OR SOUTH
OF THIS



BATON ROUGE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

**You can pay your Membership Dues at our next Meeting or
Send your Dues to:**

***Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, inc.
c/o Bob Sinitiere, Treasure,
14558 Cottinham Ct.,
Baton Rouge, LA 70817-3543***

**If you have questions about dues or receiving your News Letter call Bob
at 755-2079**

◆ Regular Membership \$20.00 \$ _____

◆ Each Additional Family Membership \$ 5.00 \$ _____

◆ Student Membership \$10.00 \$ _____
(through age 17)

◆ Donation* toward club building fund or
(_____) \$ _____
Specify

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Date _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Phone _____

(H) _____

(C) _____

(W) _____

E-Mail _____

**How do you wish to receive the Society's Newsletter *Night Visions*-
_____ By Mail or by _____ E-Mail
(Please Check one)**

**PLEASE CHECK THAT YOUR ADDRESS AND E-MAIL ARE CURRENT AND
CURRENT.**

***Meetings are usually held the second Monday of each month at 7pm, except for June and July.
Most meetings are held at the Highland Road Observatory.***

*All donations to the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, Inc. are tax-deductible under IRS Section 501(c)(3) & (a)(1) and also
170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

The Baton Rouge Astronomical Society, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation chartered under the laws of the State of Louisiana.