

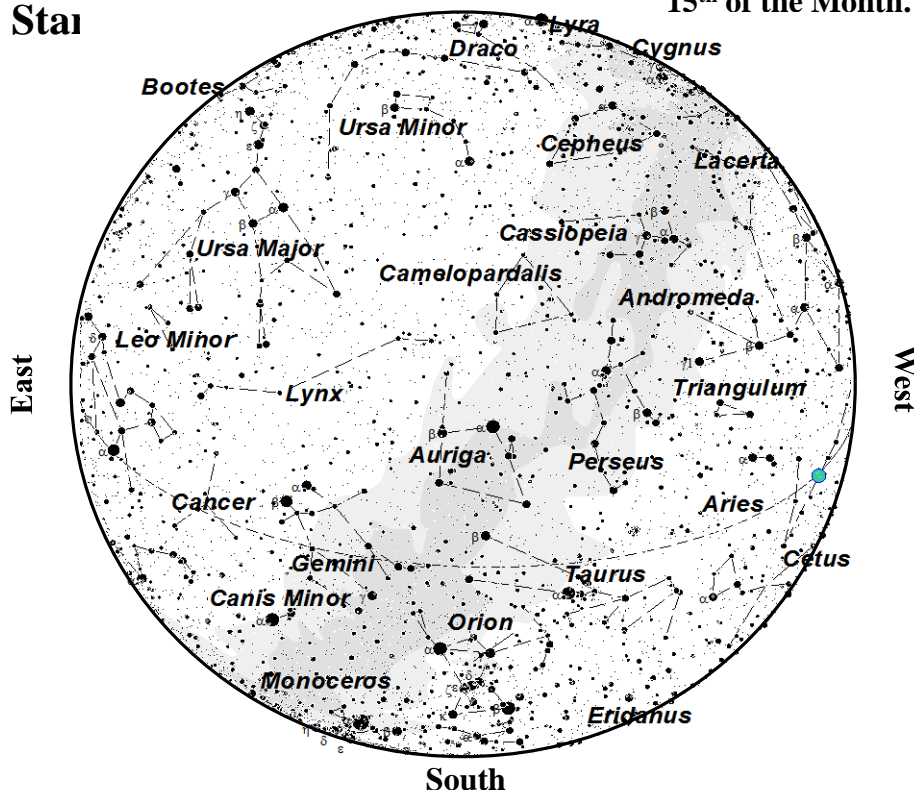
EAGLES EYE ON THE SKY – JANUARY 2017

Dave Eagle's monthly sky guide.

**This Months
Star**

North

22:00 hrs
15th of the Month.



Auriga is virtually overhead at the time of our chart with the Milky Way runs almost from south east to north west through the zenith. Scan the area with binoculars or a small telescope to be rewarded with the many open star clusters sprinkled across this area. There are a number of bright Messier open clusters within Auriga. Orion is now dominating the southern sky. Don't forget to look at his sword with the vast nebulous patch M42 and its Trapezium multiple star system nestled within. Can you see more than the four stars in there? It certainly repays further scrutiny as at least two further stars can be resolved under good conditions but does require at least a 10 inch telescope. Monoceros is also blessed with bright non-Messier nebulae including the Rosette Nebula and Hubble's Variable Nebula and a multitude of open clusters. Pegasus has almost gone in the western sky, but Leo is now quite high, bringing the realm of galaxies back into view.

THE MOON

First Qtr. – 5th.

Full – 12th.

Last Qtr. – 19th.

New – 28th.

Crescent Moon visible:

1st, 29th & 30th. - W evening sky.

25th & 26th. – E morning sky.

The Moon will be close to:

Venus, Mars & Neptune on the 2nd & 3rd.

Ceres & Uranus on the 5th & 6th.

Aldebaran & Hyades on the 9th.

Vesta and M44 on the 13th.

Regulus on the 15th.

Jupiter & Spica on the 19th.

Saturn on the 24th.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM

MERCURY – Reaches greatest western elongation of 24° on the 19th. It will be very low down and hard to spot in the south western sky just before sunrise. Saturn lies close by on the 10th.

VENUS – Reaches greatest eastern elongation of 47° from the Sun on the 12th. It will be visible low in the south western sky just after dark. Approaches Mars as the month progresses, but will never quite reach the Red Planet.

MARS – Still outpacing the Sun just after sunset in the south western sky. Its small disk and low altitude makes it a challenge to view its surface details. Passes Neptune on the 1st, but will be difficult to observe so low down.

JUPITER – Now at its highest in the south just before dawn breaks amongst the stars of Virgo just north of Spica. Magnitude is a very bright -1.56.

SATURN – Now just visible in a dark sky low in the south east before sunrise. The ringed planet is at magnitude 0.7 in the constellation of Ophiuchus.

URANUS – Visible in the south western sky just after dark in the constellation of Pisces. At magnitude 6 it requires binoculars or a small telescope to identify properly. Use a fairly high power eyepiece and you may be able to view the small pale green-blue disk. Very close to the 5th magnitude double star Zeta Piscium.

NEPTUNE – Now almost lost in the evening twilight after sunset.

QUADRANTIDS. – This meteor shower marks the 30th anniversary of the formation of BAS. They are predicted to reach a maximum of 80 per hour. 30 years! Really? Where did all that time go?

.COMET 45P Honda-Mrkos-Pajdusakova – Reaches maximum brightness late December / Early January. Although it should be a binocular object it stays very low in the sky. It passes just south of the Saturn nebula NGC7009 on the 21st, but will be a real challenge to observe or image so low down.

**For a much fuller guide, maps, graphics and
my latest news visit my Web site: www.eagleseye.me.uk**