

CAROLINA SKIES JUNE - JULY 2022

Hold the star chart over your head. Find north, and align your chart accordingly. You may need a flashlight, but be sure not to ruin your night vision with a bright bulb. Use a red light, or put a brown paper bag over your flashlight for a muted glow.

Moving into summer, new star patterns enter our evening sky. Note the Summer Triangle – not a constellation, but an asterism, or informal grouping, of the stars Deneb, Vega, and Altair, the brightest in each of their respective constellations.

From a dark location, you might notice the Milky Way, the “city” of stars to which all stars visible in our sky belong. The center of the Milky Way resides in the direction of the teapot-shaped constellation of Sagittarius the Archer.

Yellowish **Saturn** will be the first of the planets to appear at night. In June you'll need to wait until close to midnight, or later, to spot it rising above the eastern horizon. Bright **Jupiter** rises in the east a couple of hours after Saturn. In early June, reddish **Mars** will appear quite close to Jupiter, but will separate farther eastward from the giant planet as the month progresses. **Venus** dominates the eastern predawn sky. It will be hard for early risers to miss, due to its high brilliance. From early June to early July, elusive **Mercury** appears below Venus, low in the eastern twilight glow.

Predawn planet observers get a special treat, with the naked eye planets forming a striking lineup from east to west, mimicking their order out from the Sun. To best see Mercury as part of the lineup, look on or around June 24.

Skywatching Sessions:

Join us in viewing the sky! For information on Morehead's free public skywatching sessions, please check our web page, <http://moreheadplanetarium.org/skywatching> or call 919-962-1236.

