

CAROLINA SKIES OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2020

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.

Find your way around the fall sky by searching for geometric shapes: the Summer Triangle setting in the west; the Great Square of Pegasus overhead; the zigzag of Cassiopeia pointing to the North Star, Polaris; and the line of the belt in Orion the Hunter. The V-shaped “back legs” of Pegasus are really the stars of Princess Andromeda and, in a dark sky, can guide you to the Andromeda Galaxy, the Milky Way’s neighbor, which appears as a dim fuzzy oval 2.5 million light years from Earth.

Jupiter and **Saturn** shine together during the evening. You can spot the pair in the south to southwestern sky as darkness descends. Brighter Jupiter is a few degrees to the right of the yellowish ringed world. As the calendar transitions to late November, the two planets draw nearer as they head toward a super-close passing a month later. Reddish **Mars**, near its orbital close approach to Earth, shines brightly now. It becomes visible soon after sunset in the east, and then treks westward, remaining visible over most of the night. Meanwhile, **Venus** is a brilliant beacon before sunrise hanging in the eastern morning sky. It is joined in November’s pre-dawn twilight by elusive **Mercury**, positioned below the brighter planet.

For an online hub of resources for you to enjoy at home, check out **Morehead At Home** - <https://moreheadplanetarium.org/explore/morehead-at-home/>

Skywatching Sessions:

After it’s safe to gather in person again, we’ll be back with our free public monthly skywatching sessions. <http://moreheadplanetarium.org/skywatching>

