



Join in the Fun



FREE

International Astronomy Day

April 21, 2007

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada has 28 Centres consisting of enthusiastic amateur and professional astronomers across the country from Victoria to St. John's. Its main mission is to promote and support astronomy in Canada.

The Ottawa Centre, formed in 1906, has more than 450 members. The Centre offers the Fred P. Lossing Observatory near Almonte which houses an excellent 16 inch Newtonian telescope, an astronomical book library, and a telescope loan library for members.

Regular public meetings are held at 8:00 pm on the first Friday of each month at the Canada Science and Technology Museum. You do not have to be a member to sit in and enjoy the interesting talks, friendship and fun.

Membership in the RASC Ottawa Centre costs \$55 per year for regular members, \$34 for junior members. Members receive several publications which include, the yearly Observer's Handbook, the bi-monthly Journal, Sky News magazine and our monthly newsletter AstroNotes.

For questions about membership visit:

http://ottawa.rasc.ca/centre_info/Join.html

For more information about the RASC Ottawa Centre, visit our website:

www.ottawa.rasc.ca

or call our INFO LINE.

(613) 830-3381

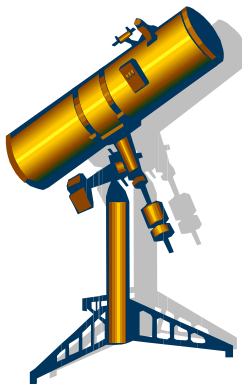
OTTAWA
CENTRE



Comet Hyakutake image courtesy of Ottawa Centre member Peter Ceravolo



Astronomy is looking up!



Today, more than 35,000 Canadians are actively observing the night sky and enjoying the hobby known as amateur astronomy.

International Astronomy Day celebrates the science of astronomy and promotes the wonder of the night sky. More than 30 different countries around the world participate in International Astronomy Day. This year it is celebrated on Saturday, April 21st, 2007.

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada invites people of all ages to look up and discover the enjoyment of astronomy. Many people feel that a large telescope is required equipment to observe the heavens—not so! All you need is your eyes. The more you look, the more you will see how the sky moves and that it is always changing.

First, learn to spot the brightest stars and star groupings. Once you've found the Big Dipper, it will serve as a guidepost you can use to find other stars and constellations. To find the planets, refer to on-line resources or one of several good monthly astronomy magazines to identify the positions of the planets. Remember, planets are closer to us than the stars, so they appear to move over a period of time. Months from now, the planets will not be near the same groups of stars

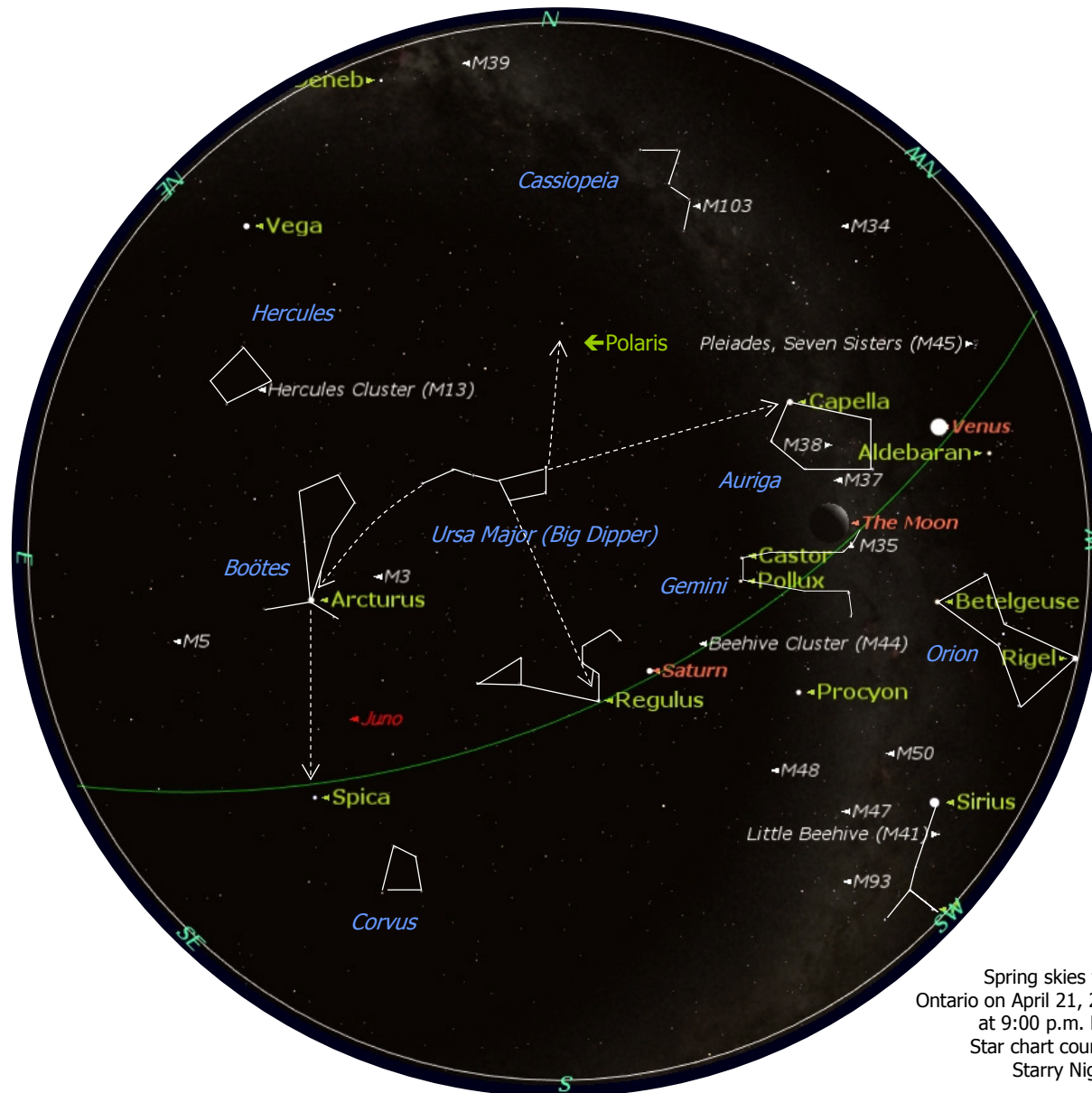
This spring, two planets are easily visible—Venus in the west and Saturn near overhead. Watch the Moon change phases and position from night to night. Don't miss the lunar eclipse visible in Ontario the morning of August 28, 2007.

After you have gained some familiarity with the night sky you can expand your horizons with astro-photography, organized observing programs (variable stars, occultations, meteors) and much more. Backyard astronomy is a hobby and pursuit that grows with you and can lead to a lifetime of "looking up."



Use the star chart on the right to find your way around the sky. Hold the chart above your head and align the four points of the compass (North, South, East and West) on the chart with the real horizons. As the night goes on, the stars appear to move from the east to the west, just like the Sun.

Tip, turn off all bright lights, use a flashlight covered with red plastic to protect your night vision and give your eyes 10 minutes to become 'dark adapted'. Enjoy the view!



Spring skies from Ontario on April 21, 2007 at 9:00 p.m. EDT. Star chart courtesy Starry Night 6