

**Planets at dusk:** Saturn, mag. +0.6 at midmonth, is high in S to WSW at dusk, in a rare and striking, long-lasting close pair with 1.4-mag. Regulus. See May 3, 11-13, 31. Closest approach, 2.2° apart on May 3, is termed a *quasi-conjunction*, an approach within 5° without an actual conjunction in Right Ascension or in celestial longitude. (Saturn already passed conjunction with Regulus, within 0.9° N of star, in early Sept. 2007.) The next occasion Saturn will appear near Regulus will be in 2036-37, in a triple conjunction. Mars, fading from +1.2 to +1.5, moves from WSW into W at dusk. Going eastward in Cancer, Mars passes through Beehive cluster and is closing in on Saturn. See May 4, 8-10, 11-13, 22, 24, 25, 31. Mercury has a very favorable appearance low in WNW from late April until mid-May, shining at mag. -1 on Apr. 29, mag. zero on May 10, +1 on May 18, then fades sharply thereafter. See May 1, 2, 5, 6-7, 13, 14, 15, 18. Span of three evening planets, Mercury-Mars-Saturn: See May 3, 14, 19. Moon goes past all three during May 6-12.

**Late night:** Jupiter rises in SE over 5 hours after sunset on May 1, to within 3 hours after sunset at month's end. See Night of Fri. May 23. **Jupiter-Saturn simultaneously:** See May 3. **Mars-Saturn-Jupiter simultaneously** (getting easier, and shifting earlier in night): See May 13, 30. **Planet at dawn:** Jupiter, of mag. -2.5 at midmonth, is in southern sky at dawn. In eastern Sagittarius, Jupiter begins retrograde on May 9. See May 9, 20-24. Try for **opposing crescent Moons on consecutive days:** On **Sunday May 4**, about 40 min. before sunrise, look for the thin old crescent Moon very low, 15°-20° N of E. The Moon is about 26-27 hours before New for E Coast, 24 hours before New for West. **Much more difficult is the very young crescent on the following day:** On **Monday May 5**, about 25-30 min. after sunset, try for a hairline thin Moon very low in WNW, ~13° lower right of Mercury. Age is a near-record 12 hours for E Coast (extremely difficult), 15-16 hours W Coast, 17 hours Hawaii. **Binoculars** will aid for both sightings, especially for the extremely young crescent on May 5.

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# SKY CALENDAR MAY 2008

An aid to enjoying the changing sky

Use this scale to measure angular distances between objects on diagrams below.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>GREAT SQUARE of PEGASUS</b></p> <p>ENE Old Moon Sat 3 E ESE</p>	<p><b>Thurs-Sat, May 1-3, 1½ hours before sunrise</b></p> <p>Thurs 1</p> <p>Fri 2</p> <p>ENE ESE</p>	<p>feet of GEMINI</p> <p><b>Thurs May 1</b></p> <p>Bull's horns</p> <p>Betelgeuse</p> <p>ORION</p> <p>••• belt</p> <p>Aldebaran • Hyades</p> <p>Rigel W WNW * Mercury</p> <p>One hour after sunset</p>	<p>Capella •</p> <p>Kids</p> <p><b>One hour after sunset</b></p> <p>TAURUS</p> <p>Pleiades</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW * Pleiades</p>	<p><b>Friday May 2, one hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Stars appear lower each night. On what date will you last see Aldebaran?</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW * Pleiades</p> <p>Wedge 7 N'most Moon near Bull's horn</p> <p>Moon easy these evenings</p> <p><b>One hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Tues May 6</p> <p>Ald • WNW</p>	<p><b>Sat May 3, one hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Saturn retrograde 2.2° from Regulus. Look high in SSW.</p> <p>LEO</p> <p>SICKLE</p> <p>Saturn</p> <p>Regulus</p> <p>In this long-lasting <i>quasi-conjunction</i>, they remain within 2.5° for 3 weeks before &amp; after May 3. Me-Ma-Sa now span 90°.</p> <p><b>ASTRONOMY DAY</b></p> <p>Sat 10 near Beehive</p> <p>Mars * Pollux Castor</p> <p>Fri 9</p> <p><b>One hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Face W.</p>	<p><b>Late night of Sat May 3</b></p> <p>Jup-Sat nearly 141° apart, max for this year. Look 6 hrs after sunset (4 hrs before sunrise).</p> <p>Jupiter</p> <p>Sigma Sgr</p> <p>TEAPOT</p>
<p><b>Sunday May 4, 35 min before sunrise:</b> Moon ~ 26-27 hrs before New from E Coast, 24 hrs before from West.</p> <p>Old Moon</p> <p>ENE E</p>	<p><b>Sunday May 4, one hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Mars Pollux Castor</p> <p>in straight line 11° long in WSW-W</p> <p>ENE E</p>	<p><b>Monday May 5</b></p> <p>8:18 a.m. EDT. Perigee, 222,309 miles from Earth, 11 p.m. EDT. <b>Very young Moon:</b> See next.</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p> <p><b>May 5, 30 min after sunset</b></p> <p>Try for very young Moon. See margin.</p>	<p><b>May 5, 30 min after sunset</b></p> <p>Try for very young Moon. See margin.</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Wed 7</b></p> <p>N'most Moon near Bull's horn</p> <p><b>One hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Tues May 6</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Sat 10</b> near Beehive</p> <p>Mars * Pollux Castor</p> <p>Fri 9</p> <p><b>One hour after sunset</b></p> <p>Face W.</p>	<p><b>Fri May 9, 1½ hrs before sunrise:</b> Jupiter begins retrograde 6° from Pi Sagittarii and 10° from Sigma; will go 10° W next 4 months.</p> <p>Jupiter</p> <p>Sigma Sgr</p> <p>TEAPOT</p>
<p>Denebola, Lion's tail</p> <p>LEO</p> <p>SICKLE</p> <p>Saturn</p> <p>First Qtr Sunday May 11</p> <p>Mars</p> <p>Tues 13</p> <p>Mon 12</p> <p>Regulus</p> <p>On May 12, Mars is 30° W of Saturn and closing. Mars will pass 0.7° N of Saturn on July 10, when planet pair will be nearly 6° E of Regulus. Saturn shifts &lt; 4° E until then.</p> <p>One hour after sunset</p>	<p><b>Tues 13, 1½ hrs after sunset</b></p> <p>Mercury at gr elong, 22° E of Sun and 47° W (LR) of Mars. Late tonight, Jupiter rises before Mars sets. Then you can see 3 bright outer planets Ma-Sa-Ju spanning 170°.</p> <p>Capella •</p> <p>N horn</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Wed 14 at dusk</b></p> <p>Mercury-Mars-Saturn span 75°.</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Thursday May 15 at dusk</b></p> <p>Mercury stays 46° W (LR) of Mars May 15-22, but fades from mag +0.5 to +1.7. Spica ~ 12° lower left of Moon this evening.</p> <p>Mercury</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Friday May 16</b></p> <p>Spica</p> <p>Moon</p> <p>Fri 16 in SSE</p> <p>Sat 17</p> <p>Alpha Lib</p>	<p><b>Thursday May 22, two hours after sunset</b></p> <p>Mars in Beehive. Use binoculars or telescope to see stars of that cluster. Saturn 25° UL of Mars.</p> <p>Pollux</p> <p>Castor</p> <p>Procyon</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Regulus 2.5° LR of Saturn this weekend. Night of Fri May 23, four hours after sunset:</b> Rising Moon near Jupiter. <b>May 24, nightfall:</b> Mars between Delta &amp; Gamma Cancri, the "Aselli", feeding from the Manger, or Praesepe, the Beehive Cluster.</p>
<p><b>Sunday May 18:</b> Last day to see Sun &amp; Moon simultaneously just before sunset. This week, Mercury fades sharply, from mag +1 to +2, and passes 4.4° LL of Bull's N horn May 20-22.</p> <p><b>Mon May 19:</b> Full "Blue" Moon (3rd Full Moon of the season) rises around sunset in FL, soon after elsewhere in U.S. <b>Next Blue Moon:</b> Nov. 21, 2010. <b>Rest of Mercury's apparition:</b> Me-Ma-Sa span 72° to 71°.</p> <p><b>Sunday May 25, nightfall</b></p> <p>Mars passes 1.5° N of 4th-mag Delta Cnc, Asellus Australis, S donkey. Binoculars.</p> <p>Alpha Lib</p> <p>Sunday 18</p> <p>Mon 19 most distant Full Moon of year</p> <p>Tues 20</p> <p>Antares in SE</p>	<p><b>Mon May 26, predawn:</b> Neptune (mag 8) begins retrograde 2.3° N of 2.8-mag. Delta Capricorni and between the 5th-mag stars 41 and Mu Cap.</p> <p>Neptune</p> <p>Delta Capricorni</p> <p>41 and Mu Cap.</p>	<p><b>Tues May 27</b></p> <p>Last Quarter 10:57 p.m. EDT. Moon isn't up then, but by sunrise on Wed 28, Moon is 86° W of Sun and is just under half full. <b>In predawn on Thurs 29,</b> Moon is 16° S of Great Square of Pegasus, 3° N of 6th-mag Uranus, and just S of Cirlet of Pisces.</p> <p>Jupiter</p> <p>Fri 23</p> <p>Sat 24</p> <p>TEAPOT</p> <p>S'most Moon rises ~ 2 hrs after sunset May 21, passes due S ~ 3 hrs before sunrise May 22.</p> <p>Thurs 22</p> <p>S'most Moon</p> <p>Scorpion's tail</p> <p>Wed 21</p> <p>Antares</p> <p>just past Full</p> <p>Tues 20</p> <p>Procyon</p> <p>WNW</p>	<p><b>Fri May 30</b></p> <p>About 3½ hours after sunset, before Mars sets, all three bright outer planets, Mars-Saturn-Jupiter, span 160°. From lat 40° N, Mars and Jupiter are then both 6° above horizon, in nearly opposite directions.</p> <p>Mars</p> <p>Saturn</p> <p>Jupiter</p>	<p><b>Sat May 31, 1½ hours after sunset, WSW to W</b></p> <p>Saturn</p> <p>SICKLE</p> <p>Regulus</p> <p>2.8°</p> <p>Ma-Sa 20° apart, closing. Binocs show Beehive 5° W of Mars.</p> <p>Mars</p>		

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