

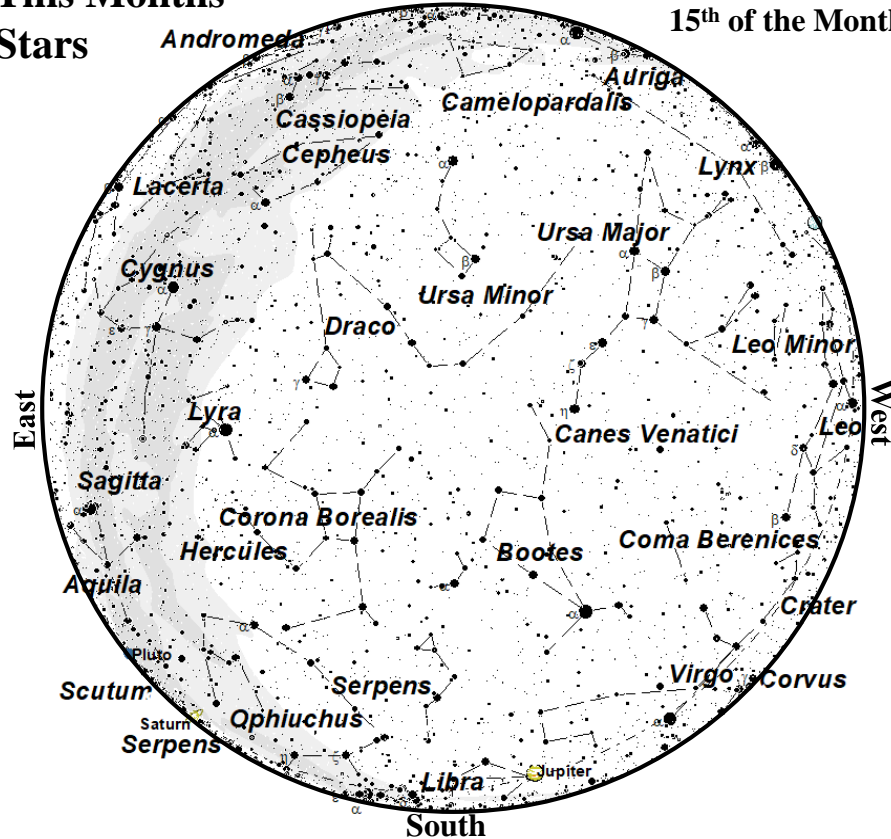
# EAGLES EYE ON THE SKY – JUNE 2018

Dave Eagle's monthly sky guide.

**This Months  
Stars**

North

22:00 hrs  
15<sup>th</sup> of the Month.



The body of Draco (The Dragon) lies overhead, there are some faint galaxies and a fine planetary nebula NGC 6543 (The Cats Eye Nebula) to be found here, but they are small and quite challenging objects in the bright skies of Summer. Between Boötes and Hercules lies Corona Borealis (The Northern Crown). Moving south we come across the head of the serpent, Serpens Caput, being grappled by the giant Ophiuchus. This area abounds with globular clusters, so hunt them down. South of Ophiuchus and just showing above the southern horizon is the head of Scorpius, (The Scorpion). It is a real pity that this extremely rich part of the Milky Way is so low for us that we cannot really see it at its best. In the western sky Leo is now getting low down, as is Virgo and both are close to setting. In the eastern sky, Aquila, the Eagle is flying with Cygnus flying alongside. The bright summer Milky Way is now starting to raise itself off the horizon. Towards north eastern sky Cassiopeia is getting higher and the top right hand corner of Pegasus is just starting to show.

## THE MOON

### Phases:

6<sup>th</sup> – Last Quarter.

13<sup>th</sup> – New.

20<sup>th</sup> – First Quarter.

29<sup>th</sup> – Full Moon.

### Thin Crescent Moon visible:

10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> – Eastern morning sky.

17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> – Western evening sky.

### The Moon will be close to:

Saturn on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mars on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>.

Neptune on the 7<sup>th</sup> (Difficult).

Venus on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Regulus on the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>.

Jupiter on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Vesta on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Saturn on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

## THE SOLAR SYSTEM

**MERCURY** – Reaches superior conjunction on the far side of the Sun on the 6<sup>th</sup>. By the end of the month this elusive planet at magnitude -0.13 is very low down in the western sky just after sunset, but will be a challenge to spot so low down in the twilight.

**VENUS** – Very bright at magnitude -4.0 in the western twilight sky after sunset. It moves away from the Sun throughout the month. Due to the shallowing angle of the ecliptic the planets altitude doesn't increase very much after nightfall each day. Reaches greatest elongation next month. Crescent Moon close on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**MARS** – The Red Planet spends the month in Capricornus as it approaches opposition next month. The planet is starting to get bigger and brighter as the distance from Earth decreases. The best time to see it is between 2 and 3am when it will be at its highest in the southern sky.

**JUPITER** – Just past opposition, this colossal planet is still very large (43.1" arc) and bright (magnitude -2.4). It makes a fascinating object to watch the changing dark belts and lighter zones which are made of swirling clouds in its atmosphere. Look out for the red spot, the movement of the Galilean moons and their shadow transits, as they constantly jostle around their massive host.

**SATURN** – Reaches opposition on the 27<sup>th</sup>. At magnitude +0.08 its rings are now very well displayed towards the Earth making a spectacular sight. Best time to view will be around midnight when the planet will be at its highest in the south. Its brightest satellites are much fainter than Jupiter's. How many others than Titan can you spot?

**URANUS & NEPTUNE** – Both planets are low in the morning twilight to be favourably viewed this month. Save these for the autumn when they will be better placed.

**PLUTO** – Visible in Sagittarius, but is an extremely challenging 14<sup>th</sup> magnitude "star" lost amongst all the other Milky Way stars in that very rich star field.

**Comet 21P (Giacobini-Zinner)** – This comet with a 6.5 year period is moving through Cygnus close to the N. American Nebula around the 20<sup>th</sup>. Currently +11<sup>th</sup> magnitude, it will brighten over the next few months as it gets closer to Earth. More details later.

**METEORS** – No notable northern hemisphere showers are predicted this month.

**NOCTILUCENT CLOUDS** – Look out towards the northern sky for these pearly-blue-white clouds as the season for them has now started.

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