

Our Night Sky for March 18th, 2024

As I previously mentioned as spring arrives, we can always count on several lovely clear nights to reacquaint ourselves with the night skies. Spring equinox is tomorrow March 18 at 8:06 pm. This is the precise moment that the sun is crossing directly above the equator on its path to it's most northernly position, which it will reach on June 20 this year and the start of summer. The spring and fall equinox are the two days each year when we enjoy equal length day and night. There is an added complication though. As you know, sunset does not mean dark. There are actually four stages on our way to darkness each night. Tomorrow the sun sets at approximately 7:26 pm this begins civic twilight, which ends at about 7:57 as Nautical twilight begins. Nautical twilight ends at approximately 8:38 pm as astronomical twilight begins. Astronomical twilight ends at approximately 9:22 pm and now it is officially dark. Astronomical night officially ends at about 5:13 am. So even this early in our spring we are already down to about five hours and fifty minutes of true darkness. So, it's pretty obvious that the opportunities to enjoy the night skies already are slipping away. I would suggest that anytime the evening is pleasant, and the sky is dark, step outside for even just a few minutes and take a moment to enjoy [Our Night Sky](#).