

Our Night Sky for April 1st 2024

Now that spring is upon us, I always enjoy the opportunity to reacquaint myself with the night sky without bundling up first. As I've mentioned before we are moving into a few months without planets to help find our way around the sky. Jupiter is still easy to find almost due west and still high enough to be worth a look with your binoculars. If you look to the left of Jupiter halfway to due south you can pick up Orion's bow pointed right at Jupiter. This still high enough for a good look at the red super giant Betelgeuse on the upper left of Orion and Bellatrix the other shoulder and the base of the bow. Now drop straight down past the three belt stars to the very bright Blue Super Giant Rigel.

Perhaps because Orion is relatively close to us, its stars are roughly between 500 and 1200 light years from us and it is well placed in our skies. This constellation is well studied with many treasures to explore. So far there are several of the stars with planets, ten so far. When exploring with optics you can easily find the Orion Nebula, an enormous star forming region located just below the belt stars. A little off to one side you can find well known Horsehead Nebula. All worth locating in Our Night Sky.