

Our Night Sky for April 15th, 2024

I previously said I would offer a constellation of the Zodiac. Or more exactly Constellations of the western zodiac, and they are found along the ecliptic, a line that is approximately the line the planets follow and is about the midline of our solar system. The position in the sky is related to the months of the year and this is where the non science of astrology splits from the science of astronomy. The ancient stories attached to constellations of the zodiac are epic and most are centuries old and not suitable as children's bedtime stories.

Because they are found along the ecliptic, they flow across our skies like the planets and from time to time are rising from the east and setting in the west. But because they are not solar system objects like the planets, these constellations are always in the same areas of the sky. Each year you will see the same constellations rising, reaching their highest elevation and as the month continues will set gradually earlier each night until they are lost in light from the setting sun but return a few months later to our eastern sky. The planets are moving across our skies because they are following their own orbit at their own speed around our sun, and they appear in different and changing positions across the sky. This complex dance of planets and background stars all add to the beauty of Our Night Sky.