

Our Night Sky for April 29th 2024

For the last couple of weeks, we looked for objects easy to find but soon to be gone from our spring skies. Let's turn completely around and look a bit north of east and up about a third of the way to overhead. This is a large complex constellation named Hercules. The body of Hercules is similar to the shape of Orion, a squarish body with shoulder stars, a left arm stretched out pointing south and its right arm holding up a shield. The bright star at the tip of the right foot is actually a triple star system about 360 light years from us. You will know you are looking at Hercules if you look left, about a hand width distance to the very bright star Vega and the hanging parallelogram that is Lyra. Looking right and a little above the head of Hercules is a very simple constellation named Corona Borealis, a small group of seven stars in the shape of horns with the open end pointing north. I have mentioned that being familiar with some constellations will help find your way to many much fainter and hard to find objects. This is true in this area; add a pair of binoculars and a star map and you could spend an enjoyable evening finding many spectacular sights in this area of Our Night Sky.