

Our Night Sky for April 14th, 2025

Again, this week I'm suggesting sky objects that will help you calibrate your night vision. Additionally, as you become familiar with the sensitivity of your vision, you will notice differences in sky conditions. This time of year offers your best opportunity for excellent sky conditions. As the weeks go by more microscopic particles from agriculture and industry will be suspended in the air, not to mention the possibility of smoky hazy days or worst of all mosquitoes. If you wait for summer, really dark skies are shorter and later, also if you want to avoid city sky glow you still have a drive out of town in the middle of the night. And now they're launching thousands of satellites to further mess up our sky.

These un-helpful conditions will vary but spring offers your best chance to enjoy our sky especially if you are trying to sharpen your skills.

A quite simple start is to pick an object high in our sky. Do a search and print a chart to help when you're outside. Try and find a red flashlight, even some red cellophane over a regular flashlight works as red light has the least effect on your night vision. Do not use a screen, remember you are effectively looking into a light. Why not start with the big dipper? Look closely at the center star in the handle. As your eyes get accustomed to the dark you should easily spot that the center star is two stars. Your chart and binoculars will show you four stars, maybe six. A star nursery, a nice surprise in Our Night Sky.