

Our Night Sky for May 12th, 2025

Tonight is a full moon with a very unusual name. It is the Micro Flower full moon I assume this is because of Mother's Day. The other unusual word in the name is Micro. This is because the moon's orbit around the earth is not circular but an ellipse, and this full moon occurs when the moon is furthest away from the earth and the word micro might be a bit of an exaggeration since the moon is only about 6 % further away than the average distance. It's unlikely that you will see the difference. You might remember the last super full moon in August 2023, a full moon when the earth is closest to the earth. The difference between a super full moon and a micro full moon is about 16%. Again, unless you are making accurate measurements it's pretty difficult to see even that difference with the unaided eye.

So have a look on Mother's Day and keep in mind it is a little further away and a little smaller than average. Another thing that is a small bit different about the Micro Flower full moon is because it is at one of the extremes, it rises at about 10 pm. This means there is time before the moon comes up to pick out a couple of bright stars that I've suggested are a good way to start learning the sky. Vega is often the first star you can spot as the sun slides slowly below the western horizon, it will suddenly blink into sight, in Our Night Sky.