



September 2026 Astronomy Report

What's Up This Month?



- **Moon:**
 - Phases
 - Galileo's crater
- **Planets:**
 - Evening: Mercury, Venus, Saturn, Neptune
 - Morning: Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune
 - Autumnal equinox occurs September 22nd at 5:05 pm PDT
- **Comets/Asteroids/Meteor Showers:**
 - Comet 10P/Tempel
- **Dark Sky Star Party:**
 - Tuttle Creek Campground - Lone Pine, September 10-12
- **Public Viewing:**
 - Cub Lake, September 19

Moon - Phases

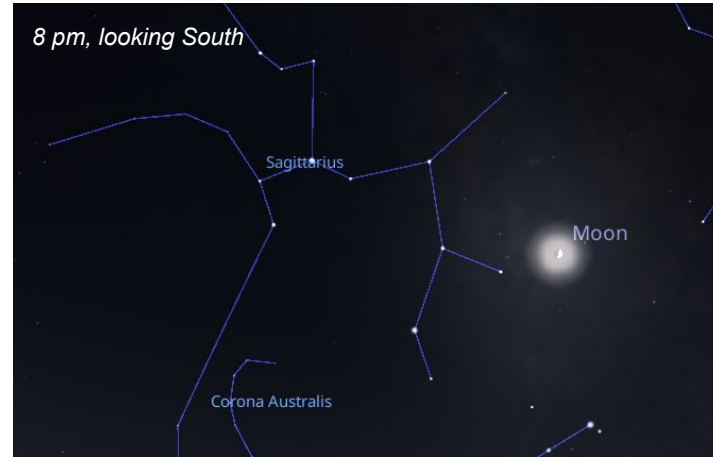
September 4 - Last Quarter (Taurus)



September 10 - New Moon

Apogee (251,171 miles) - 18th
Perigee (228,825 miles) - 6th

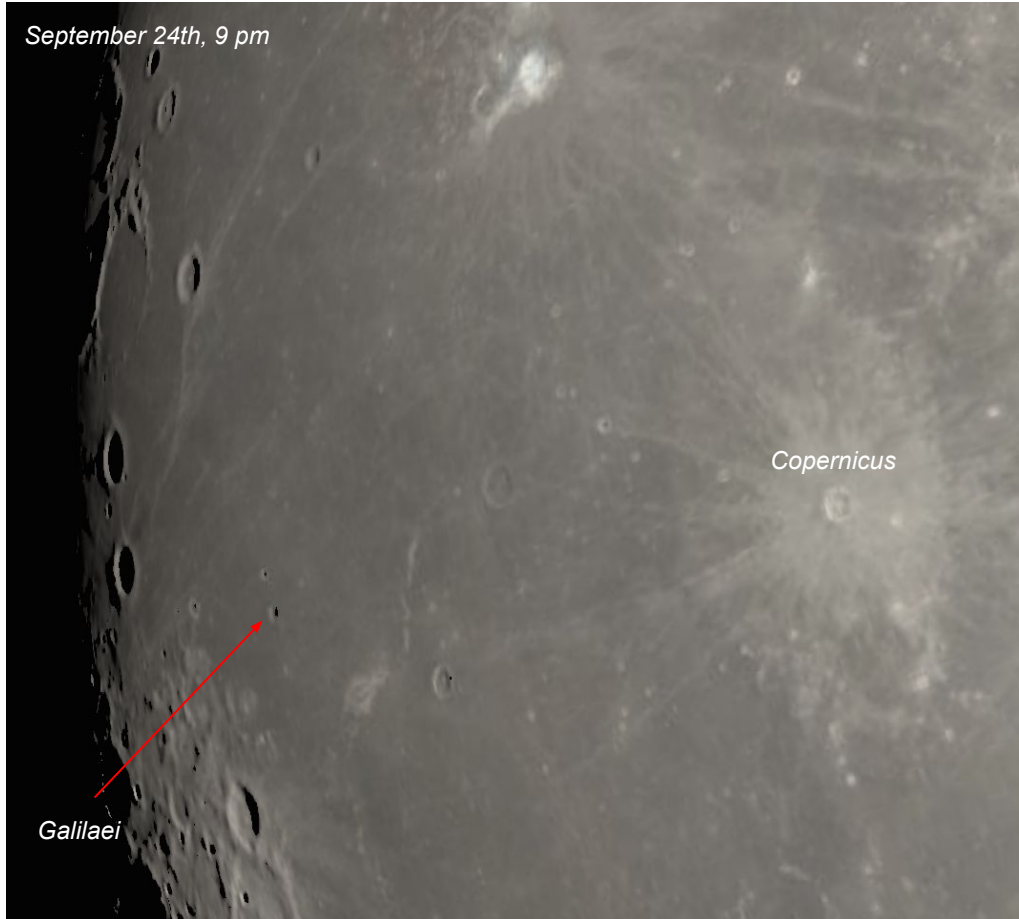
September 18 - First Quarter (Sagittarius)



September 26 - Full Moon (Pisces)



Moon - Galileo's crater



"Galileo must have rubbed the lunar cartographers the wrong way, because his crater (only 10 miles in diameter) is half the size of and less prominent than the one named after his friend and student, Reiner."

They are both located in Oceanus Procellarum as young, sharp-rimmed craters that formed well after the huge lava upwellings that characterized the Moon's early existence.

A curious splotchy white feature, Reiner Gamma, lies between Galilaei and Reiner. Apollo missions confirmed this is not topographic in origin, but like other white splotches on the far side, is quite magnetic. To date, there is no widespread agreement as to what it is or how it formed."



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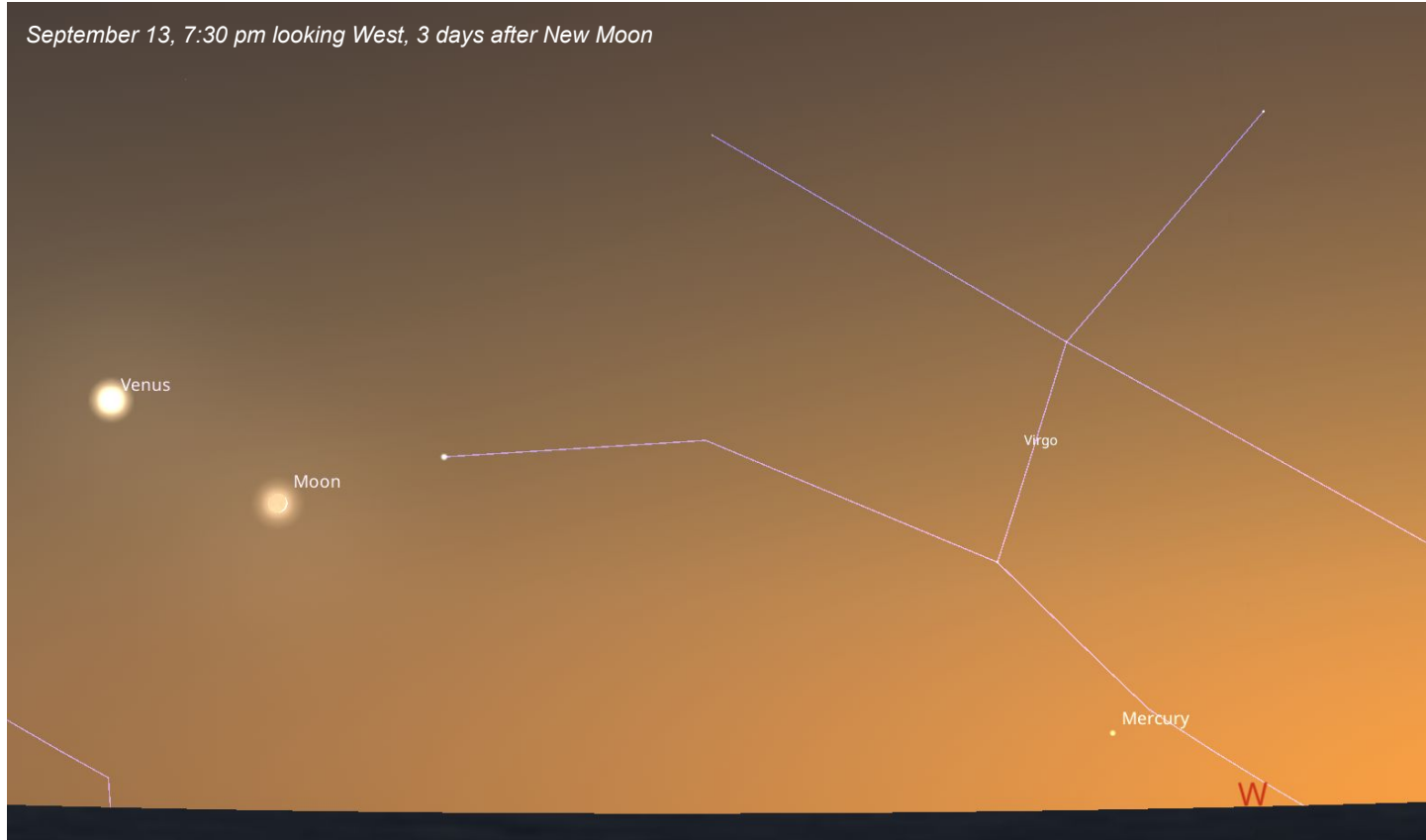


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Evening Planets: Venus/Mercury - (Virgo)

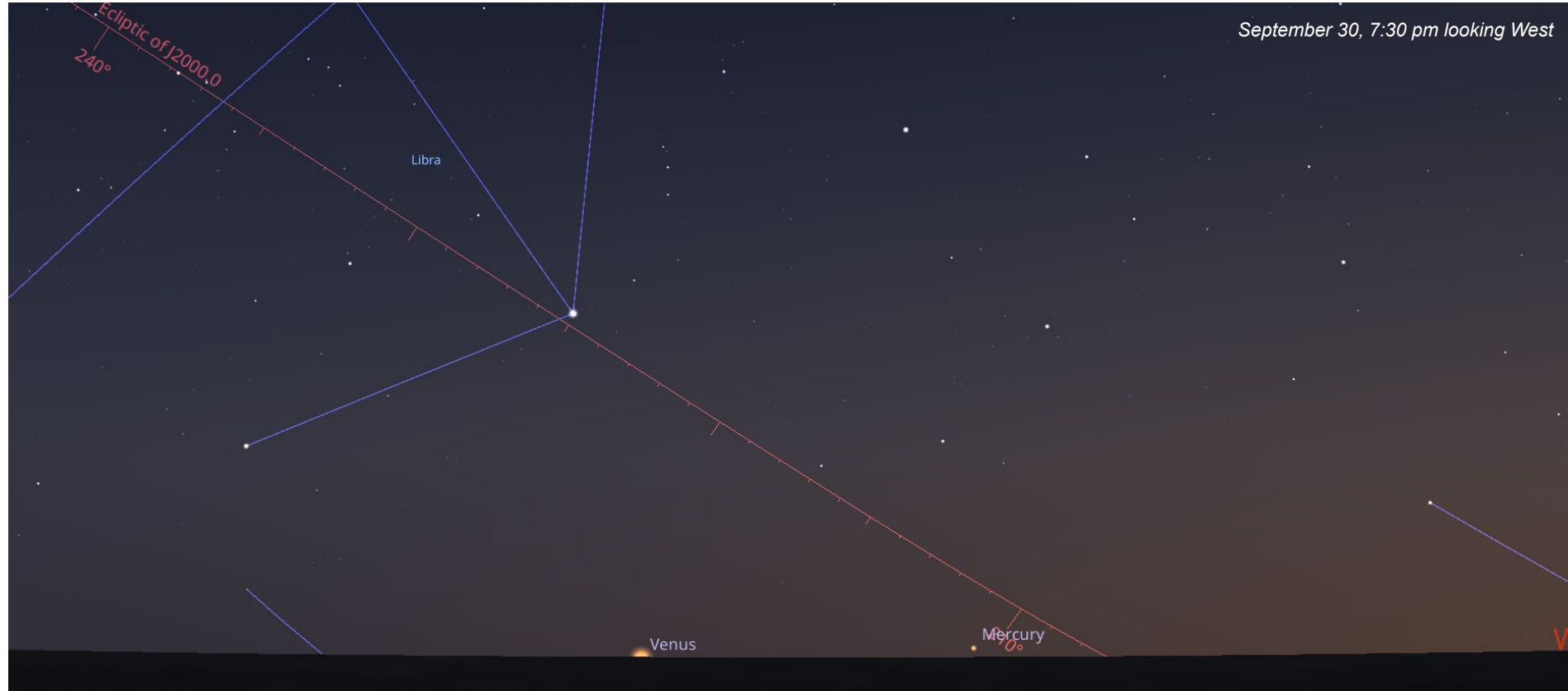
Venus is the brightest object in the west after sunset, reaching -4.8 magnitude on the 18th. The drawback is that it loses altitude during September and sets soon after sunset late in the month. Mercury has limited viewing due to its unfavorable location on the ecliptic, which is inclined at a low angle relative to the horizon.

September 13, 7:30 pm looking West, 3 days after New Moon



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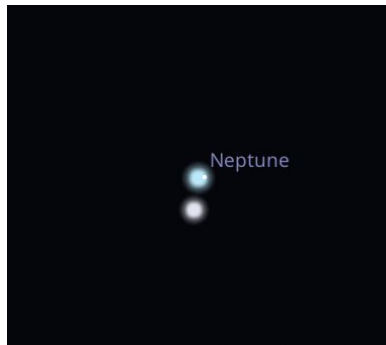
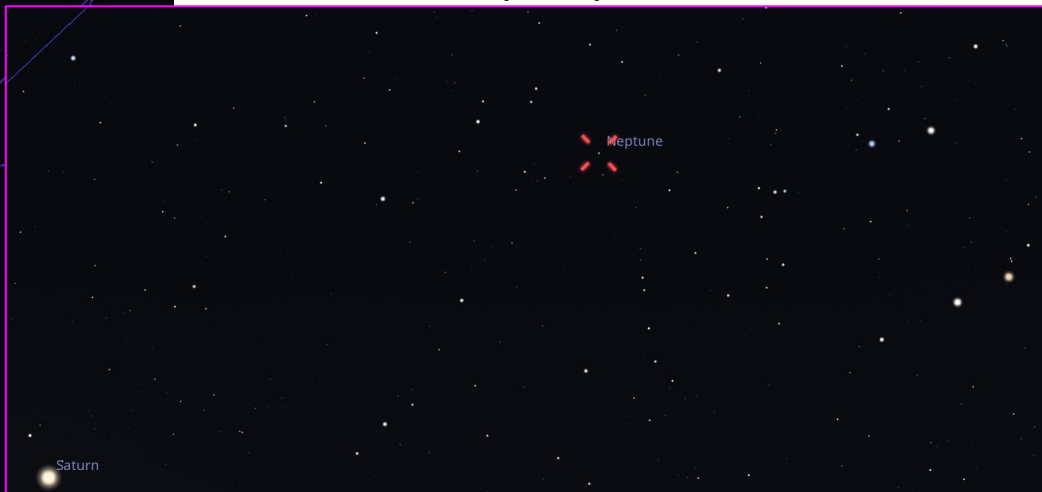


Evening Planets: Saturn/Neptune - (Pisces)

Neptune rises in the east as the Sun sets in the west, marking the time when it reaches opposition, which occurs on September 25th.



Closeup of Neptune



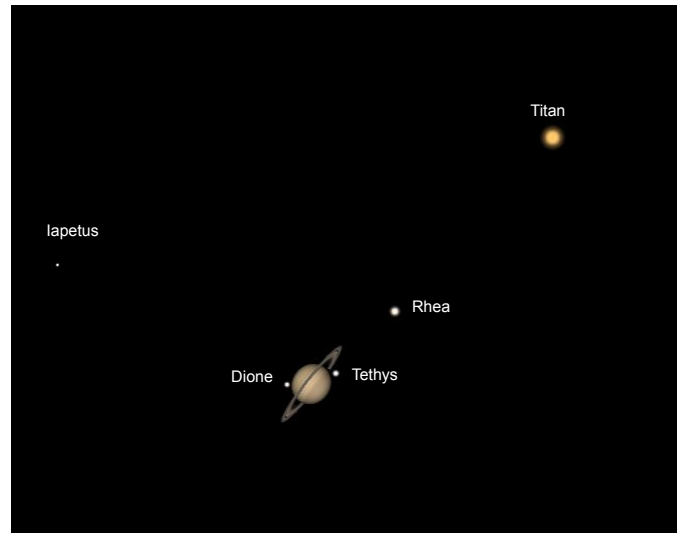
Neptune stands within 1' of a mag 8.6 field star (HIP 1127). Bluish glow of Neptune contrasts well with the yellowish main sequence star.

Evening Planets: Saturn/Neptune - (Pisces)

Saturn rises around 9 pm in early September and is visible all night. Its rings are opening, tilted by >8 degrees early in the month.



Closeup of Saturn



Morning Planets: Uranus - (Taurus)

Uranus shines at magnitude 5.7, potentially visible to the naked eye from a dark location with a moonless sky ([Tuttle Creek campout challenge!](#))



Closeup of Uranus



Morning Planets: Mars - (Gemini)

Mars rises around 2 am and is joined by a waning crescent Moon on the 6th. It crosses into Cancer Sept. 25th.



Morning Planets: Jupiter - (Cancer)

Jupiter rises shortly after 4 am and is joined by a waning crescent Moon on the 8th. It crosses into Leo Sept. 24th, brightening to magnitude -1.9.





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Comet - 10P/Tempel- (*Piscis Austrinus*)

- 8th magnitude comet visible with binoculars or a low power telescope at a dark site
- Short period comet, circling the Sun in 5.36 years; confined to the asteroid belt; appears every 16 years



“Look low in the south beginning around midnight to find Fomalhaut in Piscis Austrinus, then shift another binocular field to the southwest. After a quick peek in binoculars and under low power in a scope, bump up the magnification to 150x if the night allows, revealing a bizarre galaxy-like shape. The glow from the outflow of dust should be flattened and better defined with an off-center false nucleus.”



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Dark Sky Viewing Tuttle Creek Campground, September 11

Ps 19:2

1 - NGC 6974 (Veil Nebula)



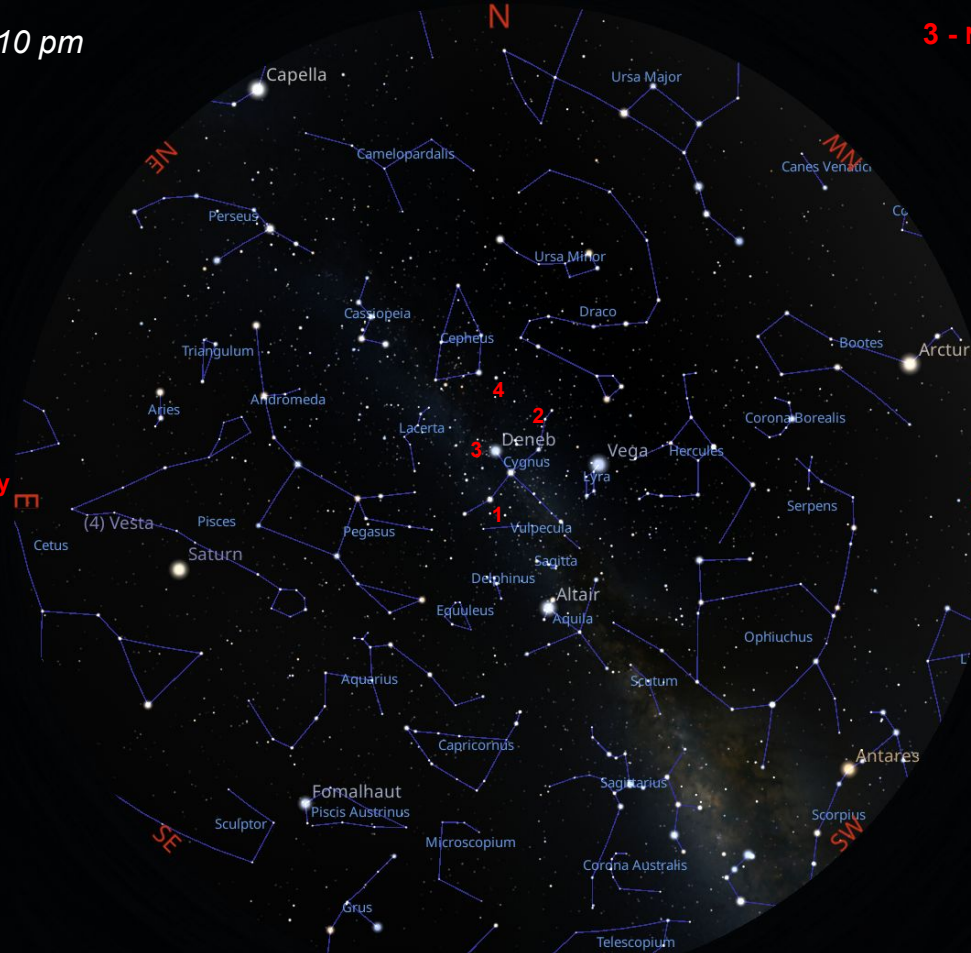
Supernova remnant in Cygnus
2400 light years from Earth
small telescopes

2 - NGC 6826 (Blinking Planetary Nebula)



Planetary nebula in Cygnus
2000 light years from Earth
small telescopes

10 pm



3 - NGC 7000 (North American Nebula)



Emission nebula in Cygnus
2600 light years from Earth
small telescopes

4 - NGC 6946 (Fireworks Galaxy)



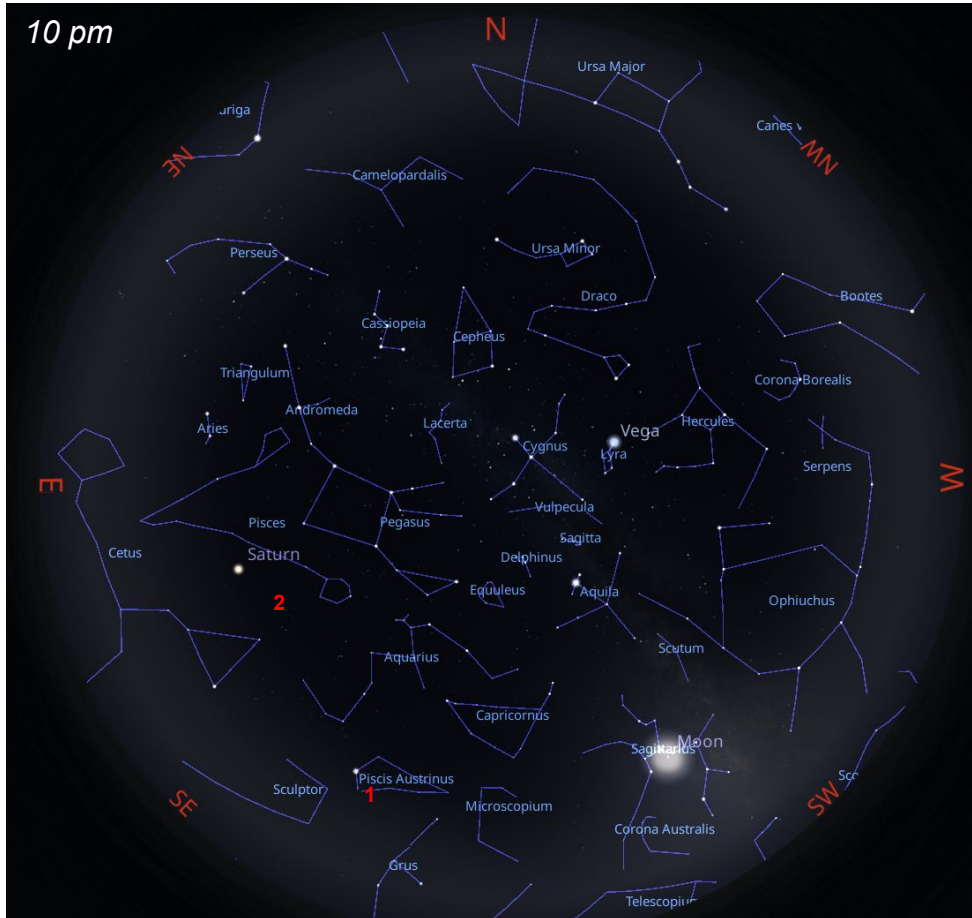
Bright face-on spiral galaxy in Cygnus
25 MM light years from Earth
small telescopes

Cub Lake, September 19

Cub Lake, September 19

Ps 19:2

10 μm



**1 - Comet 10P/Tempel
Saturn, 2 - Neptune**

Waxing 1st Qtr Moon



September 2026 Viewing Chronology

- 3 - Saturn/Neptune (*evening*)
- 4 - Last Qtr Moon (*morning*)
- 6 - Mars/Moon (*morning*)
- 8 - Jupiter/Moon (*morning*)
- 10 - New Moon
- 10 thru 12 - Dark Sky Viewing, Tuttle Creek Campground - Lone Pine
- 11 - Uranus (*morning*); Saturn/Neptune (*evening*)
- 13 - Venus/Mercury/Moon (*evening*)
- 18 - 1st Qtr Moon (*evening*)
- 18 - Public Viewing. Cub Lake
- 24 - Moon - Galileo's crater (*evening*)
- 26 - Full Moon (*evening*)
- 30 - Venus/Mercury (*morning*)

- Comet 10P/Tempel - all month (*midnight*)

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