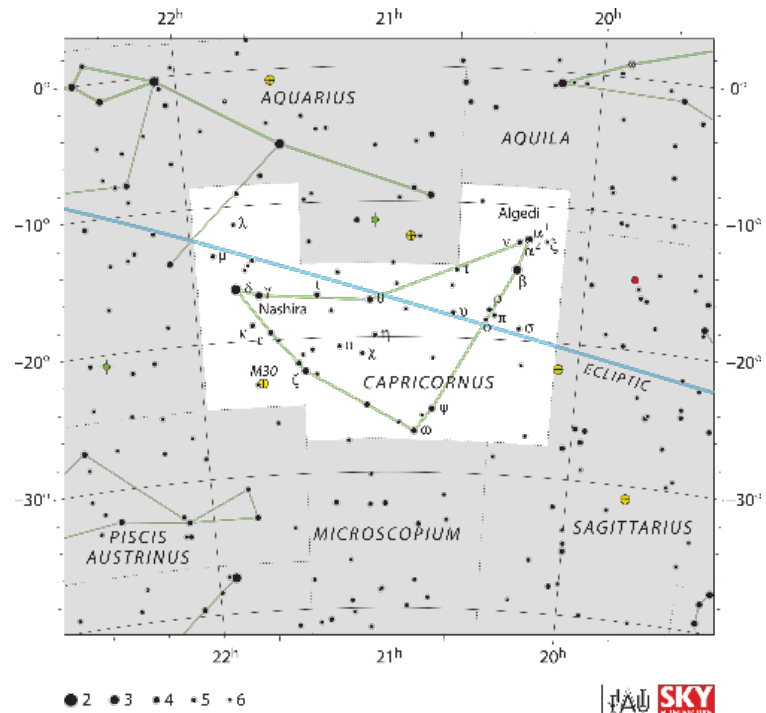


CAPRICORNUS - The Sea Goat



Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress



In Greek mythology, the god Pan dove into a river to escape the Titan monster Typhon. In his panic, he changed only half his body into a fish and the other half remained a goat. He blew his pipes and saved Zeus who honored him with a place in the stars. Capricornus is in the Sea Region of the night sky which features many water-themed constellations.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Autumn (September)
NEIGHBORS: Between Aquarius & Sagittarius

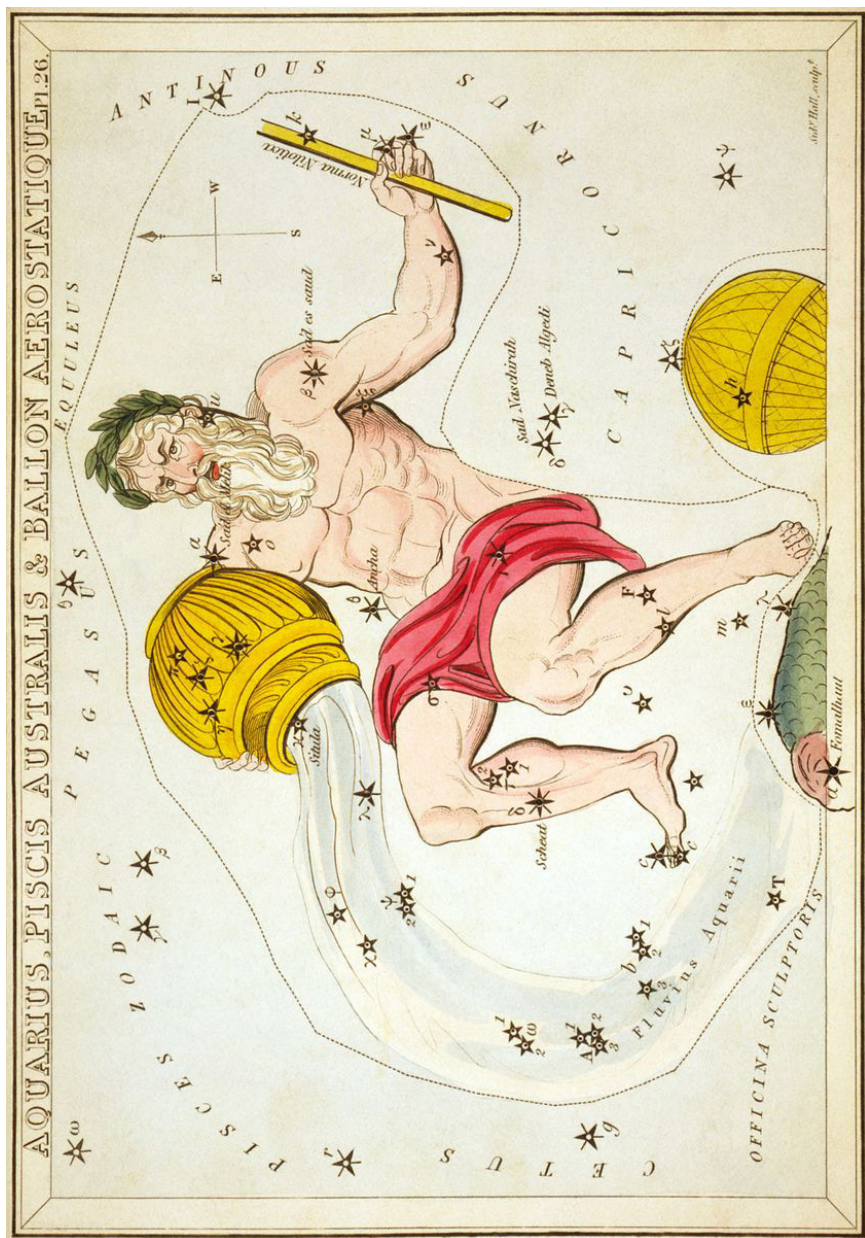
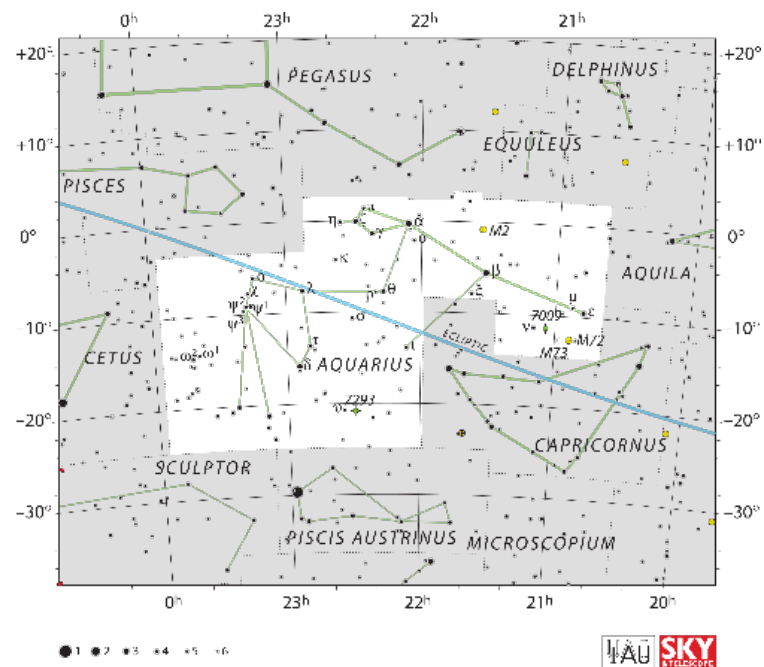


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

AQUARIUS - The Water Carrier



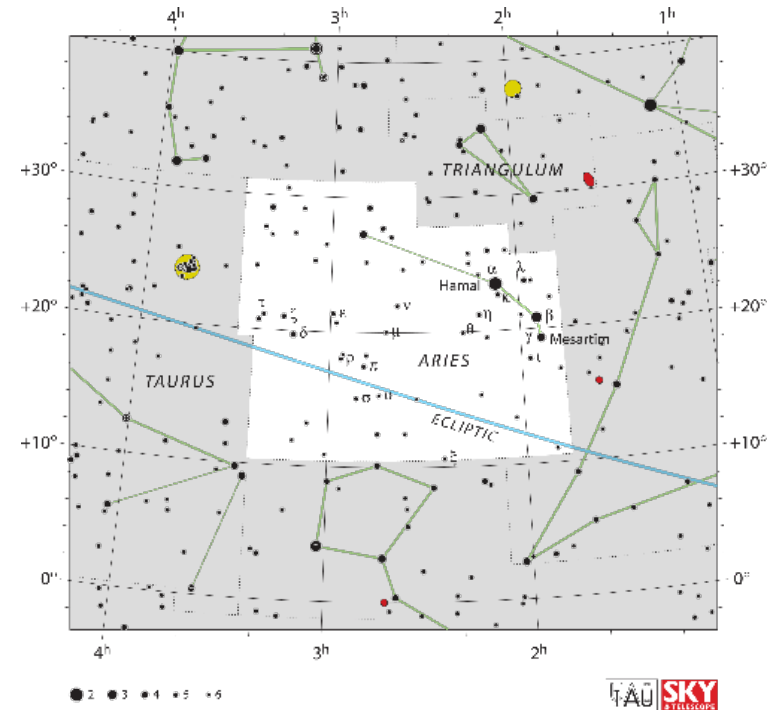
The ancients in Egypt and Babylon saw this constellation as a water carrier. The Greeks identified Aquarius with Ganymede, the cup bearer who sat next to Zeus' throne. Even in ancient India, these stars represented a water pitcher. Aquarius is in the Sea Region of the night sky which was likely associated with the rainy seasons of the ancient Middle East and the flooding of the Nile.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Autumn (October)
NEIGHBORS: Between Capricornus & Pisces



Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

ARIES - The Ram



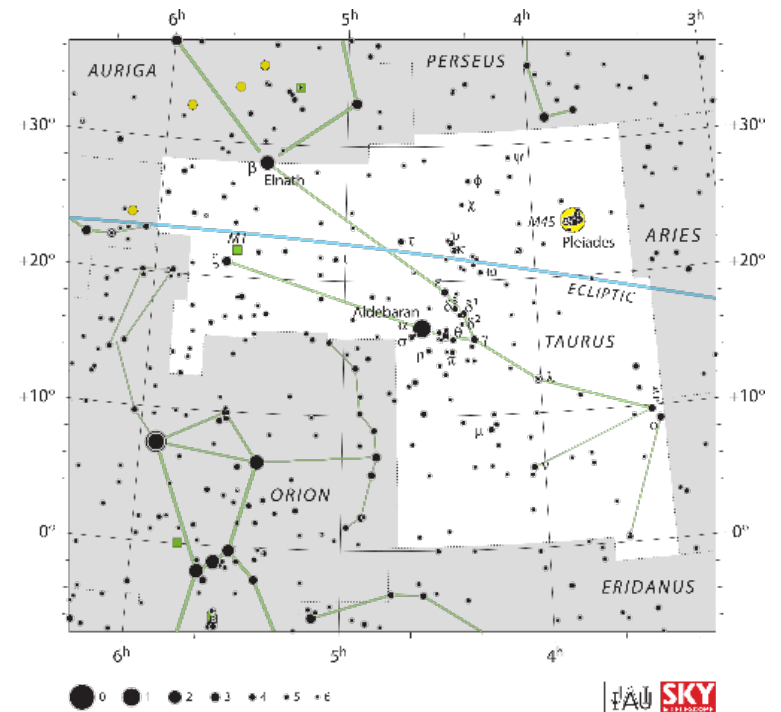
The ancient Babylonians, Egyptians and Greeks all saw this pattern of stars as a ram. Aries is also associated with the golden fleece obtained by Jason and the Argonauts in Greek mythology. The Ancient Egyptians connected this constellation with their god Amon-Ra who had a human body and ram's head. Natives of the Marshall Islands saw this pattern of stars as a tortoise.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Late Autumn/Winter (December)
NEIGHBORS: Between Pisces & Taurus



Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

TAURUS - The Bull



Taurus is a large and very old constellation which represented a bull figure in many ancient cultures from the Middle East. In Greek mythology, Zeus transformed himself into a bull to court the beautiful Europa. The constellation features the bright, red giant star **Aldebaran**. It also features the open cluster of stars called the **Pleiades** (Seven Sisters) which form a V at the bull's head.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Winter (January)
NEIGHBORS: Between Aries & Gemini

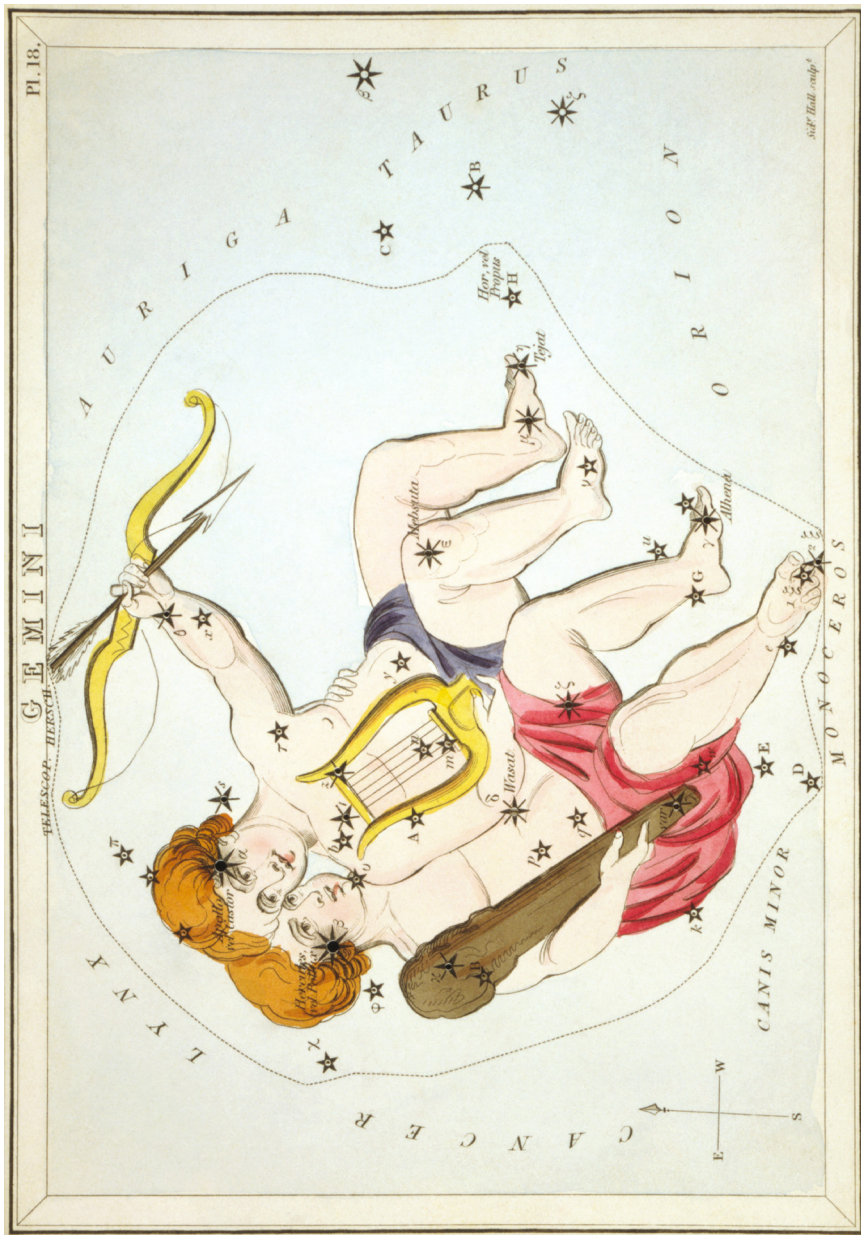
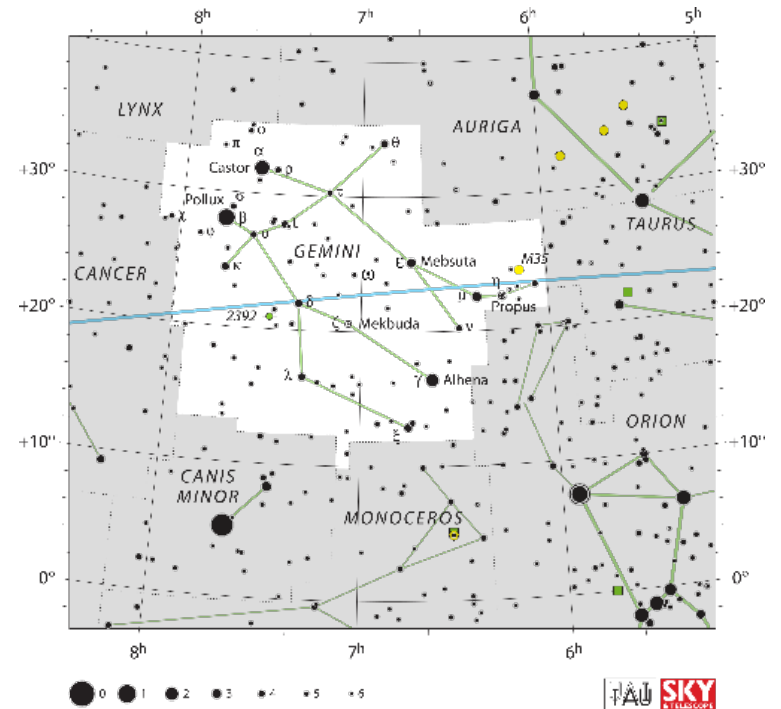


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

GEMINI - The Twins



Gemini is Latin for “twins.” The constellation is easily recognizable for its twin bright stars, **Castor** and **Pollux**. In Greek mythology, they were half-brothers but only Pollux was the son of Zeus. When Castor died, Pollux begged his father to make his brother immortal and the two were placed among the stars. In ancient Babylon, the twin stars were associated with the god of the underworld.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Winter/February
NEIGHBORS: Between Taurus & Cancer

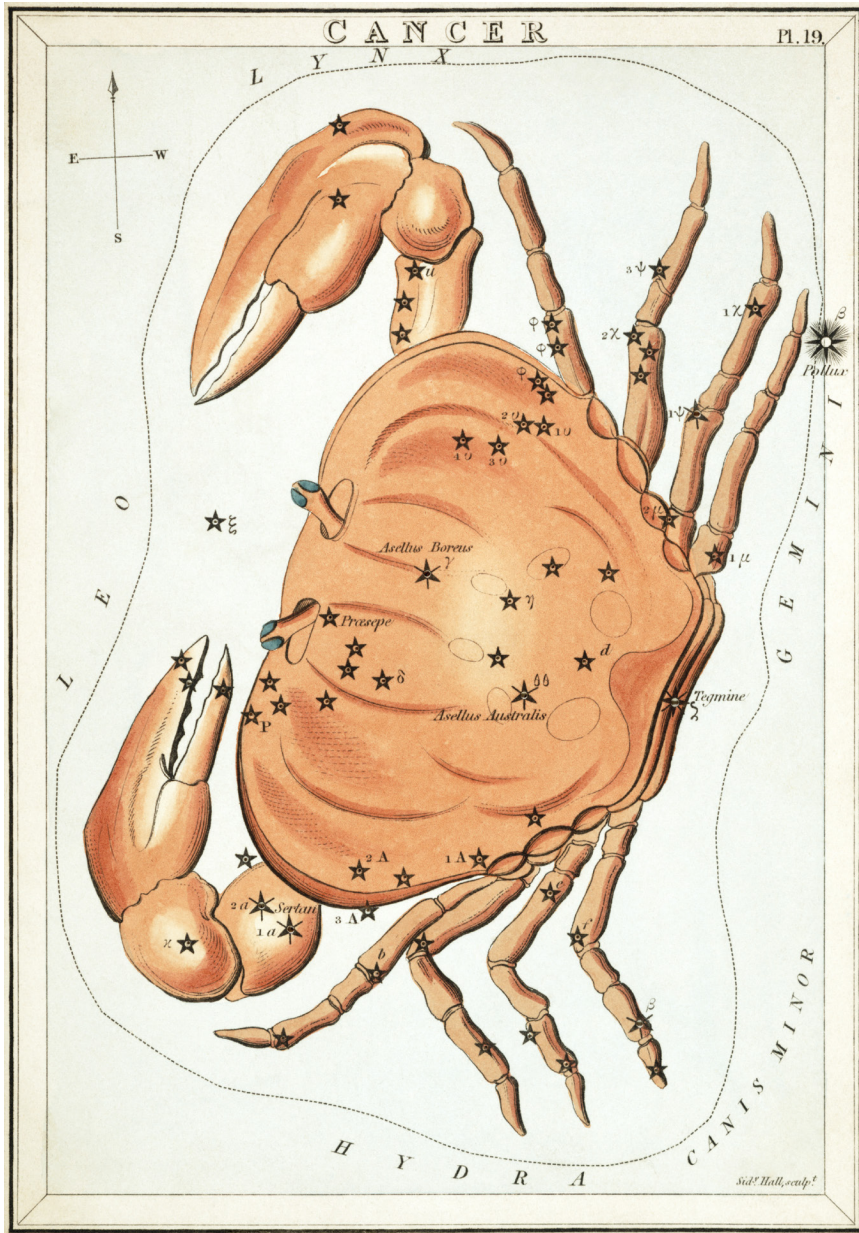
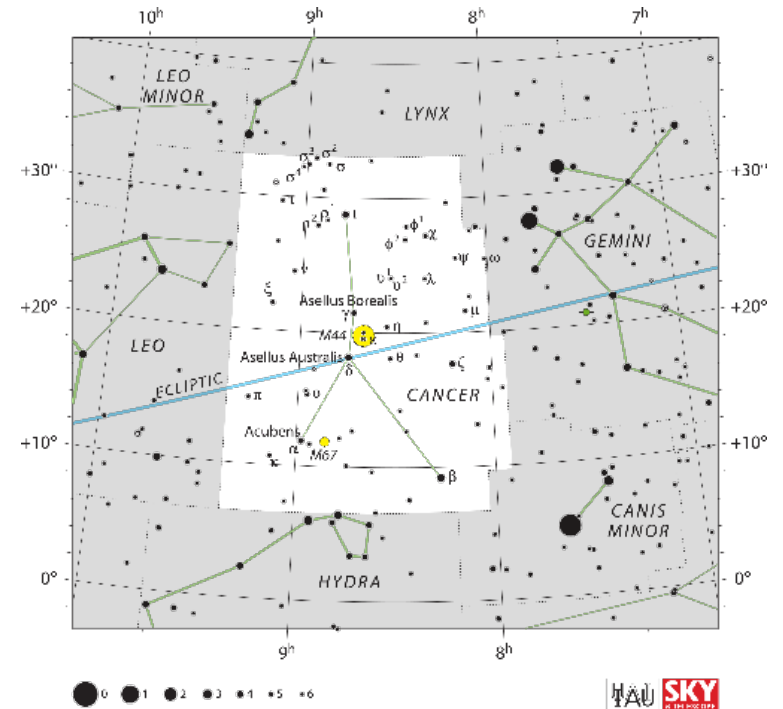


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

CANCER - The Crab



Cancer is Latin for “crab.” In Greek mythology, a crab bit Hercules on the foot and he crushed it. The goddess Hera placed the crab in the sky to honor it. The constellation is dim and is known for an open cluster of over a 1000 stars known as the **Beehive Cluster (M44)**. The Romans saw this fuzzy area as a manger and the Chinese thought this cluster was a demon riding a carriage.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Late Winter (March)
NEIGHBORS: Between Gemini & Leo

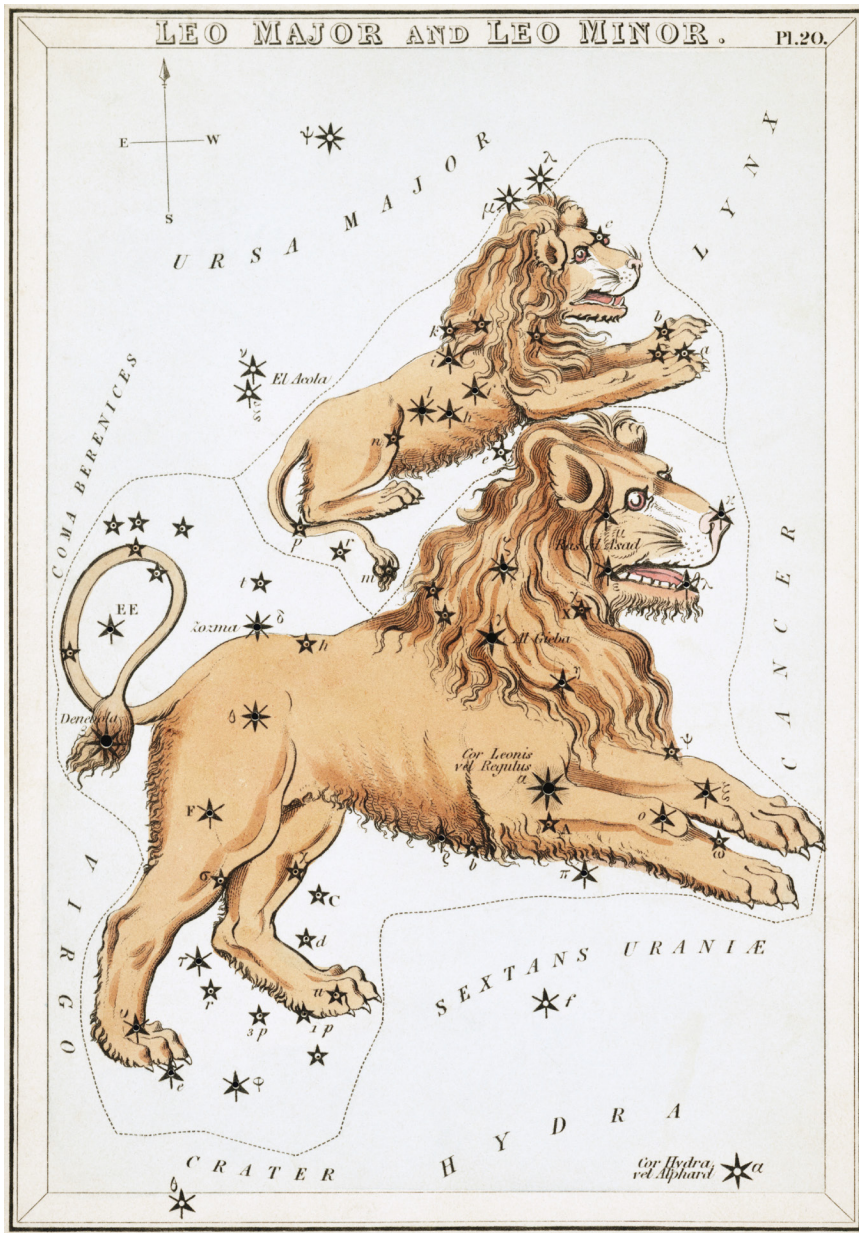
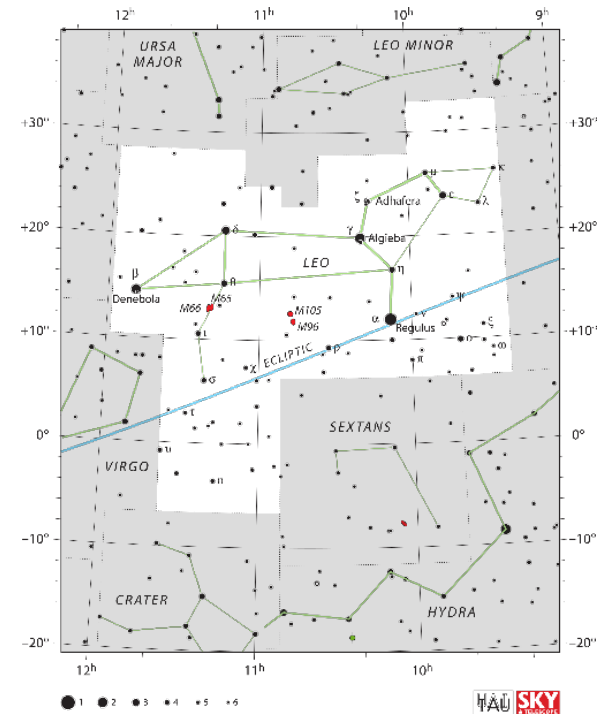


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

LEO - The Lion



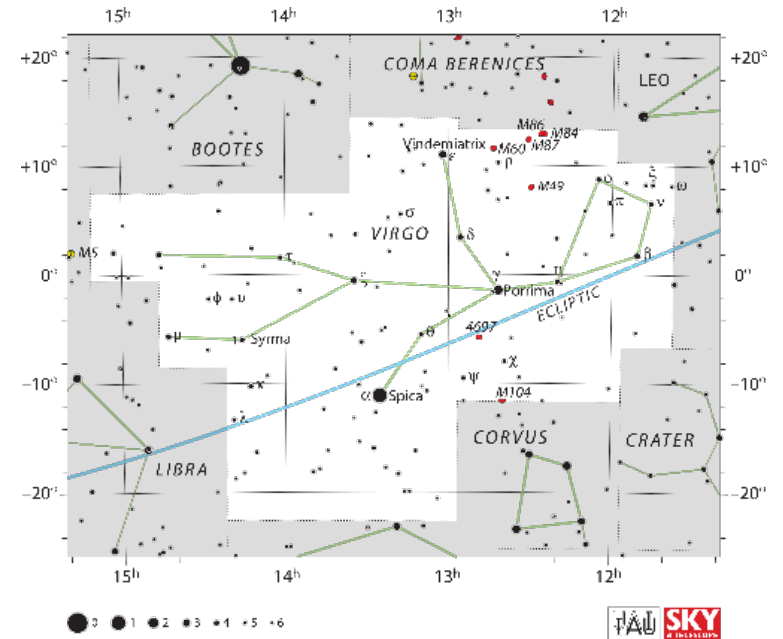
The bright stars of Leo were recognized over 5000 years ago in Mesopotamia. Ancient Persian, Turkish, Syrian, Jewish and Indian cultures all saw this grouping as a lion figure. The Greeks identified them with Nemean, the lion slain by Hercules as one of his 12 labors. There is a smaller constellation above called Leo Minor. Leo is home to the bright star **Regulus** (the little king) and the constellation contains many bright galaxies.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Spring (April)
NEIGHBORS: Between Cancer & Virgo



Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

VIRGO - The Maiden



In Greek and Roman mythology, Virgo is associated with the goddess of agriculture and justice. Virgo is located near the constellation Libra, the scales of justice. It features the bright star **Spica** which was often used for navigation. The constellation also features the **Virgo Supercluster**, a large region of over 100 galaxies. Our Milky Way Galaxy and the Andromeda Galaxy are in this super cluster.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Spring (May)
NEIGHBORS: Between Leo & Libra

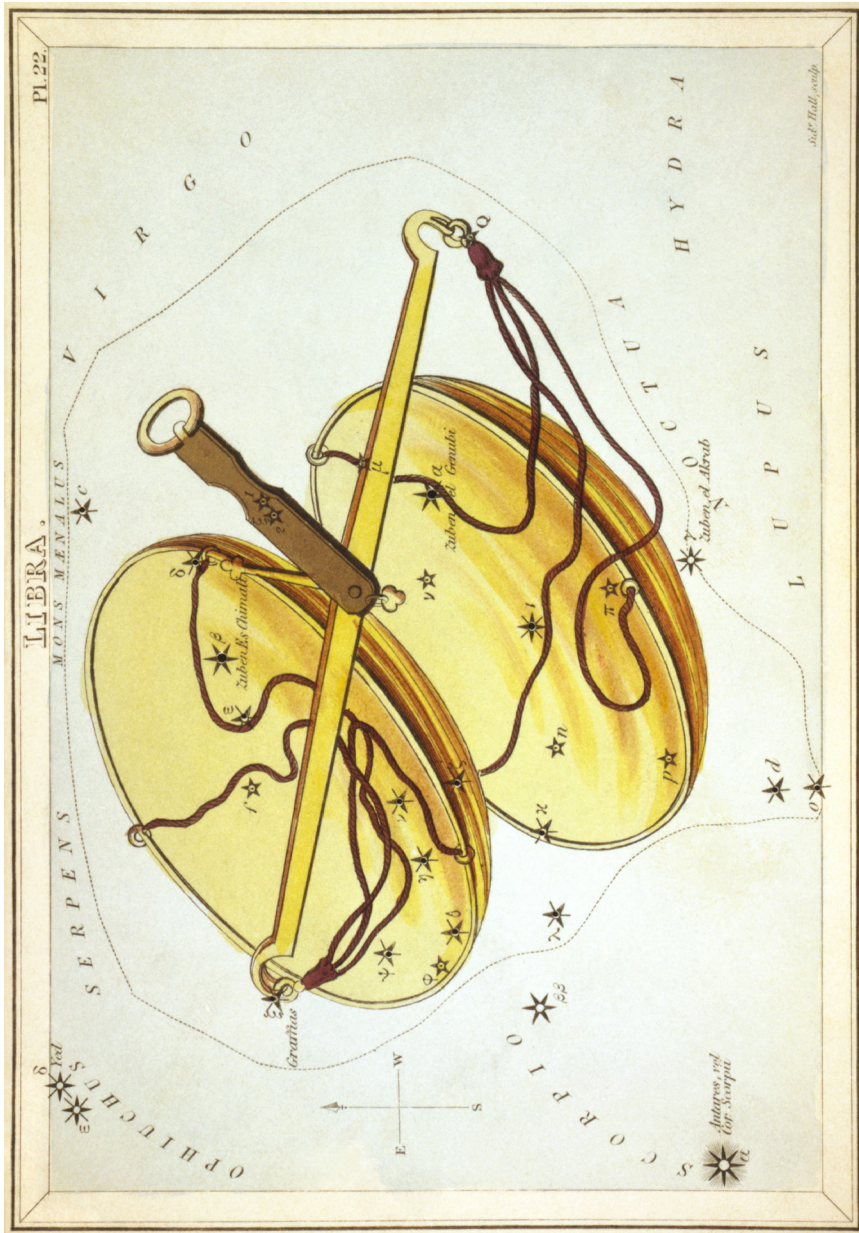
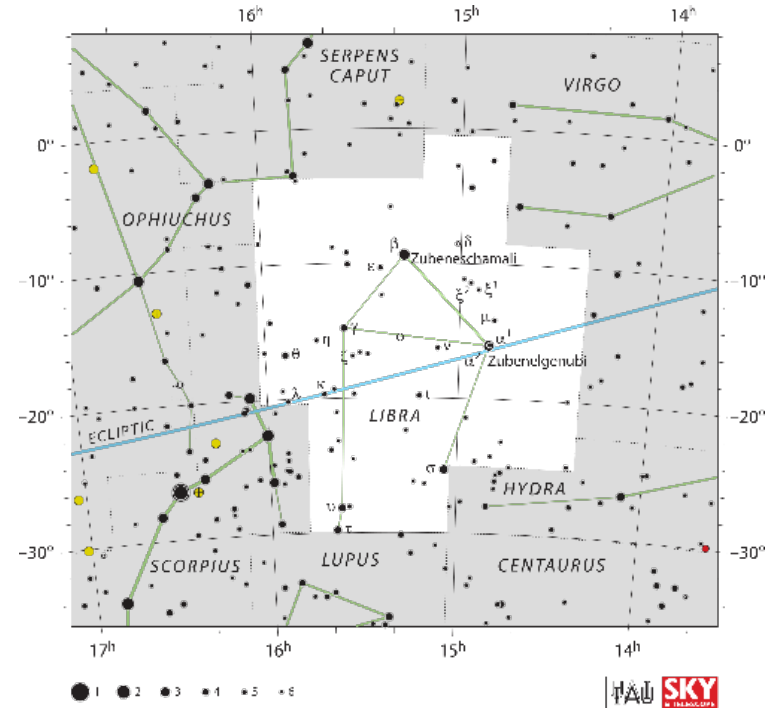


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

LIBRA - The Scales



In ancient times, the autumnal equinox (when the Sun crossed the celestial equator) occurred in Libra. So, this pattern of stars may have represented equal days and equal nights. Ancients in Babylon associated these stars with Shamash, the patron of truth and justice. Several ancient Middle Eastern cultures saw Libra as scorpion claws or the claws of justice. The ancient Egyptians saw Libra's 3 brightest stars as a boat.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Late Spring (June)
NEIGHBORS: Between Virgo & Scorpius

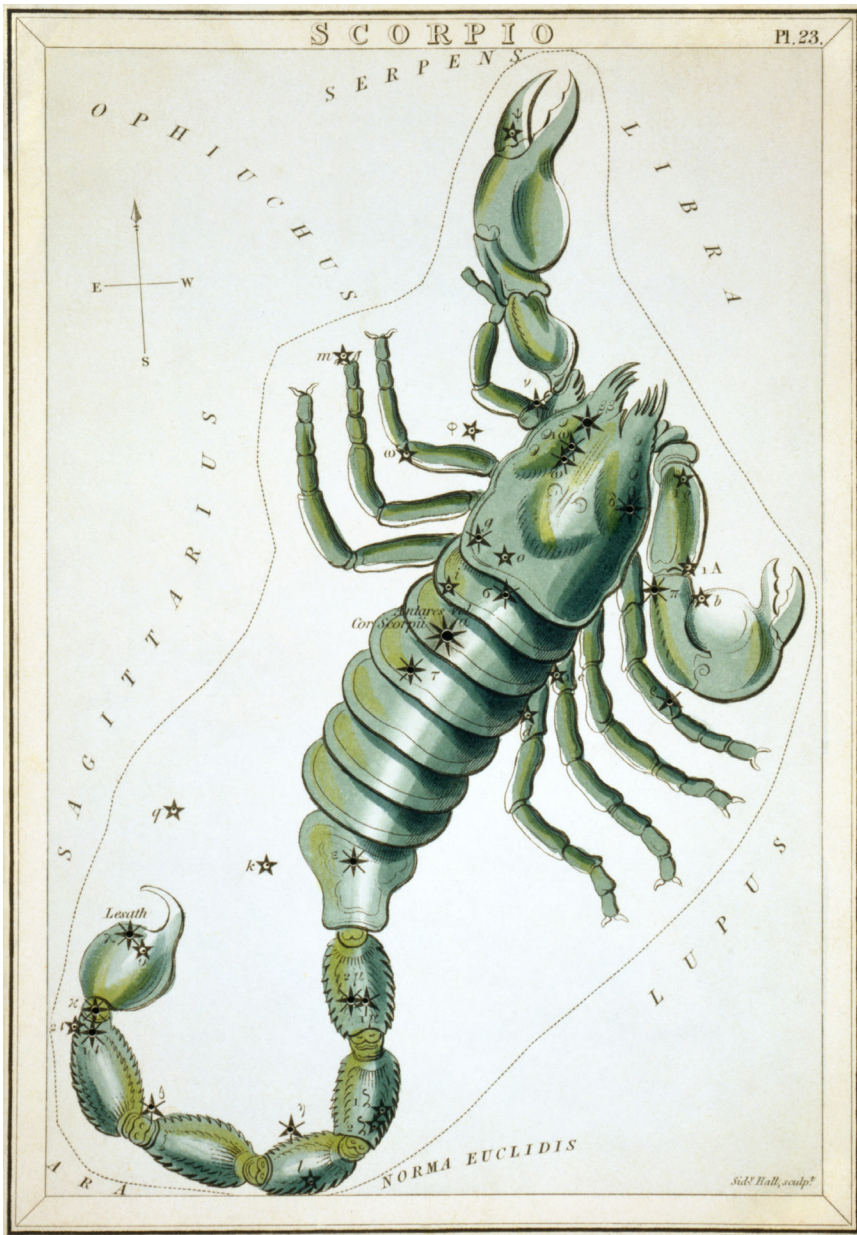
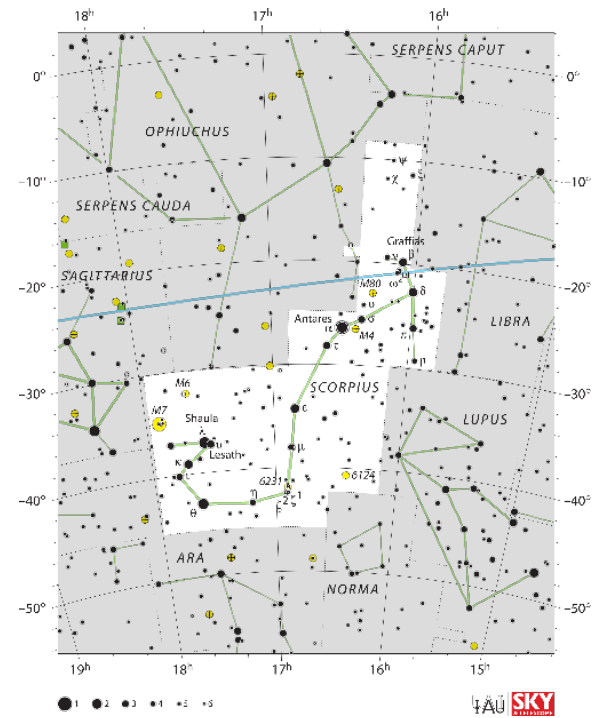


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

SCORPIUS - The Scorpion



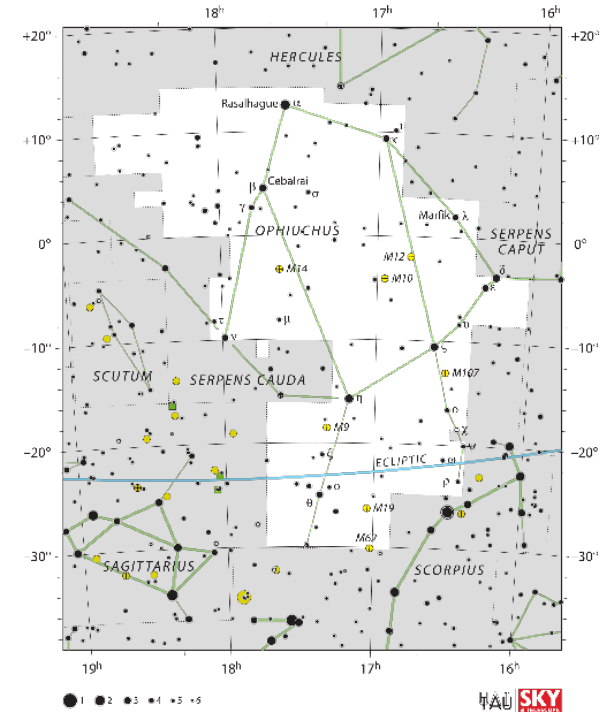
The Greek Earth goddess Gaia sent a scorpion to kill the great hunter Orion. He was stung but the doctor Ophiuchus saved him. In the night sky, Orion disappears as Scorpius rises. It is a long constellation and has many bright stars that form a hook shape. Scorpius is home to the red star **Antares** which has a brightness that rivals the planet Mars.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Summer (July)
NEIGHBORS: Between Libra & Sagittarius



Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

OPHIUCHUS - The Serpent Bearer



Ophiuchus represents the Greek god of medicine. He is depicted as a man holding two serpents, or snakes. The constellation is the lesser known 13th constellation in the Zodiac region which divides the sky into 12 sections along the ecliptic. This is the plane of our solar system and the path of the sun and planets in the night sky. Ophiuchus includes the small red dwarf **Barnard's Star** which is the fastest moving star known in our galaxy.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Summer (July)
NEIGHBORS: Between Scorpius & Sagittarius

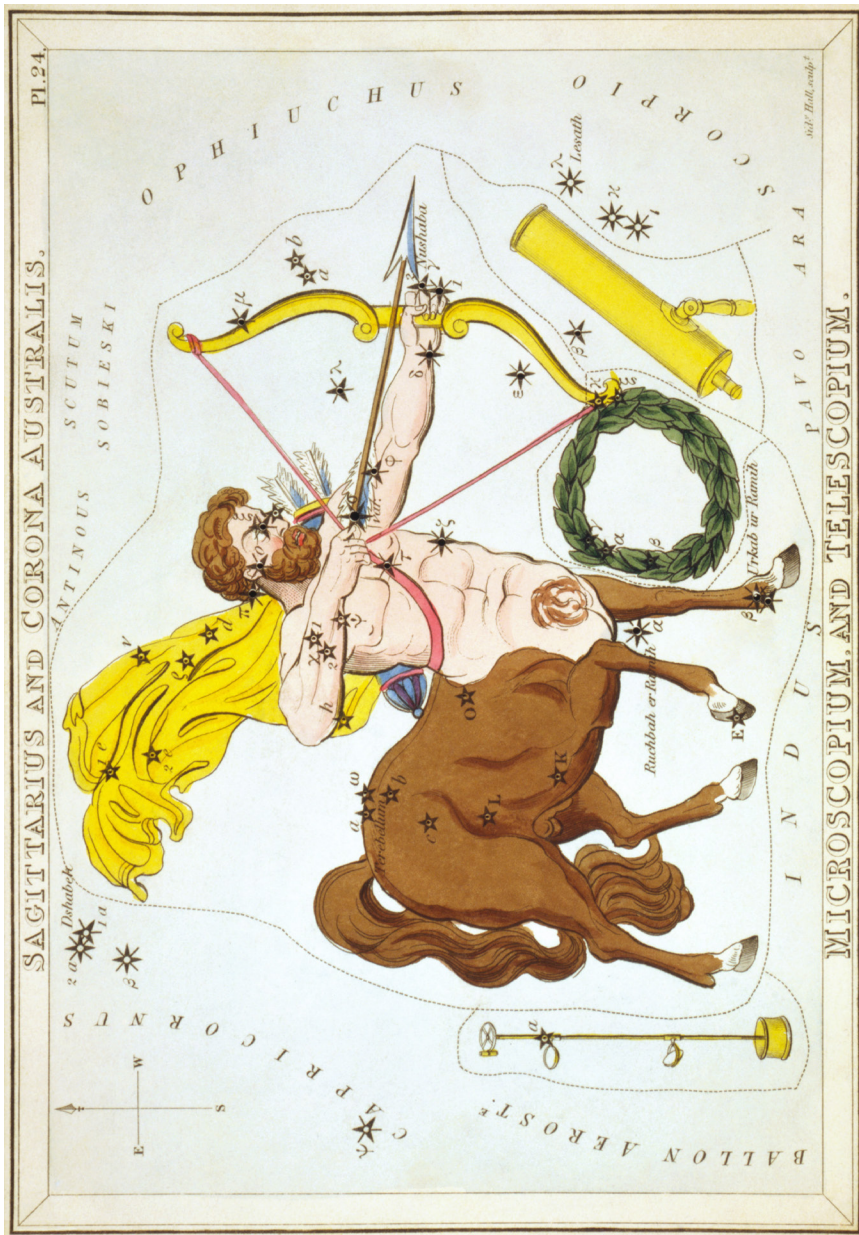
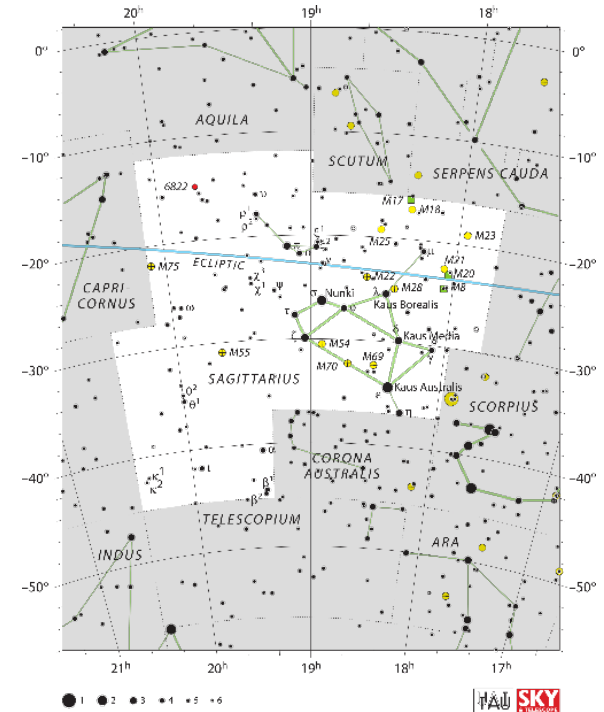


Illustration: Sydney Hall, Library of Congress

SAGITTARIUS - The Archer



This constellation was often associated as an archer who was half horse and half human. In Greek mythology, the Earth goddess Gaia sent a scorpion (Scorpius) to attack Orion. But, this centaur archer was ready to avenge the attack. The **Teapot** asterism is in the center of Sagittarius. The center of our **Milky Way Galaxy** is in this region where many nebula can be observed.

LOCATION: Ecliptic, Zodiac
BEST VIEWING: Summer (August)
NEIGHBORS: Between Scorpius & Capricornus