

**Forthcoming CAWAS Meetings at 7:00pm clock time.**  
**These meetings will be in person at the Old Clarence Pub, Earlsdon Avenue North. CV5 6GN.**  
 Friday 11th February Nick Hewitt The Great Debate  
 Friday 11th March Ian Morison Our Island Universe - The Milky Way  
 Friday 8th April Pauline Norris Ancient Egyptians and their Astronomy

**Observing sessions** with RADAS at Barby Cricket Club at 19:00 UTC  
 In general two dates are given, the one to be used will be notified the day before.  
**February 25/26 March 25/26 April 1/2**

**CPRE** are holding their annual star count from Feb 26 to March 6. To take part just count the number of stars that you can see in Orion within the rectangle formed by Betelgeuse, Bellatrix, Saiph and Rigel (not counting the corner stars themselves), then report the results to [cpre.org.uk](http://cpre.org.uk) where you can also see the results from last year.

| <u>February</u> | <u>Event</u> |  |   |
|-----------------|--------------|--|---|
| Friday          | 11th         | Moon Golden Handle visible               |   |
| Wednesday       | 16th         | Moon - full, Mercury greatest elongation | ☉ |
| Friday          | 18th         | Moon Mare Orientale visible              |   |
| Wednesday       | 23rd         | Moon - last quarter                      | ☾ |
| Sunday          | 27th         | Moon near Mars                           |   |
| <b>March</b>    |              |  |   |
| Wednesday       | 2nd          | Moon - new                               | ● |
| Saturday        | 5th          | Jupiter conjunction                      |   |
| Thursday        | 10th         | Moon - first quarter                     | ☾ |
| Friday          | 11th         | Neptune conjunction                      |   |

**Coventry and Warwickshire Astronomical Society**  
 The society usually meets on the second Friday in the month, at Earlsdon Methodist Church Hall. The meetings begin at 19:15 and end at 21:30. **(Suspended until further notice)**

**Web Site:** <http://www.covastro.org.uk>  
**Mailing list**  
 Join the CAWAS mailing list and receive irregular information of astronomical events and CAWAS news.  
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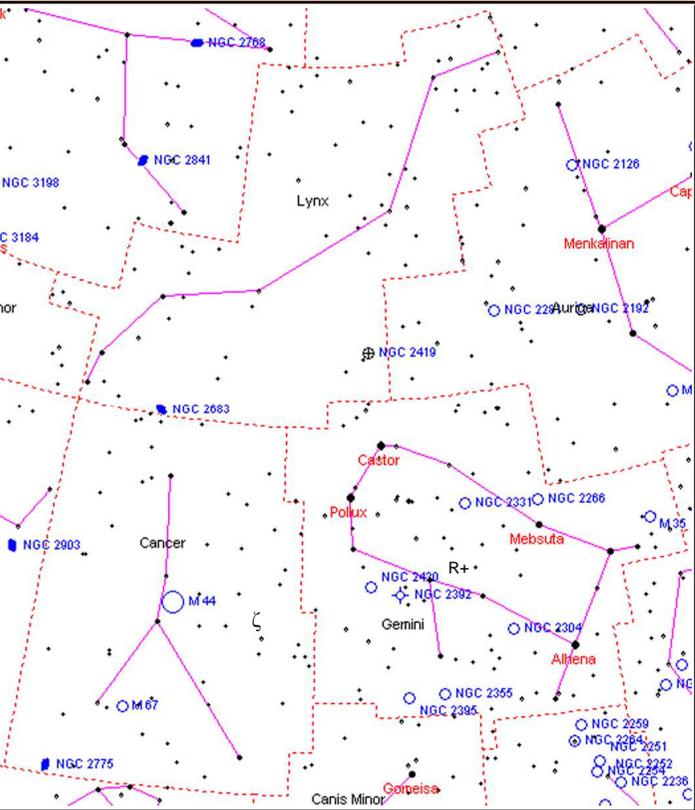
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# Coventry and Warwickshire Astronomical Society

## Sky Notes February 11th to March 11th 2022 No. 293



The Twins catch a Crab chased by a Lynx

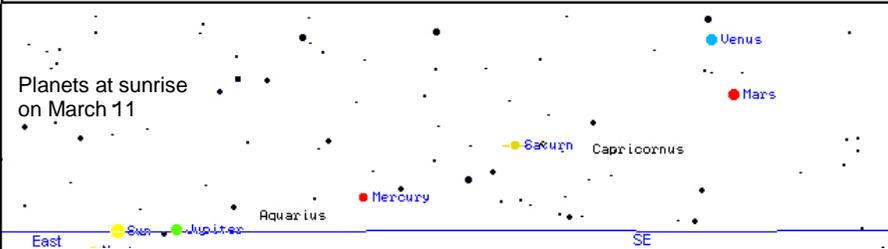
Although Lynx is a faint constellation (its brightest star, alpha, is only mag. +3.14), it contains a couple of interesting objects; NGC2419 (+9.1), one of the most distant (300,000 ly) globular clusters and NGC2683 (+10.6), the UFO galaxy, a nearly edge-on spiral.

Gemini and Cancer are famous for their bright open clusters M35 and M44 resp, but they also contain some interesting stars; R Geminorum is a Mira type star that is expected to reach a peak brightness this month of mag. +6.5 from a minimum of +13.5. Its period of 370 days means that it becomes visible around the same time each year. Castor is well known for being a multiple star system, but similarly ζ (zeta) Cancri consists of a binary pair (+5.58, +5.99 sep. 0.8") and a triple system (+6.12, sep 0.3" from a +10 spectroscopic binary) separated from each other by 5.06".

**Time** given in these skynotes is Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) known as GMT here in the UK.

**Sun** moves north from Capricornus into Aquarius and activity continues to build with spots visible on most days, some even naked eye.

February 11th Rise 07:30 Set 17:11 Dec  $-14^{\circ} 01'$   
 March 11th Rise 06:30 Set 18:03 Dec  $-3^{\circ} 45'$



**Planets** all migrate into the morning sky throughout the month (as shown in the chart above), leaving only Uranus visible in the evening .

**Mercury** (+0.2 7.6" 49.1% to  $-0.3 5.3'' 85.2\%$ ) moves from Sagittarius, through Capricornus into Aquarius and although it is at maximum western elongation on Feb 16 it is really too close to the SE horizon at sunrise to be visible this month. Which is a shame as on March 2 it passes less than a degree south of Saturn.

**Venus** ( $-4.6 41.5'' 24.4\%$  to  $-4.5 27.5'' 44.5\%$ ) moves from Sagittarius into Capricornus and is visible low above the SE horizon for about 2 hours before sunrise. As its motion takes it away from the Earth this month its phase increases from a thin crescent while its angular size decreases.

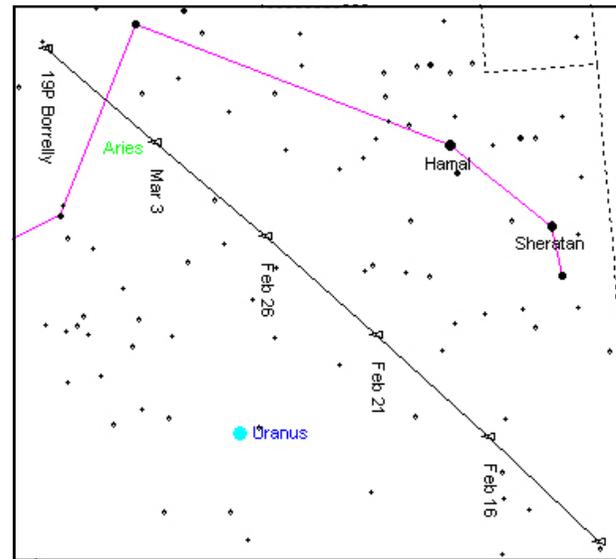
**Mars** (+1.4 4.4" to +1.2 4.8") moves from Sagittarius into Capricornus and although it is gradually brightening, will be difficult to observe very low down (about  $5^{\circ}$  below Venus) just before sunrise. On Feb 27 the crescent Moon in turn lies  $5^{\circ}$  below Mars.

**Jupiter** ( $-2.0 33.3''$  to  $-2.0 33.0''$ ) lies in Aquarius and at the beginning of the month is visible very low down in the WSW for about an hour after sunset, but as the month progresses it rapidly disappears behind the Sun, passing through conjunction on March 5.

**Saturn** (+0.7 15.2" to +0.8 15.4") lies in Capricornus, but lies too close to the SE horizon at sunrise to be visible.

**Uranus** (+5.8 3.5" to +5.8 3.4") lies in Aries and is visible high in the WSW for the first part of the night, setting at 00:35 at the beginning of the month and 22:50 at the end.

**Neptune** (+8.0 2.2") lies in Aquarius and is not visible this month as it passes through conjunction on March 11.



**Comet 19P/ Borrelly**, with an orbit that takes it between Earth and Mars and a period of 6.84 years, is at its brightest this month at mag. +8.9 having passed through perihelion on Feb 1.

The chart shows its path through Aries, which takes it about  $5^{\circ}$  north of Uranus.



The Jewelled, or Golden handle of the **Moon** is visible on the night of Feb 11. Formed by the Sun catching the tops of the Jura mountains before illuminating the Sinus Iridium below, it has the appearance of sticking out from the edge of the Moon.

Also visible in the picture are the extensive 'rays' of ejecta from the crater Tycho, which extend all around the Moon.

**Mare Orientale** is only visible when the libration of the Moon allows us to see part of its far side.

Although the Moon is tidally locked such that we only see one side, its elliptical orbit and axial tilt actually allow us to see 59% of its total surface.

Maximum western libration (required to see Mare Orientale) occurs on Feb 18 this month. Such librations follow the Moon's apogee by one week.

