

Time given in these skynotes is Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) known as GMT here in the UK. Add one hour to get clock time in BST.

Sun continues its journey north moving from Pisces into Aries this month.

April 10th	Rise 05:19	Set 18:57	Dec +8° 14'
May 8th	Rise 04:21	Set 19:45	Dec +17° 20'

Mercury (−0.2 5.9" to −1.9 5.1") moves from Pisces into Cetus between May 15 and 18, then back into Pisces finally ending up in Aries. However it is not visible this month as it lies too close to the eastern horizon at sunrise and also it passes through superior conjunction on May 4.

Venus (−4.6 28.7" to −4.7 43.9") lies in Taurus and is visible high in the west for the first part of the night setting around 23:15 (remember it is also visible to the naked eye in daylight!). Its phase gradually diminishes during the month, starting at 41% and ending as a thin crescent of 17.9%. On April 26 once again the crescent Moon lies 6° to the south.

Mars (+0.6 6.8" to +0.3 8.0") lies in Capricornus and is visible low in the SE in the morning sky for about 2 hours before dawn. During the month it gradually moves north as it draws away from Jupiter and Saturn. On April 16 the Moon lies 3° to the south.

Jupiter (−2.2 38.1" to −2.4 41.6") lies in Sagittarius and is visible low in the SE in the early morning sky, rising at 02:40 at the beginning of the month and 01:00 at the end. It lies just to the west of Saturn, gradually closing in on it throughout the month: 5° 45' to the west at the beginning and 4° 46' at the end. On April 15 the Moon lies 4° to the south of both planets.

Saturn (+0.6 16.3" to +0.5 17.1") lies in Capricornus and like Jupiter is visible low in the SE in the early morning sky, rising at 03:00 at the beginning of the month and 01:10 at the end.

Uranus (+5.9 3.4") lies in Aries but it is not visible this month as it passes through conjunction on April 26.

Neptune (+7.8 2.2") lies in Aquarius and is gradually drawing away from the glare of the sun in the morning sky, such that it might be visible low in the east just before dawn at the end of the month.

Occultation of Nu Virginis (mag. +4.0) by the dark limb of the gibbous Moon starts at 21:29 on May 3 and ends at 22:16.

Meteors Lyrids are active from April 19 to 25. The meteors come from the debris of comet C/1861 G1 (Thatcher) and the ZHR is typically low at around 10 to 15. This year their peak is predicted to be in the early hours of April 22 and with a new Moon conditions are ideal.

Eta Aquarids are active from April 24 to May 20 and come from the debris of comet 1P/Halley, these high speed meteors are predicted to peak on the morning of May 6 and have a ZHR of 20 to 60. As the radiant is below the horizon until the early hours of the morning, the hours just before dawn give the best rates, but with the Moon one day before full conditions are not ideal.

Neo 52768 1998 OR2 is a potentially hazardous asteroid with a diameter of 2 - 4 km, which makes a close pass of the Earth at 09:56 on April 29. This pass is at a safe distance of 6,289,000km (16 times the distance to the Moon), whereas when it passes in 2079 it will be four times closer.

Comet C/2019 Y4 ATLAS continues to brighten from +8.5 to +5.5 as it passes through Camelopardalis on its way to Perseus and its passage around the Sun. Its path is shown in the chart below.

