Navigating the mid to late March Night Sky For observers in the middle The stars plotted represent those which northern latitudes, this chart Morth can be seen from areas suffering is suitable for mid March from moderate light pollution. at 8 p.m. (daylight time) or In larger cities, less than late March at 9 p.m. 100 stars are visible, (daylight time). while from dark, rural areas well over ten times that amount are found. Polaris, the North Star Pointer Stars to the Nor Double Mizar, nice Cluster binocular double star Arcturus Coma Berenices Star Cluster Mar 1 Capella Venus Zenith Auriga Pleiades Denebola Moon The Mar 1 & 28 Sickle Aldebaran Ecliptic The Beehive Hyades Regulus • Star Cluster **Betelgeuse** Celestial\*Equator Procyon ( The Winter Triangle Rigel Alphard Relative sizes and distances in the sky can be deceiving. For The Ecliptic represents instance, 360 "full the plane of the solar moons" can be placed side by side, extending from system. The sun, the moon, and the major planets all lie on or South horizon to horizon. near this imaginary line in the sky. • Relative size of the full moon.

## Navigating the March night sky: Simply start with what you know or with what you can easily find.

- 1 Above the northeast horizon rises the Big Dipper. Draw a line from its two end bowl stars upwards to the North Star. Its top bowl stars point west to Capella in Auriga, nearly overhead. Leo reclines below the Dipper's bowl.
- **2** From Capella jump northwestward along the Milky Way to Perseus, then to the "W" of Cassiopeia. Next jump southeastward from Capella to the twin stars of Castor and Pollux in Gemini.
- **3** Directly south of Capella stands the constellation of Orion with its three Belt Stars, its bright red star Betelgeuse, and its bright blue-white star Rigel.
- 4 Use Orion's three Belt stars to point northwest to the red star Aldebaran and the Hyades star cluster, then to the Pleiades star cluster. Travel southeast from the Belt stars to the brightest star in the night sky, Sirius. It is a member of the Winter Triangle.

## **Binocular Highlights**

**A:** Between the "W" of Cassiopeia and Perseus lies the Double Cluster. **B:** Examine the stars of the Pleiades and Hyades, two naked eye star clusters. **C:** M42 in Orion is a star forming nebula. **D:** Look south of Sirius for the star cluster M41. **E:** M44, a star cluster barely visible to the naked eye, lies to the southeast of Pollux. **F:** Look high in the east for the loose star cluster of Coma Berenices.

