



Does it really resemble a darkened lagoon with dim lights dotting its misty shore?



Messier 8, a closer look

Take your time and explore this large, bright nebula.

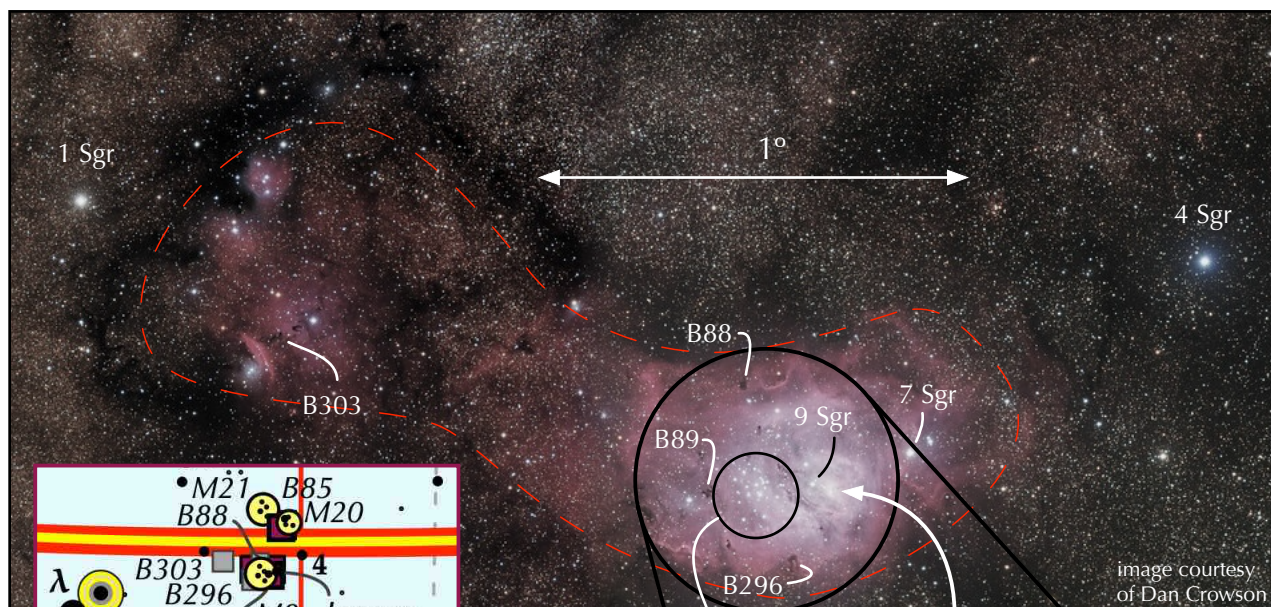


image courtesy of Dan Crowson

Features to Identify

- NGC 6523: Lagoon nebula.
 - The stars 1, 4, 7, and 9 Sagittari.
 - NGC 6530: a young open cluster having just emerged from the nebula. It now lies 10 light-years in front of it.
 - Herschel 36: a very young, bright star that powers the nebula. (200,000 brighter than the sun.)
 - Hourglass nebula: Bright area surrounding H36.
 - M8 is bounded by dark nebula, some encroaching the bright nebula itself.
- Identify B88, B89, B296, known as Bok globules, and the sinuous B303.

See more detail:

- Use a high contrast or deep sky nebula filter.
- Don't forget to try high magnification, >200.
- Observe under dark, high contrast skies.
- As aperture increases, the better the view!

Try your hand at sketching: Lay down the bright stars first to set relative distances, lightly outline bright nebula next, then fill in cluster stars and dimmer field stars. Add shading. Note dark areas. The more you look, the more you see!