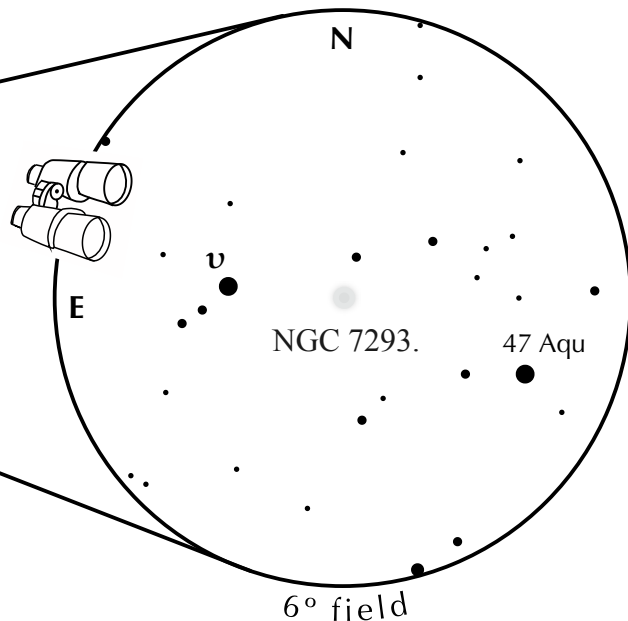
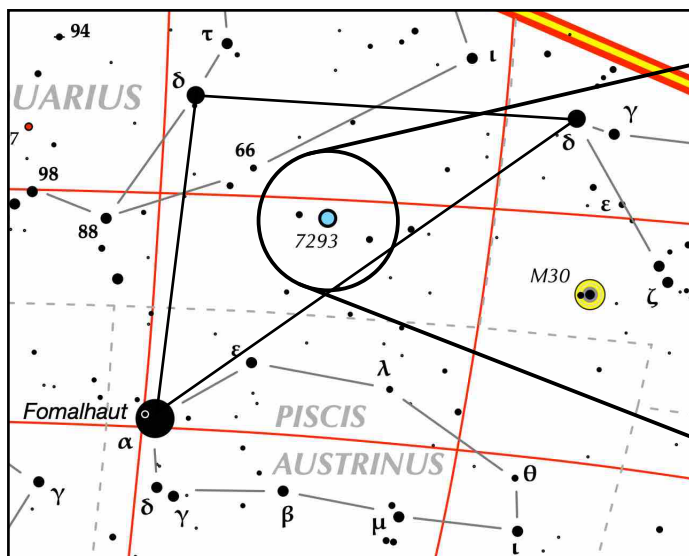


# Helix Nebula (NGC 7293, Caldwell 63)



*One of the largest and closest planetary nebula*



Visible in the early evening in the southeast in late September, in the south in early November, and in the southwest by mid December.

The view through 10x50 binoculars.

## NGC 7293, the Helix Nebula

Magnitude: 7.6

Size: 20 min

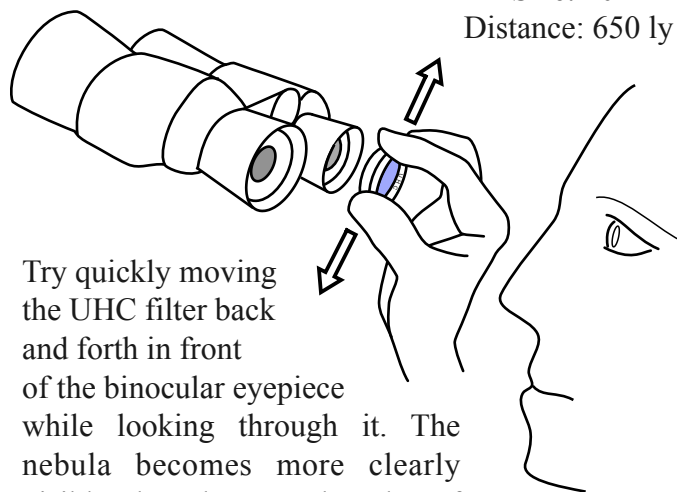
Distance: 650 ly

### How to find NGC 7293:

1. Locate Fomalhaut and the third magnitude stars Delta Aquarii (Skat) and Delta Capricorni.
2. NGC 7293 lies near the center of a triangle formed by those three stars.
3. The Helix Nebula faintly glows one-third between the 5th magnitude stars Upsilon and 47 Aquarii.

### Helix Nebula:

- The nebula is often better visible in binoculars than in a small telescope.
- Observe under dark, high contrast skies.
- Avoid observing when the moon is in the sky, even when it is a crescent.
- Try viewing when the Helix is at least 30° above the horizon.
- Use an ultra-high contrast filter or an OIII filter to enhance contrast.



Try quickly moving the UHC filter back and forth in front of the binocular eyepiece while looking through it. The nebula becomes more clearly visible, then drops to the edge of perceptibility, then appears again.

Remember: An ultra-high contrast filter blocks most wavelengths of light that the nebula does not emit, increasing its contrast. But it also makes the scene much darker.