

What's Up, Doc? †

January 2026

Dr. Aaron B. Clevenson, Observatory Director, Insperity Observatory

This document tells you what objects are visible this next month for many of the Astronomical League Observing Programs. If you are working on one of the more advanced Observing Programs, then I assume that you are also probably tracking where your objects are all the time. This concentrates on the more common and starter level Observing Programs. This information is based on 9 PM Central Time.

Naked-Eye Observing Programs

Meteors – any night, any time, anywhere; the darker the sky the better. Major showers are in **BOLD**:

<u>Shower</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Type</u>
Quadrantids	1/1 to 1/10	1/3	Major
Zeta Aurigids	12/11 to 1/21	12/31 & 1/1	Minor
January Bootids	1/9 to 1/18	1/16 to 1/18	Minor
Alpha Centaurids	1/28 to 2/21	2/8	Minor
Delta Cancrids	12/14 to 2/14	1/17	Minor
Canids	1/13 to 1/30	1/24 & 1/25	Minor
Eta Carinids	1/14 to 1/27	1/21 & 1/22	Minor
Eta Craterids	1/11 to 1/22	1/16 & 1/17	Minor
January Draconids	1/10 to 1/24	1/13 to 1/16	Minor
Rho Geminids	12/28 to 1/28	1/8 & 1/9	Minor
Alpha Hydrids	1/15 to 1/30	1/20 & 1/21	Minor
Alpha Leonids	1/13 to 2/13	1/24 to 1/31	Minor
Gamma Velids	1/1 to 1/17	1/5 to 1/8	Minor

Constellations, Northern Skies – any night, any time, anywhere, the darker the sky the better.

Last Chance: Cygnus, Lyra, Vulpecula, Sagitta, Delphinus, Equuleus, Aquarius, Piscis Austrinus.

Transit: Camelopardalis, Perseus, Aries, Taurus, Eridanus, Fornax.

New Arrivals: Lynx, Ursa Major, Leo Minor, Cancer, Canis Minor, Monoceros, Canis Major, Columba.

Binocular Observing Programs

Binocular Messier – Monthly highlights include:

Easy – 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 67, 103

Medium – 33, 78, 79, 81, 82

Hard – 1, 32, 97

Big Binoculars – 77, 108, 110

Deep Sky Binocular – Monthly highlights include:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60

Other Observing Programs

Messier In addition to those listed under Binocular Messier, check out: 43, 74, 76

Caldwell

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 33, 39, 41, 43, 44, 46, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 58, 62, 64, 65, 67, 70, 73

Double Star

2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 40, 42, 46, 47, 49, 50, 53, 55, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 89, 95, 99

Solar System and Lunar Observing Programs

Solar System – These are the tasks that can be done this month: (all times are **Central Time**)

Sun – Any clear day is a good time to get those sunspots.

Sunset is 1745 by mid-month.

Moon:

The Maria requirement can be done any time the moon is visible. Look before 1/11 and after 1/25 for the fullest views.

The Highlands requirement can be done at the same time.

The Crater Ages requirement is best done on 1/24 or 1/25.

The Scarps requirement is best done on 1/26.

Occultations occur all the time, the bright ones can be found on the internet. Objects disappear on the East side of the moon.

Mercury, Venus, Mars, Ceres, and Pluto are not available in the evening sky mid-month.

Asteroids – Course Plotting and Measuring Movement requirements can be done at any time on any asteroid.

Jupiter is in Gemini and is up all evening mid-month.

Saturn is in Pisces and sets at 2223 mid-month.

Uranus is in Taurus and is up all evening mid-month.

Neptune is in Pisces and sets at 2235 mid-month.

Lunar (all times are Central Time)

Key timings are indicated below: (New Moon, 1/18)

4 days, 1/22

7 days, 1/25

10 days, 1/28

14 days, 1/1

Old moon in new moons arms – before 1352 on 1/21, 10 % illuminated. (72 hr > New)

New moon in old moons arms – after 1352 on 1/15, 10 % illuminated. (72 hr < New)

Waxing Crescent – before 1352 on 1/20 and 1500 on 1/31, 4 % illuminated. (40 hr > New)

Waning Crescent – after 1352 on 1/16, 4 % illuminated. (48 hr < New)

Astronomical Events

- 1/1 – Lunar Perigee
- 1/4 – Quadrantids Meteors
- 1/5 – Lunar Occultation of Neptune
- 1/8 – Gamma Ursid Minorid Meteors
- 1/9 – Mars at Solar Conjunction
- 1/10 Jupiter at Opposition
- 1/10 – Kappa-Cancrid Meteors
- 1/13 – Lunar Apogee
- 1/21 – Mercury at Superior Conjunction
- 1/22 – Venus at Aphelion
- 1/29 – Lunar Perigee

* - Although some clubs are not detailed in this “**What’s Up Doc?**” handout, you can get information on many of their objects by using the “**What’s Up Tonight, Doc?**” spreadsheet (version 4.1). To get your copy, talk to the Doc, Aaron Clevenson, by sending an email to aaron@clevenson.org. It is also available through the AL website.

† - “What’s Up Doc?” is used with permission from Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

To be added to our monthly distribution list, send an email to aaron@clevenson.org and ask to be added.

© 2026 Aaron B. Clevenson. All international rights reserved. This work may be copied and distributed as is, without modification, free of charge for educational purposes only.

Inspirity Observatory, 2505 S. Houston Avenue, Humble, TX: www.humbleisd.net/observatory