

What's Up, Doc? †

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This document tells you what objects are visible this next month for many of the Astronomical League Clubs. If you are working on one of the more advanced clubs, 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 clubs. All times are **Eastern Time (Washington DC)**.

Naked-Eye Clubs

Meteors – any night, any time, anywhere, the darker the sky the better.

<u>Shower</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Type</u>
Aurigids	1/31 to 2/23	2/5 to 2/10	Minor
Alpha Centaurids	2/2 to 2/25	2/8 & 2/9	Minor
Beta Centaurids	2/2 to 2/25	2/8 & 2/9	Minor
Delta Leonids	2/5 to 3/19	2/22 & 2/23	Minor
Sigma Leonids	2/9 to 3/13	2/25 & 2/26	Minor
Capricornids-Sagittariids	1/13 to 2/28	1/30 to 2/3	DAYLIGHT
Chi Capricornids	1/29 to 2/28	2/13 & 2/14	DAYLIGHT

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

Last Chance this cycle: Cepheus, Lacerta, Andromeda, Pisces, Cetus, Fornax.

Transit Camelopardis, Auriga, Taurus, Orion, Lepus, Columba, Caelum.

New arrivals: Ursa Major, Leo Minor, Leo, Sextans, Pyxis, Puppis.

Binocular Clubs

Binocular Messier – Monthly highlights include:

Easy – 3, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 67, 93, 103.

Medium – 40, 49, 53, 63, 64, 78, 79, 81, 21, 94.

Hard – 1, 51, 65, 66, 68, 97, 101, 104, 106.

Big Binoculars – 58, 59, 60, 61, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 95, 96, 99, 100, 102, 105, 108, 109.

Deep Sky Binocular – Monthly highlights include:

3, 4, 5, 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, 39, 40, 41, 42.

Other Clubs

Messier

In addition to those listed under Binocular Messier, check out: 43, 76, 91, 98.

Caldwell

1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 71, 74, 79.

Double Star

5, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 92, 95, 98, 99, 100.

Other Clubs (of the Solar System)

Planetary (Planets and Dwarf Planets) – These are the tasks that can be done this month:

Mercury, Venus, and Mars will not be visible during the evening hours. They are morning stars or too close to the sun.

Sun – Any clear day is a good time to get those sunspots. And they are on the rise...

The Sun sets at 1708 by mid-month.

Moon:

The Maria requirement can be done any time the moon is visible. Look before 2/10 or after 2/24 for the fullest views.

The Highlands requirement can be done at the same time.

The Crater Ages requirement is best done on 2/23 and 2/24.

The Scarps requirement is best done on 2/25.

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

Asteroids – Course Plotting and Measuring Movement requirements can be done at any time on any asteroid as long as it is visible in the nighttime sky.

Ceres is in Cetus and sets at 2315 mid-month.

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

Saturn is in Aquarius and sets at 2219 mid-month.

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

Neptune is in Pisces and sets at 2233 mid-month.

Pluto is in Capricornus and sets at 1742 mid-month.

Lunar

Key timings are indicated below (all times are Eastern Time):

New, 2/17 4 days, 2/21 7 days, 2/24 10 days, 2/27 14 days, 2/1

Old moon in new moons arms – before 0438 on 2/20, ~10 % illuminated. (72 hr > New)

New moon in old moons arms – after 0438 on 2/14, ~10 % illuminated. (72 hr < New)

Waxing Crescent – before 0438 on 2/19 or before 1945 on 3/1, ~4 % illuminated. (48 hr > New)

Waning Crescent – after 0438 on 2/15, ~4 % illuminated. (48 hr < New)

Major Astronomical Events:

2/1 – Lunar Perigee

2/4 – Uranus ends Retrograde Motion

2/10 – Lunar Apogee

2/15 – Saturn/Neptune Conjunction (54')

2/15 – Uranus at Eastern Quadrature

2/17 – Annular Solar Eclipse

2/18 – Moon/Mercury Conjunction (8')

2/19 – Mercury Greatest Elongation East

2/24 – Lunar Perigee

2/26 – Mercury begins Retrograde Motion

Although many Astronomical League Observing Programs 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 on the Astronomical League website: (<https://www.astroleague.org/navigating-the-night-sky-guides/>).

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

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