



If you're interested in stargazing, come join us.
 Everyone is welcome. We have group stargazing sessions, workshops, talks, and other events
BathAstronomers.org.uk
 BathAstronomers



Daylight information for the month is:

Sunrise: 05:33 (1st) 06:20 (31st)
 Sunset: 20:57 (1st) 19:58 (31st)

Traditionally the Summer months are quiet for British Astronomers and local societies have a break from meetings. In many ways, the break is a shame as there are lots of objects to see and activities to do e.g. learn some constellations. The Summer constellations and memorable star shapes are on full view and having past the longest day, nights are getting longer and darker.



Last Quarter: 4th August
 New Moon: 11th August
 First Quarter: 18th August
 Full Moon: 26th August

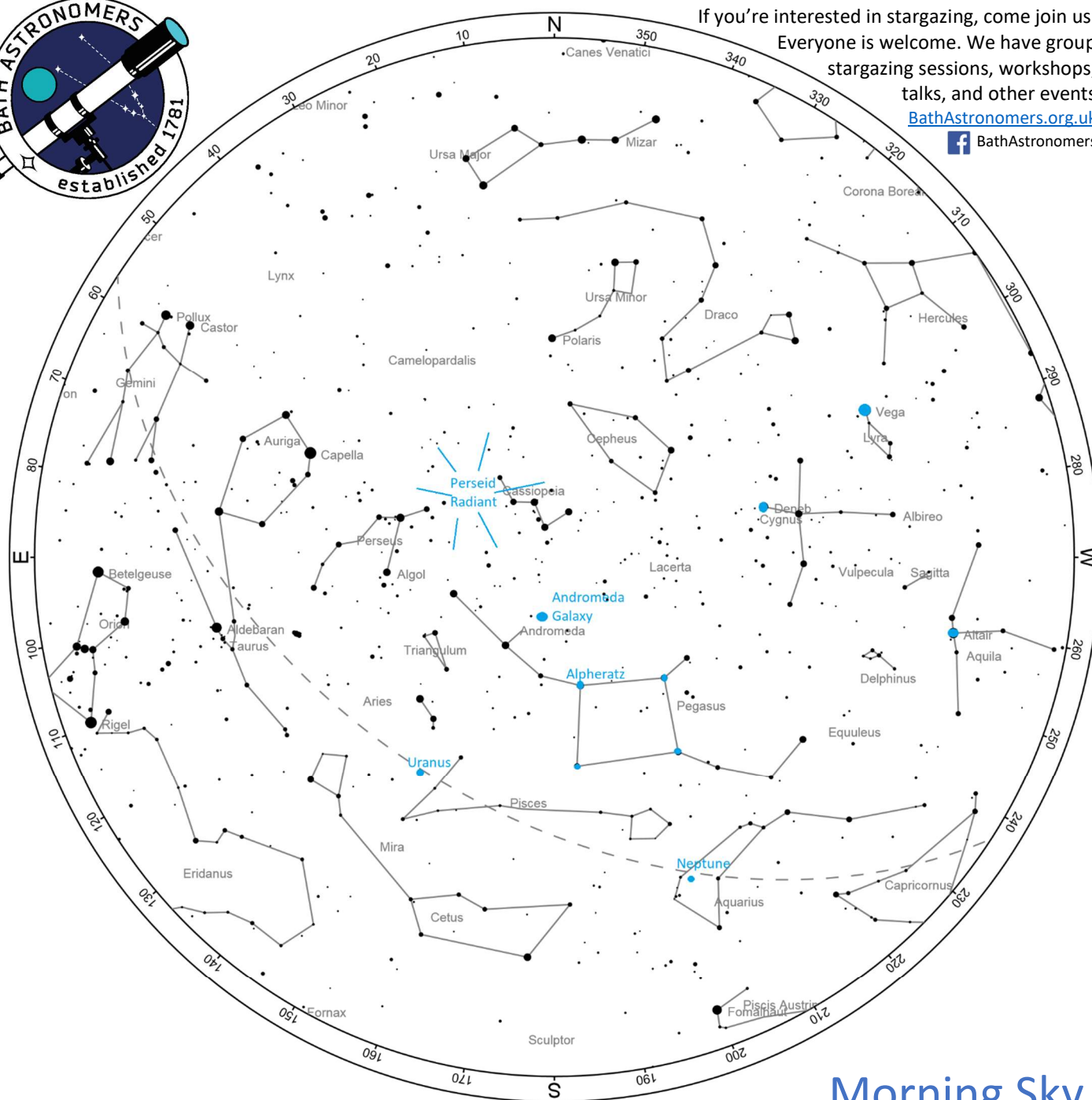


The early morning skies are dominated with the constellation of Pegasus ('The Square') almost directly overhead. The two 'vertical' sides of the Square point back over the top of your head to the constellations of the Little and Big Bears, Ursa Minor and Ursa Major, making Pegasus a great place to start navigating the sky from. If, like most, you don't have a light meter and you want to test the darkness of the skies and the keenness of your eyes, simply try to count the number of stars you see within the Square. In poor conditions, 3 may be your limit but from a reasonable site you can expect 13 and at an amazing one 30. To the East of Pegasus is Andromeda, a line of stars leading away from Alpheratz in the top left corner of the Square. Here you'll find the only galaxy visible to the naked eye, Andromeda Galaxy (M31).

The big treat this month has to be the Perseid Meteor shower which is best observed after midnight and peaks between 11th and 12th August each year. The Moon is New this year and so lots of meteors should be visible, perhaps 30 or up to 60 per hour.

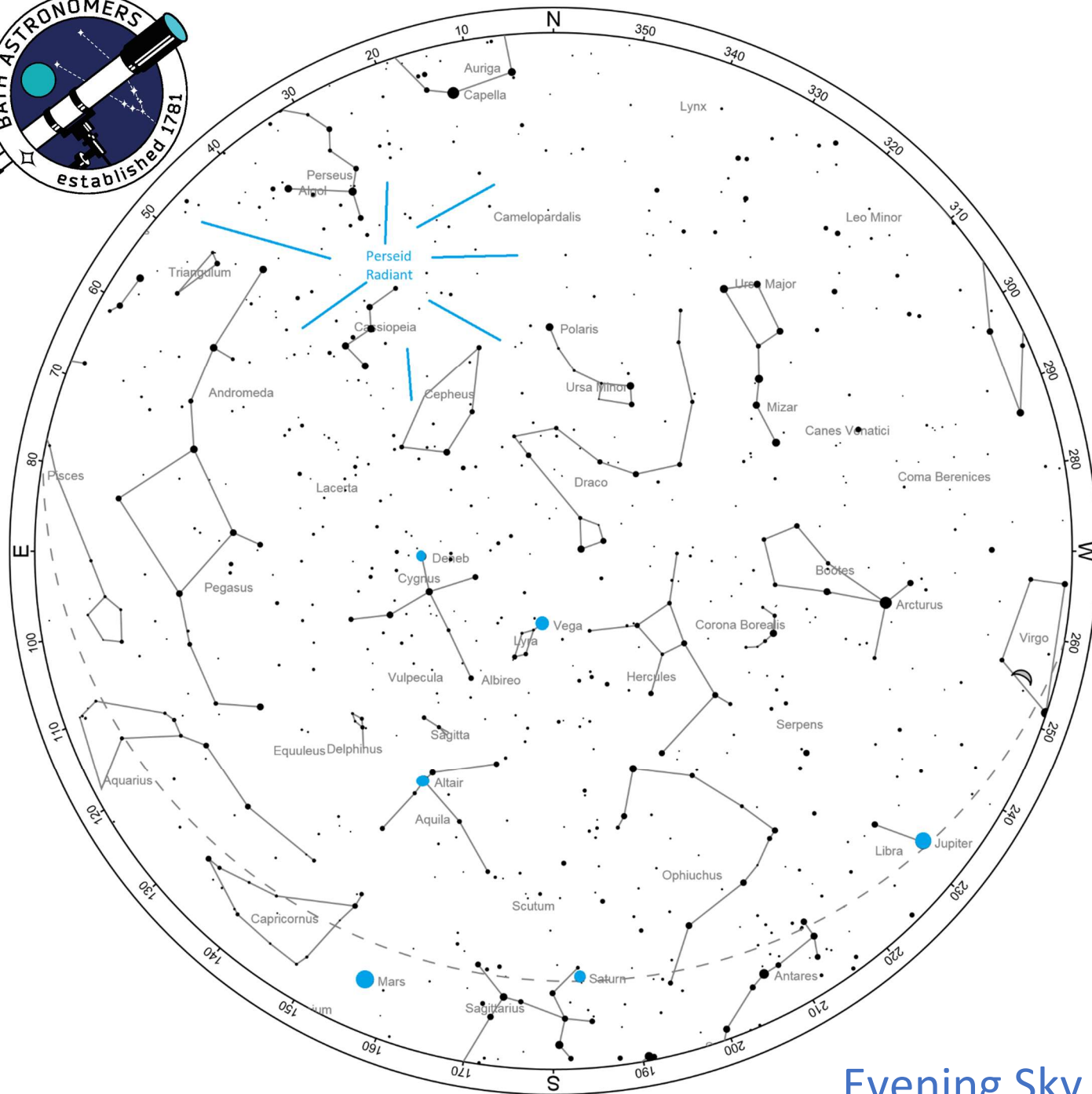


Uranus and Neptune are both out on show again. You'll need a detailed finder chart to help you locate them as only Uranus gives you a comfortable disk in the eyepiece.



Morning Sky in August 2018

Location: Bath, UK, 51.3758°N, 2.3599°W
 Time: 16 August 2018 04:00 (UTC +01:00)



Location: Bath, UK, 51.3758°N, 2.3599°W
Time: 15 August 2018 22:00 (UTC +01:00)

Evening Sky in August 2018



This most notable grouping of stars looking up and South is the 'Summer Triangle'. Called an asterism, it is made up of three stars within separate constellations: Vega in Lyra, Altair in Aquila and Deneb in Cygnus. This association of stars sits across the path of the Milky Way helping you locate it in lighter skies. The evenings this month are a good opportunity to see 4 of the other 7 planets. They are all low in the sky and spread from Eastern to Western horizons. Catch bright Venus first around 8pm in the West. On 14th August, it'll be directly below the Moon so easier to find as the Sun sets. Next is Jupiter, then Saturn due South and by 10pm rising Mars will have gained sufficient height to be visible to most. Having reached it's brightest and closest only a few weeks ago, it is a magnificent bright red object.



Jupiter, of all the planets, will show up best in binoculars presenting its Galilean Moons changing positions each evening. They'll appear as bright pin prick stars next to the bright circle of Jupiter. From nearest to Jupiter outwards, they are Io, Europa, Ganymede Callisto. Ganymede is big. It's 40% the diameter of the Earth and the 9th largest object in the Solar System. It takes 7 days to orbit Jupiter in resonance with Io that takes <2 days.



Although August is the time of enjoying recliner chairs in the warmth watching the Heavens rotate majestically above you with Perseid meteors whizzing into view (see Morning Sky), why not get the telescope out too. The planets will show extra detail and features missed in binoculars. Venus will appear as a crescent like the Moon, Mars as a mottled disk (although the planet wide storm has softened some features), Jupiter complete with more distinct Great Red Spot and Equatorial Bands and Saturn with its open ring structure, the Cassini Division ring gap, and ever-present moon Titan with its seas of methane and ethane and nitrogen atmosphere.



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Heavens-Above.com. All times are given as
British Summer Time.