

ORGANISED BY MIRAZ JORDAN, [HTTPS://MIRAZ.ME](https://miraz.me)

STARRY TIME, 15 SEPTEMBER 2023

ARCTURUS

- ▶ Orange Arcturus very low in the NW twinkles red and green as it sets in the northwest. It's the fourth-brightest star in the night sky. It twinkles because it's shining through a lot of air.



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FOV 90.0°

OBSERVE ▾

MAELEON

APUS

ARA

NORMA

SCORPIUS

OPHIUCHUS

Alpha Centauri

MUSCA

LUPUS

SERPENS

CRUX

CENTAURUS

LIBRA

CORVUS

VIRGO

Arcturus

BOOTES

ANTLIA

Mars

WAIKAWA BEACH



19:30:30
2023-09-15

MARS

- ▶ Red Mars (Matawhero) is very low in the West. Perseverance Rover took about 7 months to travel to Mars (~480 million Km) in 2021. Mars is currently 380 million km away, on the far side of the Sun.

ANTARES

- ▶ Orange Antares (Rehua) is due to explode into a supernova sometime in the next 10,000 years, and should be visible then in the daytime, as bright as the full Moon.

SCORPIUS

- ▶ Scorpius in the West with Te Matau a Māui (some interpret the tail of Scorpius as the fish hook of Māui).

MILKY WAY

- ▶ The Milky Way spans the sky from north to south this month. It's brightest and broadest overhead in Scorpius and next door (eastwards) in Sagittarius. The thick hub of the galaxy, 27,000 light years away, is in Sagittarius.



Saturn

Alpha Centauri

AQUARIUS

PISCIS AUSTRINUS

INDUS

PAVO

CENTAUR

GRUS

APUS

CRUX

OCTANS

MUSCA

TUCANA

SMC

SCULPTOR

HYDRUS

PHOENIX

LMC

VOLANS

CARINA

VELA

DORADO

HOROLOGIUM

PICTOR
Canopus

CETUS

WAIKAWA BEACH

19:30:30
2023-09-15



THE POINTER STARS OF CENTAURUS

- ▶ The first stars that begin to come out at dusk are the pointer stars of Centaurus, with the Southern Cross appearing as the night deepens. Because our planet wobbles, for those living in what is now Europe during the early Bronze Age, it was as familiar in their skies as it is in ours. People in the British Isles could see Crux 4,000 years before Christ.

SOUTHERN CROSS (MĀHUTONGA)

- ▶ The Southern Cross is our familiar kite-shaped local constellation. One of the names Māori have for it is Māhutonga, and another is Te Taki-o-Autahi. It's the smallest of all 88 constellations but one of the brightest.

CANOPUS

- ▶ Canopus twinkles like a diamond near the horizon in the south. For Māori, Atutahi ('first light' or 'single light') is the oldest of all stars. It twinkles because it's shining through a lot of air.

LARGE & SMALL CLOUDS OF MAGELLAN (NGĀ PATARI)

- ▶ Large & Small Clouds of Magellan (Ngā Patari) are above Arcturus. These two cloud-like patches of light are our galactic near-neighbours. The LMC is about 160,000 light years away; the SMC about 200,000 light years away.



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SERPENS

OPHIUCHUS

SAGITTARIUS

GRUS

SCUTUM

PISCIS AUSTRINUS

CAPRICORNUS

SCUL

AQUILA

Saturn
AQUARIUS

RCULES

LYRA

CYGNUS

PEGASUS



WAIKAWA BEACH

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PISCES

SATURN (KOPŪNUI)

- ▶ Saturn (Kopūnui) appears as a cream-coloured star midway up the eastern sky. Saturn has rings visible in a small to medium size telescope or giant binoculars. At the moment though the rings are 'closing' or getting more edge-on and therefore 'thinner'. Saturn is 1,320 million km away at the moment.

ALTAIR (POUTŪTERANGI)

- ▶ Altair (Poutūterangi) is in the NNE between Saturn and Vega.

VEGA (WHANUI) LOW IN THE NORTH

- ▶ Vega (Whanui) is low in the North. Due to precession, it used to be the northern pole star.



Altair

Variable Star of delta Sct type

Also known as **Alpha Aquilae** **53 Aquilae** **HD**
187642 **HR 7557** **SAO 125122** **HIP 97649** **TYC 1058-**
3399-1 ...

Magnitude **0.82**
 Distance **16.73** light years
 Spectral Type **A7Vn**
 Ra/Dec **19h 51m 56.6s +08° 55' 58.1"**
 Az/Alt **020° 27' 22.5" +38° 11' 27.9"**
 Visibility **Rise: 15:08 Set: 02:04**

Altair is the brightest star in the constellation of Aquila and the twelfth-brightest star in the night sky. It has the Bayer designation Alpha Aquilae, which is Latinised from **α Aquilae** and abbreviated **Alpha Aql** or **α Aql**. Altair is an A-type... [more on wikipedia](#)



Vega

N

Altair

Saturn

CREDITS

- ▶ Thanks to information from several sources, including:
 - ▶ Book: *Southern Nights*, by Naomi Arnold
 - ▶ Royal Astronomical Society of New Zealand
 - ▶ Stellarium Web Online Star Map – <https://stellarium-web.org>