



### Evening sky in APRIL 2015

Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky, appears in Canis Major (Big Dog), high in the north-western sky. Below it and slightly to the east in Canis Minor (Little Dog), we find the binary star, Procyon. It is the 8th brightest star in the night sky and lies at a distance of 11.4 light years, making it one of our closest stellar neighbours. One of the two stars in the system is a white dwarf star. Its presence may cause unstable orbits in the habitable zone of the system and therefore the existence of planets supporting life is unlikely. Procyon also emits more of its light in the ultraviolet spectrum, which is harmful to life as we know it.

Planet Venus, the bright "Evening Star" in the west, moves from Aries (Ram) into Taurus (Bull) by mid-month. Planet Jupiter is to the north in the constellation of Cancer (Crab). Its four biggest moons can be seen with binoculars. Watch their configuration on either side of the planet change from one night to the next as they orbit quite quickly around Jupiter. Planet Saturn is in Scorpius (Scorpion) rising in the east.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 7 April and again from 19 April.

The Autumn equinox is on 21 March.