



### Evening sky in DECEMBER 2011

By using the brightest stars in the sky, one can often find many of the constellations. A row of three bright stars, forming Orion the Hunter's belt, is easily visible in the East. Following the belt stars to the left we find the red giant star, Aldebaran, the fiery red eye of Taurus the Bull, with the Seven Sisters or Pleiades riding on the bull's neck. Following the belt stars to the right we find the brightest star in the night sky, Sirius, in the collar of the Big Dog, Canis Major. Lower down towards the northern horizon is Procyon in the Little Dog, Canis Minor. Canopus, the second brightest star, is in Carina, the Keel, while Achernar is found in Eridanus, the River. Fomalhaut will guide you to the Southern Fish, Piscis Austrinus, while four bright stars in the northeast form the Great Square in Pegasus, the Flying Horse. Low in the South are the bright Pointer stars and Crux, the Southern Cross.

The Sun crosses the equator southwards on 22 December, our summer solstice (winter solstice in the northern hemisphere).

Planet Jupiter is in Pisces and Venus is in Sagittarius.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 11 December and again from 26 December.