



Evening sky in JANUARY 2012

The brightest star in the night sky, Sirius, can easily be found by following the line of the three stars in Orion's Belt to the right. Sirius lies in Canis Major, the Big Dog while the bright star Procyon, in Canis Minor, the Little Dog, is lower down. Follow the Belt stars to the left to find the bright star Aldebaran, the eye of Taurus, the Bull, carrying the Seven Sisters, (Pleiades) on his shoulder. Eridanus, the River, runs from Rigel, the bright star in Orion's knee, meandering directly overhead to end in the 4th brightest star, Achernar. To the West is Fomalhaut in the Southern Fish and to the East is the 2nd brightest star, Canopus. In isiXhosa the month of May is named after this star (uCanzibe). It lies 310 light years from our Solar System. The Southern Cross (Crux) followed by the Pointers (Alpha and Beta Centauri) appears upside down, still low in the South.

Planet Venus moves into Aquarius and Jupiter into Aries.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 10 Jan and again from 25 Jan. On the 1 and 31 January this month the moon will be at first quarter. The moon therefore completes 5 phases instead of the usual 4.