



Evening sky in June 2017

The Southern Cross (Crux) dominates the southern sky. The cross consists of three bright stars plus a slightly fainter fourth star creating the kite-shaped cross. Close by are the Pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri, two bright stars belonging to the large constellation of Centaurus, which borders Crux on three sides. The /Xam Bushmen knew the three bright stars in Crux as female lions and the Pointers as male lions. For Sotho and Tswana peoples the two brightest stars in Crux and the two Pointers made up *Dithutlwa*, the four giraffes. To the northwest is another constellation depicting a lion, Leo, with the bright star, Regulus. Over to the east is a bright red star, Antares, a supergiant star marking the heart of Scorpius, the Scorpion.

Low above the eastern horizon is Ophiuchus, the Serpent Bearer, hosting the planet Saturn while planet Jupiter makes a spectacular appearance close to the bright star Spica in Virgo, the Maiden.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 12 June and again after 24 June. It is near Jupiter on 3 June and near Saturn on 9 June.

Winter solstice in the Southern Hemisphere is on 21 June.