



Evening sky in June 2018

As South Africa delves into the heart of winter and heads towards Solstice (21 June), the prominent constellation Scorpius, with its recognisable curved asterism of stars, rises early in the eastern sky. In the area between Scorpius and Sagittarius (the Archer, situated low towards the eastern horizon), look out for the dark dust lanes observed in the broadened Milky Way region which encompasses the Galactic Centre (requires dark conditions). Both Jupiter and Saturn rise in the early evening and are well-placed in Libra and Sagittarius respectively to be observed for most of the night throughout June. Moving southwards, Crux (Southern Cross) continues to be a prominent constellation high overhead. Closer to the southern horizon, you may be able to make out the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds (LMC, SMC) - two neighbouring irregular dwarf galaxies visible to the naked eye. Binoculars used just south of the SMC reveal the stunning globular cluster 47 Tuc. Setting 2 hours after sunset into the north-western horizon, Venus can be seen as the brilliant evening star, close to Mercury which reappears in our early evening skies from mid-June.

The moon will be in the evening sky until the 5 June, and then from the 15 June, with full moon situated in Sagittarius on the 28 June.