



Evening sky in March 2014

To the north the Hunter (Orion) is in combat with the Bull (Taurus). His hunting Dogs (Canis Major and Canis Minor) complete the familiar summer hunting scene. Not as well known is the sailing scene, almost overhead and a little to the south. It is dominated by the Great Ship Argo Navis (from Greek mythology), which consists of three constellations: the Sails (Vela), the Stern (Puppis) and the Keel (Carina). Completing the scene are three fainter constellations, Pyxis (Compass) is above the Sails; Volans (Flying Fish) is below the Keel, while Columba (Dove), flies to the west of the Stern. Their stars are admittedly harder to detect, but fun to search for on a moonless night. The second brightest star in the night sky, Canopus in Carina, is the only star named after a real person, the pilot of the Greek fleet of King Menelaus. In isiXhosa it is called *uCanzibe*, the harbinger of winter. Autumn equinox is on 20 March, confirming that the seasons are indeed changing. Planet Jupiter is the bright object in Gemini (Twins). Planets Mars and Saturn are in Virgo (Maiden) and Libra (Scales) respectively.

The Moon is in the evening sky from 5 March until 20 March.