



Evening sky in SEPTEMBER 2011

Above the northern horizon three bright stars form a triangle known in the northern hemisphere as the Summer triangle. These stars, Altair in Aquila (the Eagle), Vega in Lyra (the Lyre - a musical instrument) and Deneb in Cygnus (the Swan), are easily visible from the Southern hemisphere. Perhaps a more appropriate name should be the Northern Triangle.

Cetus (the Whale) is rising in the East with the bright star Fomalhaut in the Southern Fish (Pisces Austrinus) above it. The bright star to the southeast, Achernar, marks another watery constellation, Eridanus, the River.

Above the south-western horizon the Southern Cross (Crux) is on its side, with the Pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri above. Exploring this area, and higher up towards the Scorpion and the Archer (Sagittarius) with binoculars, will reveal bright star clusters and nebulae (interstellar dust and gas clouds). In the vicinity of the Archer the Milky Way is particularly bright, marking the centre of our Galaxy.

The Sun crosses the equator southwards on 23 September (Autumnal Equinox), signalling the start of Spring in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 14 September and again from 29 September.