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SKY CALENDAR JANUARY 2018

An aid to enjoying the changing sky

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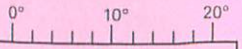
Use this scale to measure angular distances between objects on diagrams below.



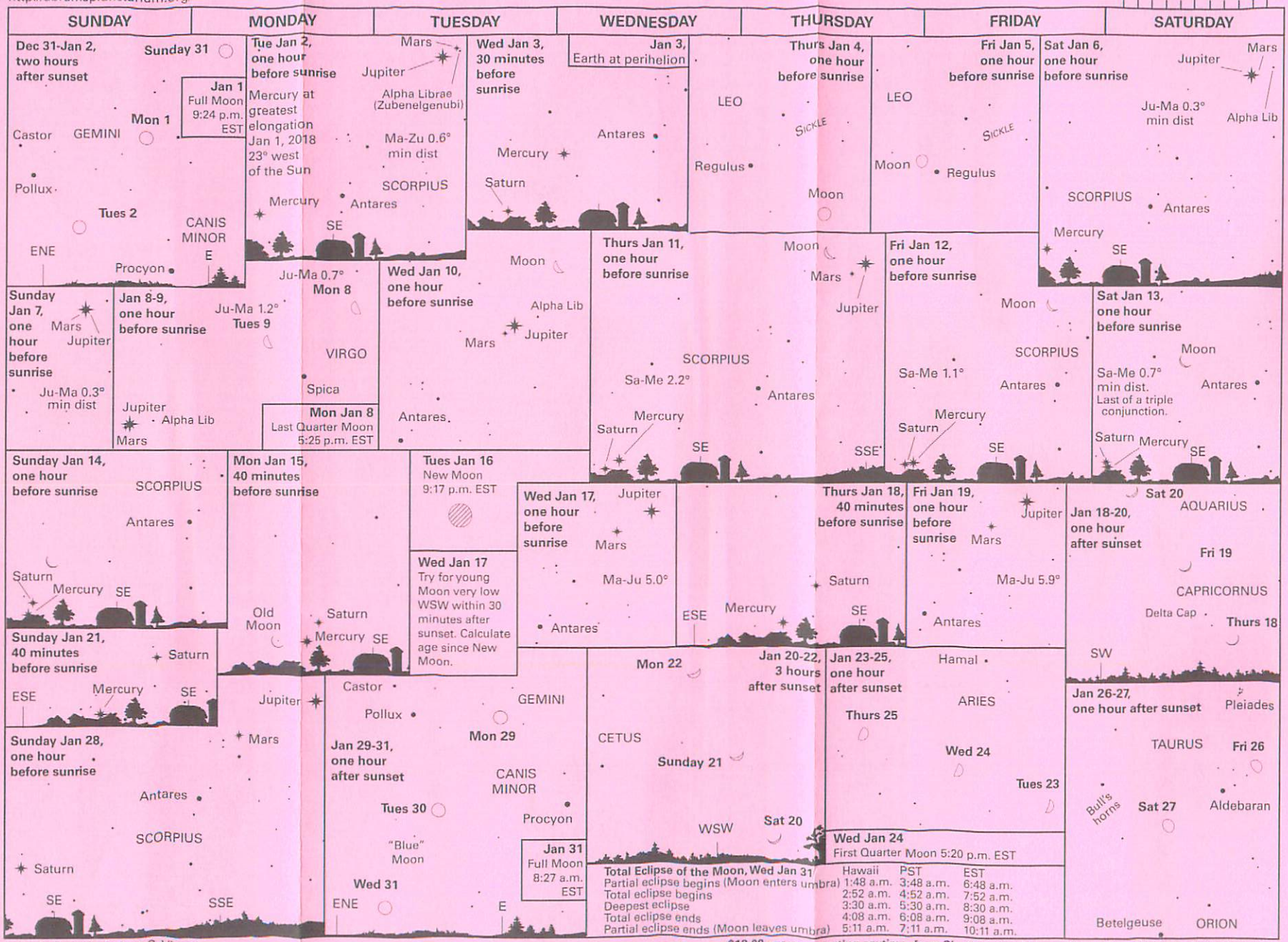
January 2018 sees four planets in the dawn sky, **Saturn, Mercury, Jupiter, and Mars**. Saturn is just emerging from the glare of the Sun. Look for Saturn low in the southeast early in January, climbing higher each day. **Mercury**, at gr elongation Jan 1, is lower left of Antares. Mercury and Saturn pass each other January 13. The swift moving planet Mercury drops lower each morning and is lost in the morning twilight before the month ends.

Jupiter and Mars are about 45° to the upper right of Saturn and Mercury. Jupiter and Mars pass just 0.3° of each other January 6. January 11, the waning crescent Moon is next to Jupiter and Mars. By the end of the month, we are left with three morning planets, Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter. Venus is at superior conjunction January 9 and is not visible. The Moon is near Mars and Jupiter on January 10 and 11. The waning crescent Moon is near Saturn and Mercury January 14 and 15.

The First Full Moon of January will be the closest Full Moon of the year. This so called "**supermoon**" will be 221,600 miles away. The Moon on January 14 will be the farthest apogee of the year with the Moon 252,600 miles from Earth.

The second Full Moon of the month is January 31. The second Full Moon of a month, by one definition, is called a "**Blue Moon**." In a year when a blue moon happens in January, we'll usually also get one in March.

Visit *web.pa.msu.edu/abrams/msta/skycalnov2017.html*. for more information on the Lunar Eclipse, Jan 31.



Total Eclipse of the Moon, Wed Jan 31

	Hawaii	PST	EST
Partial eclipse begins (Moon enters umbra)	1:48 a.m.	3:48 a.m.	6:48 a.m.
Total eclipse begins	2:52 a.m.	4:52 a.m.	7:52 a.m.
Deepest eclipse	3:30 a.m.	5:30 a.m.	8:30 a.m.
Total eclipse ends	4:08 a.m.	6:08 a.m.	9:08 a.m.
Partial eclipse ends (Moon leaves umbra)	5:11 a.m.	7:11 a.m.	10:11 a.m.

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ISSN 0733-6314

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January Evening Skies

This chart is drawn for latitude 40° north, but should be useful to stargazers throughout the continental United States. It represents the sky at the following local standard times:

Late December	10 p.m.
Early January	9 p.m.
Late January	8 p.m.
Early February	7 p.m.

This map is applicable one hour either side of the above times.

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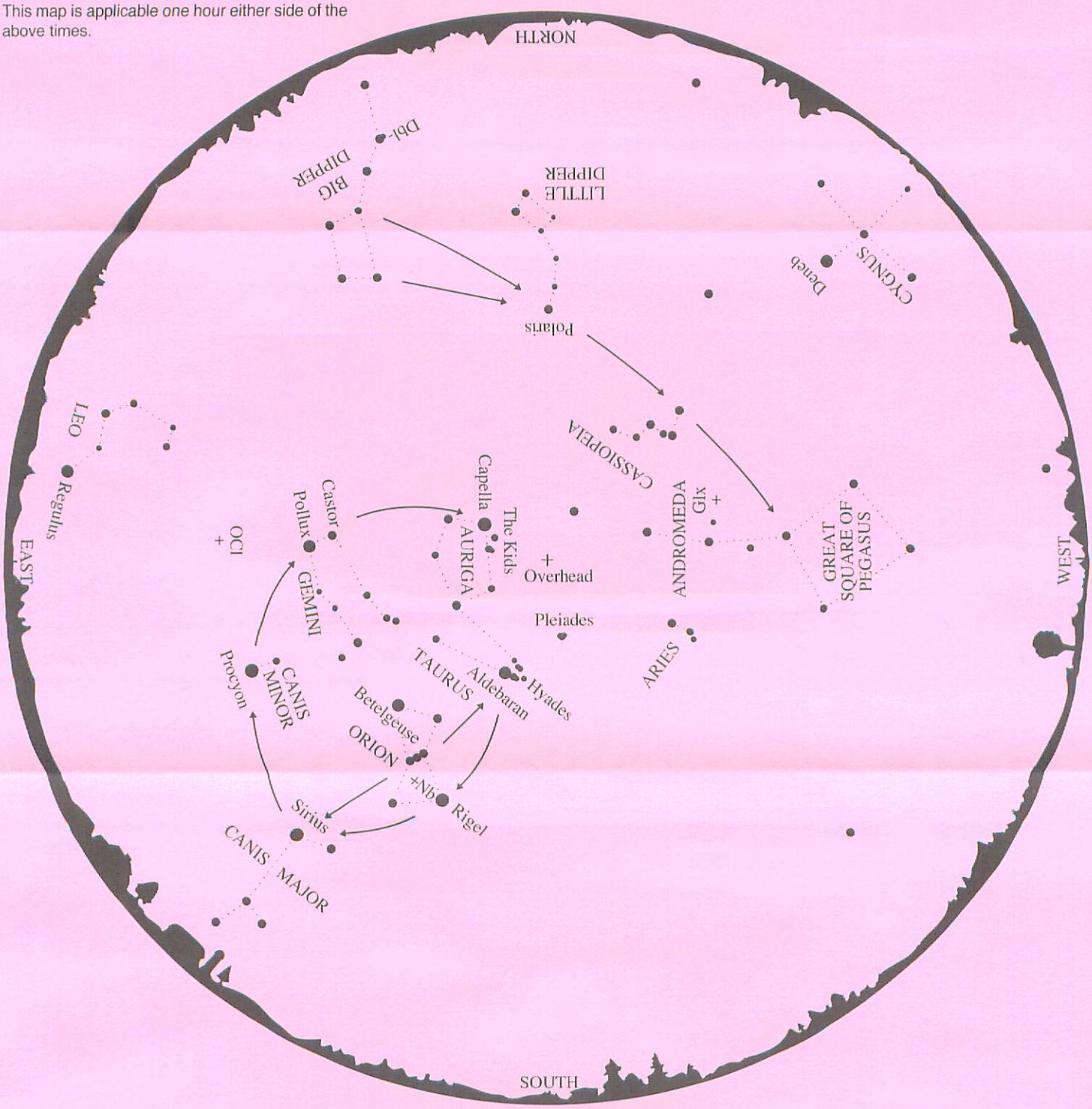

No planets are plotted for mid-January 2018. At chart time 9 objects of first magnitude or brighter are visible. In order of brightness they are: Sirius, Capella, Rigel, Procyon, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran, Pollux, Deneb, and Regulus. In addition to stars, other objects that should be visible to the unaided eye are labeled on the map. The double star (Dbl) at the bend of the handle of the Big Dipper should be detectable. The famous Orion Nebula, a cloud of gas and dust out of which stars are forming, is marked (Nb) in that constellation. The open or galactic star cluster (OCl) known as the "Beehive" can be located between the Gemini twins and Leo. The position of an external star system, called the Andromeda Galaxy after the constellation in which it appears, is also indicated (Glx). Try to observe these objects with unaided eye and binoculars.

—D. David Batch