



### Evening sky in MARCH 2012

The Sun crosses the celestial equator, moving into the northern sky, on 20 March. The changing of seasons is reflected by the positions of the constellations. Above the north-western horizon the "summer hunting scene", Orion with Taurus, the Bull, and the two dogs, Canis Major and Canis Minor, now appears much lower down. Leo, the Lion, a constellation prominent during autumn, is already high above the north-eastern horizon. The Lion appears upside down, with its head indicated by an upside down sickle of stars.

Above the southwest is Achernar, the fourth brightest star in the night sky, in Eridanus (River). Canopus, the second brightest star is above it in Carina (Keel). The brightest star is Sirius, close by in Canis Major.

The Southern Cross (Crux) lies on its side in the southeast, with the Pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri, below it.

On 15 March the bright planet Venus passes the almost equally bright planet Jupiter, in a spectacular planetary conjunction in Aries (Ram). Planet Mars is in Leo and Saturn is in Virgo.

The Moon is in the evening sky until 9 March and again from 27 March.