




## Community Observatory St Martin's on Scilly

# April 2022

## What to see in Scilly's skies this month

<p><b>1 Apr: New Moon</b> The Moon won't be visible in the night sky, appearing as a waxing crescent over the next few nights. This is a great time for deep-sky stargazing, or to experience the true darkness of Scilly's skies. You'll be amazed how many stars you can see!</p>	<p><b>5 Apr: Saturn &amp; Mars</b> For the early risers: these 2 planets appear close in the sky just over an hour before sunrise. Find a spot with a clear view of the eastern horizon. They'll appear low in the sky, Mars distinctly reddish. Bright Venus joins before the Sun appears.</p>	<p><b>Apr constellations</b> Catch the last of the winter constellations before they drop too low in the sky: wonder at Orion (see below), spy Gemini, Taurus and open cluster the Pleiades. Make the most of relatively early dark nights to get out and enjoy the sky!</p>
<p><b>10 Apr: First Quarter</b> Best time to gaze upon our celestial neighbour, the Moon, in more detail. Astronomers pay special attention to the terminator, the dividing line between shadow and light. This is where craters and surface formations are best viewed.</p>	<p><b>22 Apr: Lyrids</b> The peak of the Lyrid meteor shower, viewable all night. Its radiant (from where streaks of light appear to originate) will rise high after midnight from the NE, near Vega. Expect to see 10-15 per hour; there could be many more!</p> 	<p><b>26-30 Apr: planets on parade</b> The pre-dawn sky sees Saturn, Mars, Venus and Jupiter appear in a row above the eastern horizon. This imaginary line in the sky is known as the ecliptic: the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun.</p>
<p><b>29 Apr: Mercury</b> About 10pm, tiny rocky planet Mercury will appear south of the Pleiades, above the NW horizon. The closest planet to the Sun, Mercury's only visible shortly before sunrise or after sunset, and is only a little larger than the Earth's Moon.</p>	<p><b>All month: Orion</b> The great hunter drops ever lower in the night sky; catch him while you can! Spot the belt of 3 stars, with the naked-eye-viewable Orion Nebula (M42) 'hanging' below. Compare red giant Betelgeuse (top L) to blue supergiant Rigel (bottom R).</p>	<p><b>Next Month:</b> <b>6 May:</b> Eta Aquarids meteor shower; remains of Halley's comet. 1 every minute or so, pre-dawn. <b>16 May:</b> total lunar eclipse. Our far-SW location is best in the UK to spot some of our Moon's pre-dawn eclipse.</p>

## St Martin's Observatory opening times

Tuesdays: 20.00-21.00 or 21.00-22.00 *pre-booking essential*

Fridays: 14.00-16.00 *drop-ins*

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