



# Three planets shine

by James Stokley

Three planets—Mars, Jupiter and Saturn—appear on August evenings, but not all will be visible at the same time. There are also five bright stars. These, as well as Mars, are shown on the maps.

The sky looks like this about 11:00 p.m. local daylight saving time at the beginning of August, an hour earlier at mid-month and two hours earlier at the end.

Only Mars is above the horizon at these times. It appears in the south in the constellation Scorpius. On the first, Mars is to the right of the red star Antares, but it is moving eastward and passes Antares on the 11th. After that it will be to the left, as shown on the map.

**Although fading** as it draws away from earth, Mars is still quite bright, exceeding any star now visible. Jupiter, considerably brighter, stands in Virgo; its brilliance makes it easy to locate. However, the light of an object near the horizon has to penetrate the thickness of the atmosphere, making it appear

dimmer than it really is.

Saturn is visible in Aries about midnight on Aug. 1 and about 10:00 p.m. on the 31st. It is less than half as bright as Mars.

Brightest star in the evening is Vega, in Lyra, directly overhead. Next is Arcturus in the west in Boötes, only slightly fainter.

Altair in Aquila is high in the south. Higher and to the left is Cygnus with bright Deneb. Antares, near which Mars is moving, is the faintest of the five first magnitude stars.

Several other constellations are visible but they contain no bright stars. Above Scorpius is Ophiuchus, represented on the map by Serpens on each side. The head is to the right. Above the head is the semicircular group of Corona Borealis. Higher, toward Vega, is Hercules.

Two smaller constellations are high in the southeast, between Cygnus and Aquila. To the right is Sagitta and to the left is Delphinus.

In the north, to the right of Hercules, is Draco. It winds around Ursa Minor, which contains Polaris, the pole star. It can be located from the Pointers in the Big Dipper, toward the left. This is part of Ursa Major. ◇



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### CELESTIAL TIMETABLE

Aug.	EDT	
4	7:00 p.m.	Moon passes north of Saturn
	9:39 p.m.	Moon in last quarter
9	10:00 a.m.	Moon passes north of Venus
	9:00 p.m.	Moon farthest, distance 252,300 miles
12	early a.m.	Numerous meteors visible, apparently radiating from constellation Perseus in northeastern sky
13	1:17 a.m.	New moon
16	7:00 p.m.	Moon passes south of Jupiter
20	4:04 p.m.	Moon in first quarter
21	8:00 p.m.	Moon passes south of Mars
25	11:00 a.m.	Moon nearest, distance 224,600 miles
27	6:33 a.m.	Full moon