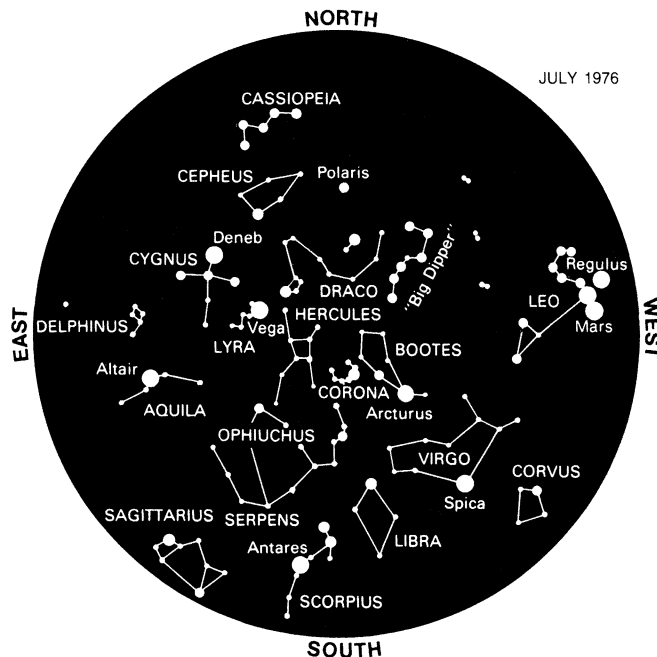


STARS OF JULY

CELESTIAL TIME TABLE

July	1	10:00 a.m. EDT	Moon passes south of Mars
	2	midnight	Earth farthest from sun, distance 94.5 million miles
	4	1:28 p.m.	Moon in first quarter
	6	10:00 p.m.	Moon nearest, distance 228,900 miles
	11	9:09 a.m.	Full moon
	15	11:00 a.m.	Mercury behind sun
	19	2:29 a.m.	Moon in last quarter
		7:00 a.m.	Moon farthest, distance 251,100 miles
	21	1:00 p.m.	Moon passes south of Jupiter
	26	9:39 p.m.	New Moon
	29	10:00 a.m.	Saturn behind sun
		10:00 p.m.	Moon passes south of Mars
	31	midnight	Moon nearest, distance 229,400 miles



BY JAMES STOKLEY

Although Mars, now about 200 million miles away, is visible in July only with difficulty, low in the west for an hour or two after sunset, this month may be recorded in astronomical history as the time when we began to learn more than ever before about this planetary neighbor.

If all goes well, the Viking 1 spacecraft will be orbiting around Mars, after a journey that began last year on Aug. 20 from Cape Canaveral, Fla. Early in July, the craft's landing section will be detached by radio control and sent to rest on the surface, as the two spacecraft study the planet in greater detail than ever before. Later on, the dual probe will be joined by Viking 2, launched last Sept. 9, making a total of four separate instrument

packages to supplement the data gathered by Mariner 9 in 1971, which first showed that Mars had a cratered surface in some ways like that of the moon (see last week's special issue of *SCIENCE NEWS*).

Now equal in brightness to a second magnitude star such as Polaris, Mars will be hard to see when it appears low in the west at twilight. Much lower but about 150 times as bright, Venus is nearby.

Brightest of the July evening stars is Arcturus in Boötes, high in the west. Only slightly fainter is Vega in Lyra, high in the east. Below it is Cygnus, in which Deneb shines about a third as bright but still of the first magnitude. Look to the southeast for Altair, in Aquila.

Two of the five planets that are some-

times visible to the naked eye cannot be seen this month. Mercury passes behind the sun on July 15 and Saturn does the same on the 29th. Thus, during July, both will be lost in the sun's glare.

However, brilliant Jupiter, more than five times as bright as Vega, rises in the east about 2:30 a.m., local DST, on July 1 and at about 1 a.m. on the 31st. On July 21 the moon will pass in front of Jupiter, but this will happen when it is below the horizon for observers in North America and Europe. The event will be visible, however, in New Zealand and the South Pacific. From the U.S., both in the early mornings of the 21st and 22nd, moon and planet will be close together, a striking sight in the eastern sky. □

... Parascience Letters

nity. Why not obtain the opinion of objective scholars, researchers and scientists.

This article is sheer prejudice. If a UFO disintegrated what names would your so-called scientists use to describe non-earth materials.

Obviously the committee named in the article is not representative of scholar-scientists. Frazier confuses the expected hoaxes with the real thing. The only difficulty the alleged scientists have is their closed minds. They refer to the yellow-paged notes they took when students and resist anything new.

*Irving Ward-Steinman
Alexandria, La.*

Astrologer John M. Addey of Sutton, Surrey, England, has pointed out that "empiricists are *not* the champions of reason." Apparently they only appear to be by challenging or condemning uncomfortable (to them) areas of investigation and they are all too quick to arbitrarily apply labels of "cultist unreason." How much more objec-

tive "scientific" critics of legitimate astrology would be to direct their energies to their own housecleaning. Certainly the environmental backlash of recent years offers adequate testimony to Addey's observation. Ask any environmentalist, then ask any anti-environmentalist. Each complains about the other's irrationality.

*John Walker
Houston, Texas*

The remarks about Uri Geller deliberately excluded the fact that he has been tested by four independent magicians who now believe he is genuine. Documentation can be found in *NEWSWEEK* science editor Charles Panati's book *The Geller Papers*.

The remark that Prof. John Taylor was "fooled" by Randi during an encounter with him is an out-and-out farce. Randi visited Taylor in the guise of a reporter and proceeded to "fool" Taylor by covert actions while Taylor was busy elsewhere. I ask readers this crucial question which proves an absurd premise in Randi's reasoning: Do they believe that Taylor *should* have sus-

pected Randi to be a trickster because Taylor should be on guard against every cordial-appearing visitor?

*A.H. Klotz
Babylon, N.Y.*

I was very pleased to learn of the establishment of the Committee to Scientifically Investigate Claims of Paranormal and Other Phenomena. I have long wished that an impartial body existed to study such things. Of late, far too much hogwash is passing for science in the public mind. And, I think, not a little worthwhile data gets chucked out with the garbage when respectable scientists refuse to give serious consideration to the claims of para- and pseudoscience.

*Karl T. Pflöck
Arlington, Va.*

I want to let you know how pleased I was by your article. Not only was it well written, but it avoided the usual simplifications, dichotomies and distortions that usually characterize articles on pseudosciences and debunking.