

* * o • SYMBOLS FOR STARS IN ORDER OF BRIGHTNESS

which does not contain any first magnitude stars, but it can hardly be called an unimportant constellation. It is one of the 12 that mark the zodiac, the band through which the sun, moon and planets all seem to move.

Praesepe or the Manger

In this group, on a dark clear night, one can see a faint misty light that has sometimes been mistaken for a comet. Actually this is a naked-eye star cluster, a great aggregation of distant suns, known as Praesepe. It is sometimes called the Manger, and two donkeys, represented by stars nearby, are supposed to be feeding from it.

Early in the 16th century, when he was making the first telescopic observations of the skies, Galileo looked at Praesepe and counted 40 stars, thus proving that there were stars which could not be seen by the naked eye.

Modern powerful telescopes reveal several hundred or more in this little group.

Celestial Time Table for March

MARCH	EST	
1	11:12 a.m.	New moon.
7	8:25 a.m.	Moon passes Mars.
9	6:50 a.m.	Moon in first quarter.
12	2:30 a.m.	Algol (variable star in Perseus) at minimum brightness.
14	5:00 p.m.	Moon nearest, distance 223,100 miles.
	11:19 p.m.	Algol at minimum.
15	9:22 p.m.	Full moon.
16	4:07 a.m.	Moon passes Jupiter.
17	1:00 p.m.	Jupiter in opposite direction from sun and nearest earth, distance 413,400,000 miles.
	8:08 p.m.	Algol at minimum.
20	1:00 p.m.	Mercury behind sun.
	4:17 p.m.	Vernal equinox (beginning of spring in Northern Hemisphere).
21	1:23 p.m.	Moon passes Saturn.
23	12:04 a.m.	Moon in last quarter.
26	11:00 p.m.	Moon farthest, distance 252,100 miles.
31	4:19 a.m.	New moon.

Subtract one hour for CST, two hours for MST, and three for PST.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1957

ZOOLOGY

Dog, Bear Ancestor Same

► THE ANCESTRY of man's best friend, the dog, can be traced back some 40,000,000 years to a common ancestor of bear and dog, *Miacis*. Dr. Edwin H. Colbert of the American Museum of Natural History reports in a new Museum publication in New York.

Miacis, who was built somewhat like a dachshund with a long body and short legs, was not very different in appearance from some of the modern East Indian or African civets.

Miacis lived during the transition from the Eocene to the Oligocene period of geologic history. Those were the days when horses were no larger than small sheep and had three toes on each foot. Rhinoceroses were still small horse-like running animals, quite hornless and probably completely lacking in the ferocity that so distinguishes their modern descendants. The first ancestors of apes and man were, in those days, small tree-dwelling monkeys, Dr. Colbert says.

During the Oligocene period the first canids evolved in North America as direct descendants of *Miacis*. There were two types. One of these later evolved into a heavy animal with a lumbering walk—the bear. The other was the ancestor of the dogs, wolves, and foxes.

The descendants had increasingly longer legs adapting them especially for fleet running after prey.

Almost from the beginning, the true dog was a runner. And he was among the most intelligent of the warm-blooded animals. In addition, early in the history of the dog's development, this animal displayed a "social intelligence," learning to act together as a group to run down a fleet victim and to hunt in packs.

And there are well authenticated records, Dr. Colbert reports, of wolves supplying food for an infirm and aged member of the pack.

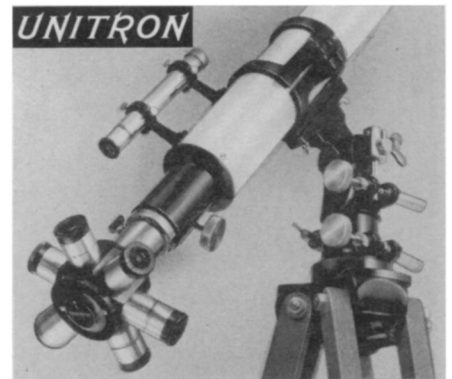
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