S & S Optika

What's Up?

Sky Events for:
May 2021

MAY IS MERCURY MONTH: Mercury is the most visible in May for all of 2021. It will also meet up with Venus. Watch in the early evening to see it.

5/3 Dusk: Mercury will be ~ 2 degrees from the Pleiades, shortly after sunset. Mercury will be -0.9 magnitude but you will probably need binoculars to see the Pleiades. Look very low in the West-Northwest.

Last Quarter Moon

5/4 Dawn: The Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn form a wide triangle. Look above the Southeastern horizon.

5/6 Eta Aquariids Meteor Shower – usually better in the Southern Hemisphere, some may be visible before the waning Moon rises before 4am.

5/11 New Moon

5/12 Dusk: right after sunset: Venus and a very small crescent Moon will be less than 1 degree separation. You will need a Very Good West-Northwest horizon to see them.

5/13 30 minutes after sunset: Again in the West-Northwest look for Mercury ~ 3 degrees from the Moon.

5/15 Evening: The moon is now approaching Mars. Shortly after midnight MDT the moon will be closest to Mars at about 43'. Watch during the evening hours as it approaches from about 2 degrees separation after sunset to its closest encounter after midnight.

5/16 Evening: The Moon is about 3 degrees from Pollux in Gemini.

5/17 Mercury is at greatest elongation – highest in the Western sky, and will now start its decent again.

Waxing Moon is about 2 degrees from M44 the Beehive Cluster, in Cancer.

Sky Events for:
May 2021 (continued)

5/19 First Quarter Moon

5/26 Full Moon: Total Lunar Eclipse: Flower Moon – "April showers bring May flowers", also called the Milk Moon, and Corn Planting Moon.

5/26 TOTAL LUNAR ECLIPSE: This will be a short total eclipse. Totality will last only 18.4 minutes. In New Mexico and Colorado the partial eclipse will set before leaving the umbra.

Partial Eclipse begins: 3:45 am MDT	
Totality:	5:10 – 5: 28 am MDT
Partial Ends:	6:53 am MDT

This Full Moon is a perigean/"Super Moon". At 33.6' in diameter it is about 8% larger than the average 31', and will be 29.8' during the 11/19/21 Partial Eclipse when it is at apogee. A photograph clearly shows the difference.

Photo Credit: Celestron Website

5/27 Evening: Mars and Pollux will be about 6 degrees separation until early June.

5/28 Dusk: West-Northwest 30 minutes after Sunset – Mercury will be less than ½ degree from Venus at 9:10pm MDT. Even though Venus (in full phase) is about 300X brighter than Mercury (tiny crescent phase) they will look about the same size since Mercury is now 2.5X closer than Venus.

5/31 – 6/1 Dawn: 1 hour before Sunrise. The Moon passes Jupiter and Saturn again.