

New Braunfels Astronomy Club

Texas, USA

April 20th, 2017

216th Meeting

Larry's

Celestial Calendar & Newsletter

April 21st to May 18th, 2017

238th Edition

**Will the Eta Aquariids Show up?
Double up Shadow Transits at Jupiter
What about Comet 41P?**

Observer's Highlight Calendar for Clear Skies

Month Date Time Event

Month	Date	Time	Event
Apr	22	Pre-dawn	Lyrid meteor shower is peaking – weakly or not
Apr	26	7:18 am CDT	New Moon
May	2	9:47am CDT	First Quarter Moon
May	3 & 4	Night to Dawn	A waxing gibbous Moon joins Regulus (Leo) in the sky
May	5 & 6	Pre-dawn	The Eta Aquariid meteor shower is peaking. Get up before dawn, after the Moon sets and see if it shows up. Look east-southeast
May	10	4:42pm CDT	Full Moon
May	11	8:59pm CDT. Set up early	The first double shadow transit on Jupiter this month – See Jupiter in Solar System Roundup
May	18	7:33pm CDT	Last Quarter Moon
May	18	11:53 pm CDT. Set up early	The second double shadow transit on Jupiter this month – See Jupiter in Solar System Roundup

Solar System Roundup

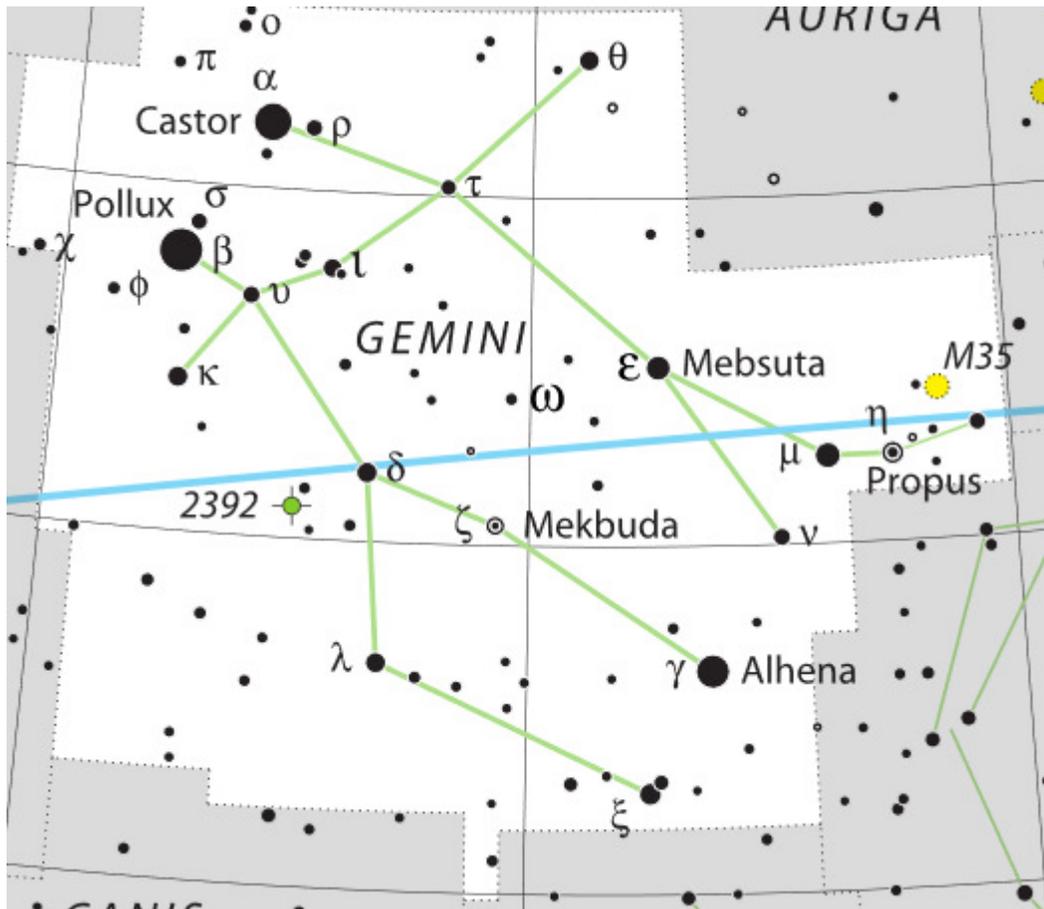
Comet 41P/Tuttle-Giacobini-Kresak...

Near the end of April Comet 41P is heading into Lyra, then passes into Hercules in mid-May. Look for it just west, then southwest of Vega in the first week of May. As May progresses 41P moves into eastern Hercules, about 4-5° east-southeast of omicron (o) Herculis (in his left hand). If we're lucky, it will make magnitude 6 or even 5. Either way it should be a nice binocular and telescope sight. What about the ...? We have another reasonably bright (6th magnitude) comet – **Johnson (C/2015 V2)** is moving through Boötes in May.

- ✚ **Mercury** is out of sight, lost in the Sun's glare
- ✚ **Venus** is visible in the morning before Sunrise. Its apparent diameter is decreasing, but its disk illumination is increasing.
- ✚ **Earth** still spins, and we are still here to marvel at the wonders of our universe.
- ✚ **The Moon** gives us a little show on the early evenings of April 27th and 28th. A waxing crescent, it teams up with Mars, the Pleiades, the Hyades, and Aldebaran – low in the west.
- ✚ **Mars** continues to dim and make for a western exit. See the Moon.
- ✚ **Jupiter** rules the night now and is a fine target for telescopes and binoculars, especially big and powerful binoculars. It is still at opposition (away from the Sun, as opposed to conjunction where it is in the direction of the Sun). We are treated to a double – double shadow transit, first on May 11th and again on May 18th. Io and Europa are the shadow producers.
- ✚ **Saturn** rises by 10:30 CDT at the end of April, earlier in May. Its rings are nicely tilted for a beautiful view.
- ✚ **Uranus** is a poor target
- ✚ **Neptune** can be viewed in Aquarius in pre-dawn mornings starting in May
- ✚ **Pluto** is lost in the Sun's glare

My Observing Pick: Gemini, the Twins

Go out just after dark. Gemini is Latin for “twins”. Called The Great Twins in Babylonian astronomy, they were considered minor gods, and were given the names Meshlamtaea and Lugalirra. In Greek mythology Castor was mortal, son of king Tyndareus and Leda, while Pollux was the son of Zeus and Leda (Zeus seduced Leda) and therefore a demigod. Twins? They were both sons of Leda but not twins in Greek mythology. Zeus united Castor and Pollux in the sky.



Name	Object Type	Location	Description
Castor (α) Gem. A misnomer, as Pollux is brighter	Multiple (sextuple) star system	-	Pretty double with a dim third 73" away. Three of the system stars are visible while the others are spectrographic
M35, NGC 2158, Cr89	A Cluster of Open Star Clusters	Just to the northwest of Castor's foot.	M35 is a Bright, elongated cluster of +- 200 stars. NGC 2158 is compact. Cr89 is more diffuse and more difficult.
NGC 2392, The Eskimo Nebula	Planetary Nebula	About 2° southeast of δ, the waist of Pollux	Blue-green, magnitude 9 with magnitude 10 central star.

Coming up: OUR 217th ASTRONOMY CLUB MEETING

Thursday, **May 18th**, 2017 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., held in the conference room of TJ's restaurant on the Loop Road (337). Have dinner and/or a beverage if you like. The New Braunfels Astronomy Club can be reached at www.astronomynbtx.org

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