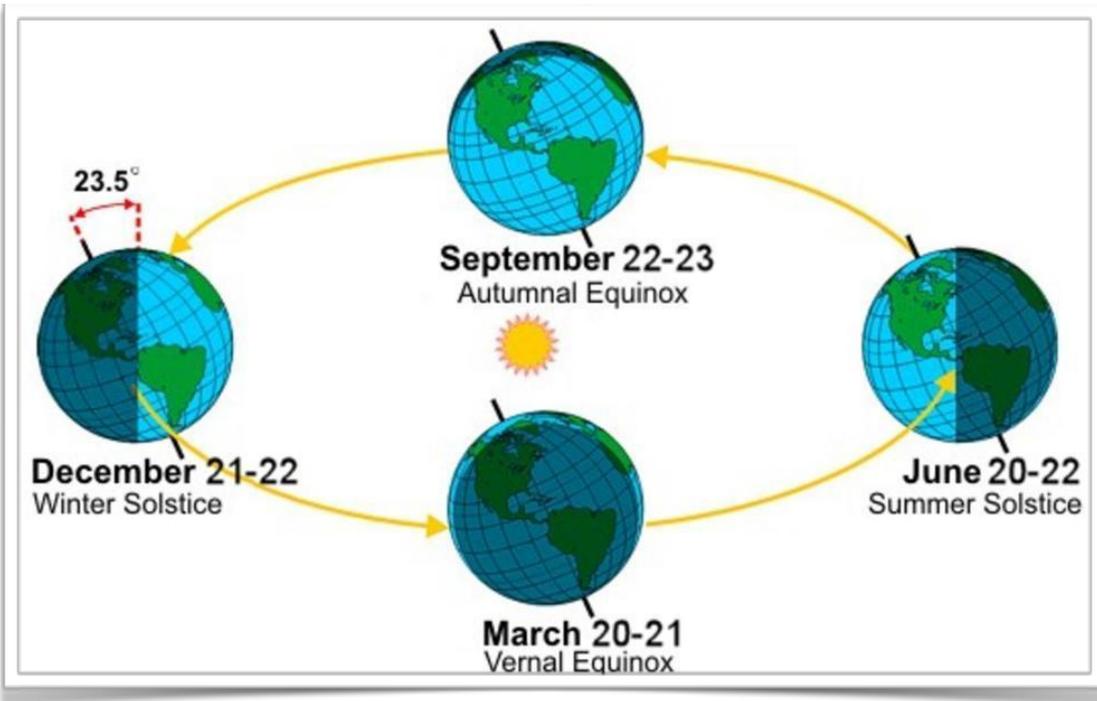




The Astrophile Newsletter

One Fond of Starlore: An Amateur Astronomer

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Spring Equinox 2019

On March 21 at 03:28 IST or 2158 UT of March 20, Northern hemisphere will witness spring equinox.

Spring equinox is the day of the year when the Sun crosses the equator and starts moving northwards in sky. It also marks the ending of Winter and start of Spring season in Northern hemisphere. While in southern hemisphere, it is called as autumn equinox and marks the end of summer and beginning of autumn. It is interesting to note that the seasons are just opposite in the two hemispheres.

Every year between March 19-21 the spring equinox occurs and for people living on the equator can observe their shadow disappearing at local noon. Interestingly it also marks the day of equal day and night. The length of the day gets longer while the length of night gets trimmed with each passing day until summer solstice.

Moon phases and dates

Important phases and dates for Moon to plan your observation

06/03/19	New Moon	21:33
14/03/19	First Quarter	15:57
21/03/19	Half Moon	07:12
28/03/19	Third Quarter	09:39



Mars

The red planet is still shining bright in the night sky. Setting just between 8-9 pm. The planet is bright enough to be seen from the urban skies and appear small in the amateur telescopes.



Venus

The brightest planet is now shining bright in the morning skies rising after 3 AM. Currently it is showing a crescent phase and soon will become half phase.



Jupiter

Jupiter will rise post midnight between 2am and 1 am across the month. Currently placed very close to Scorpio, it is bright and can be easily spotted from the city skies.



Saturn

The ringed planet will be shining bright in the early morning hours as it rises just before the dawn. The planet will be rising between 3:30 am and 1:30 am in this month and will offer excellent views of its ring.

The future of space exploration is here



On Saturday morning when Dragon Crew 2 on board Falcon 9 rocket, it was very clear that NASA has reached 1 more step closer to its target of launching American astronauts from the American soil once again. So far they were dependent on Russia and their Soyuz Rockets for the launch.

One Monday night the Dragon Crew 2 docked with the ISS where the astronauts took a tour of the new capsule and also collected telemetric data. Everything went perfectly for SpaceX, the manufacturer for this new space voyager and if the return is also safe, we can see the possible manned launch as early as mid June.

Dragon Crew X is a reusable capsule to be used with Falcon 9 rockets and splashdown return.

100 Hours of Astronomy & Eratosthenes Experiment



Eratosthenes was a Greek scholar who in 2300 BC conducted an experiment to measure the circumference of the Earth with an accuracy of 99%. On March 21st, International Astronomical Union (IAU) under its 100 hours of astronomy program is conducting a special project for schools across the globe to participate in recreating the experiment and for students to learn about how a man calculated the circumference of Earth with no modern scientific tools but with maths.

Interested schools can contact us to participate in this program. The participation is free of cost and any number of student can participate in this international projects. The project will be carried out with neighbouring schools on the same day.

GLOBAL ASTRONOMY MONTH - APRIL 2019

Global Astronomy Month (GAM), organized each April by Astronomers Without Borders, is the world's largest global celebration of astronomy. Every year GAM brings new ideas and new opportunities, bringing enthusiasts together worldwide to celebrate Astronomers Without Borders' motto One People, One Sky.

Date	Program
27 Mar-5 Apr	Globe at Night
31 Mar-7 Apr	International Dark Sky Week.
1 Apr-30 Apr	AstroArts Contest
1 Apr-30 Apr	AstroPoetry Contest
12 Apr	Walking on the Moon - Online Observing Event
13 Apr	Global Star Party
12 Apr	OPTICKS
17 Apr	Cosmic Concert 10th Edition
21 Apr	SunDay
25 Apr - 5 May	Globe at Night
28 Apr	Sketching the Moon with Bettina Forget
Date TBD	Online Messier Marathon - 10th edition

To participate in any of the programs, or to conduct a similar

program at your school, need ideas or help, do write to us. The programs conducted needs to be registered with the AWB and the activities will reflect in the final reports circulated and shared in various International science magazines and conferences. Last year, **168 countries**, over **37,000 schools** and more than **1.2 billion people** participated. This year it is expected to grow even bigger. To be part of this global celebration for free of cost, share your plans with us.

