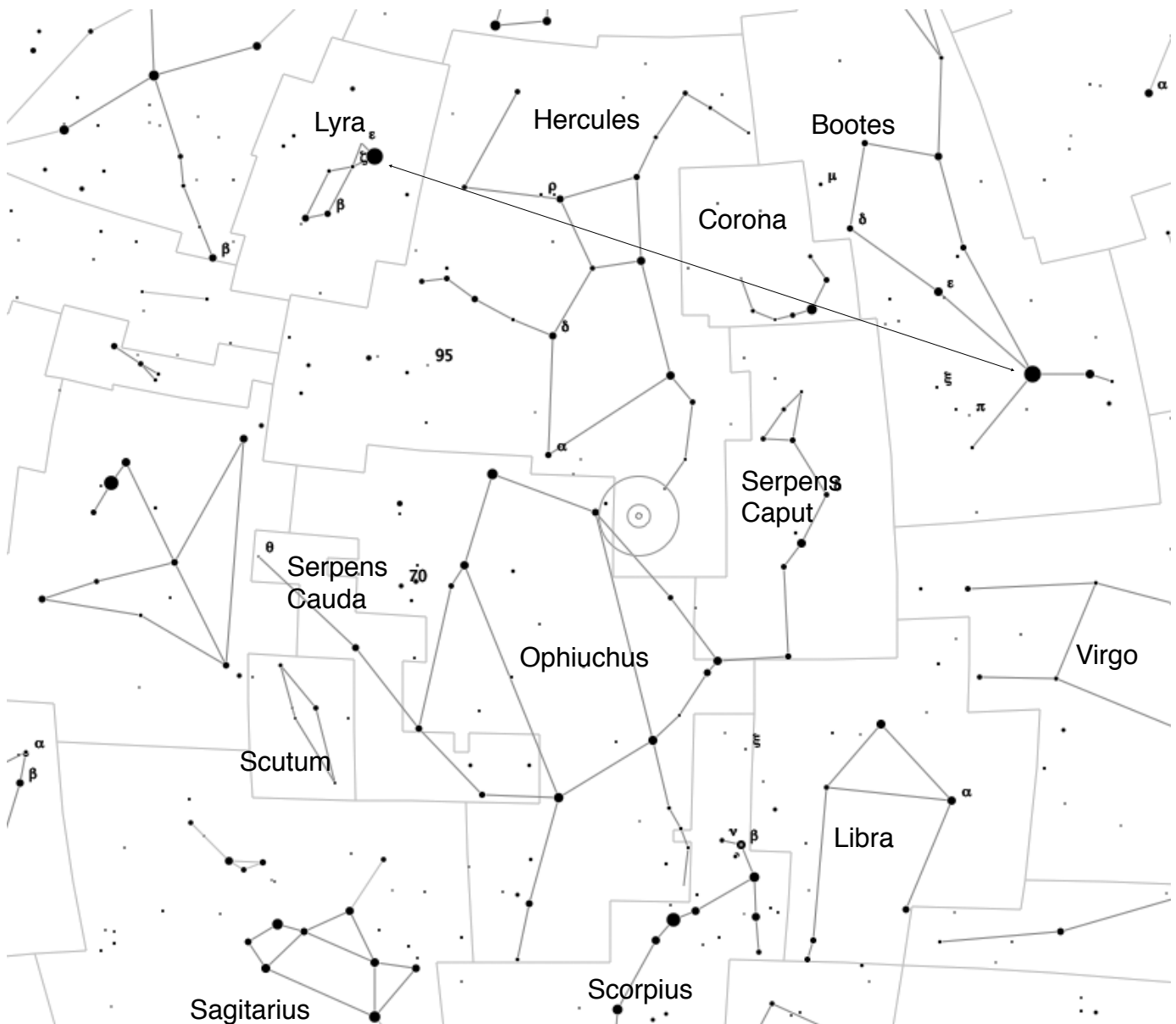


Hopping Around Hercules



- Hercules may not be a good starting point for hopping to other constellations, but it sounds better than “Hopping around Ophiuchus” and it’s a little easier to discern. It’s also in the middle of the constellations I want to cover for May/June.
- Last time we talked about hopping around Leo and we talked about “arcing to Arcturus” from the handle of the Big Dipper. Arcturus is the bright star on the right in the chart above and it is part of the constellation Bootes. If we draw a line from Vega, the brightest star at the top left, to Arcturus, we’ll find the “Keystone” of Hercules about a third of the way down the line. Once you have found the Keystone, you will be one step closer to viewing some beautiful globular clusters M13 and M92.
- If you continue down that line to the 2/3rd mark you’ll find the constellation Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown.

- 🌐 Below Hercules is the constellation Ophiuchus, the Serpent Bearer. If you like globular clusters, this is the constellation for you. There are a lot to be found.
- 🌐 Right of Ophiuchus is Serpens Caput the Serpents Head and left of Ophiuchus is Serpens Cauda the Serpents Tail. Together both regions represent Serpens the Serpent. Serpens is the only constellation to have two parts.
- 🌐 Below Ophiuchus is Scorpius the Scorpion. Note it's called **Scorpius** not **Scorpio** the astrological name. From our latitude we don't get to see the curved tail of Scorpius so some nickname it Scorpius the Lobster.
- 🌐 Right of the head of Scorpius is Libra the Scales. Although Libra is one of the constellations of the zodiac, it does not have much in it.
- 🌐 Left of Scorpius is the constellation Sagittarius the Archer. Most people don't bother trying to look for an archer though -- they look for the distinctive "teapot" and the "teaspoon" just left of it. There are many interesting objects in and around the teapot as this area is in the direction of the center of our galaxy (the spout points to it). Try scanning around this area with a telescope or binoculars and you are bound to find lots of cool objects.
- 🌐 Above Sagittarius and left of Serpens Cauda is the small constellation Scutum the Shield. This small constellation holds a favorite open cluster, M11 - the wild duck cluster.