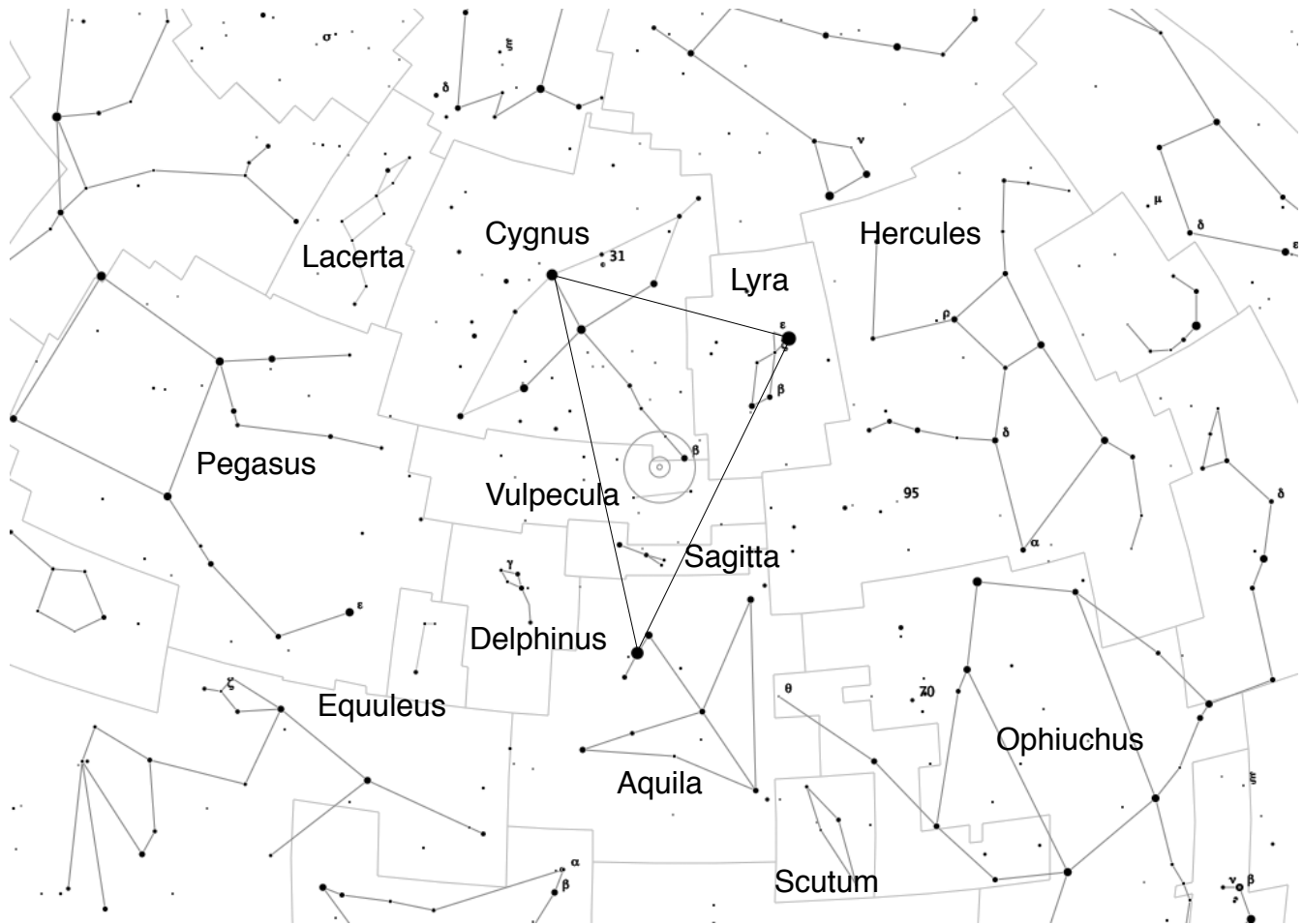


Hopping Around the Summer Triangle



The Summer Triangle is an excellent starting point for finding constellations in the summer time night sky. The triangle consists of three bright stars: Deneb in Cygnus the Swan, Vega in Lyra the Harp and Altair in Aquila the Eagle. If you can see these stars you can use them to spot the constellations they are a part of.

- ☉ Start with the top left star in the triangle, Deneb. Deneb is the top star in the “Northern Cross” and it is the tail of Cygnus the Swan (Deneb means “tail” in arabic).
- ☉ The top right star is Vega, the brightest one in the triangle and it is part of Lyra the Harp. The harp is hard to imagine so it might be easier to look for a stick drawing of a fish with Vega as one of the stars in the tail.
- ☉ The bottom star at the pointy end of the triangle is Altair in Aquila the Eagle. There are a few different ways that this constellation is drawn. In this representation the head is at the top and the wings are at the bottom. Another common way is to draw the wings at the top and head at the bottom.
- ☉ Right of Lyra and Aquila are some constellations we’ve covered previously: Hercules (can you see the keystone?), Ophiuchus, Serpens and Scutum.

- Below Cygnus are four small faint constellations. Right beneath Cygnus is Vulpecula the Fox. This constellation has no stars brighter than magnitude 4 so it can be completely invisible in light polluted skies.
- In between Altair and the head of Cygnus is a small constellation that looks like a pair of scissors. This is Sagitta the Arrow.
- Left of Sagitta is another small constellation Delphinus the Dolphin. It looks like a small kite with a tail.
- Left and below Delphinus is Equuleus the Colt. Seeing all of three stars that make up this upside down L figure can be a challenge even from a dark site.
- Left of Cygnus is an easy to find constellation Pegasus the Flying Horse. The “Square of Pegasus” can be spotted easily, then you just have to remember that the horse is upside down so the bottom right star is the start of its neck.
- Left of Cygnus and above Pegasus is a faint constellation Lacerta the Lizard. From a dark site the stars that make up the body are visible and are often seen as just a zig-zag pattern.