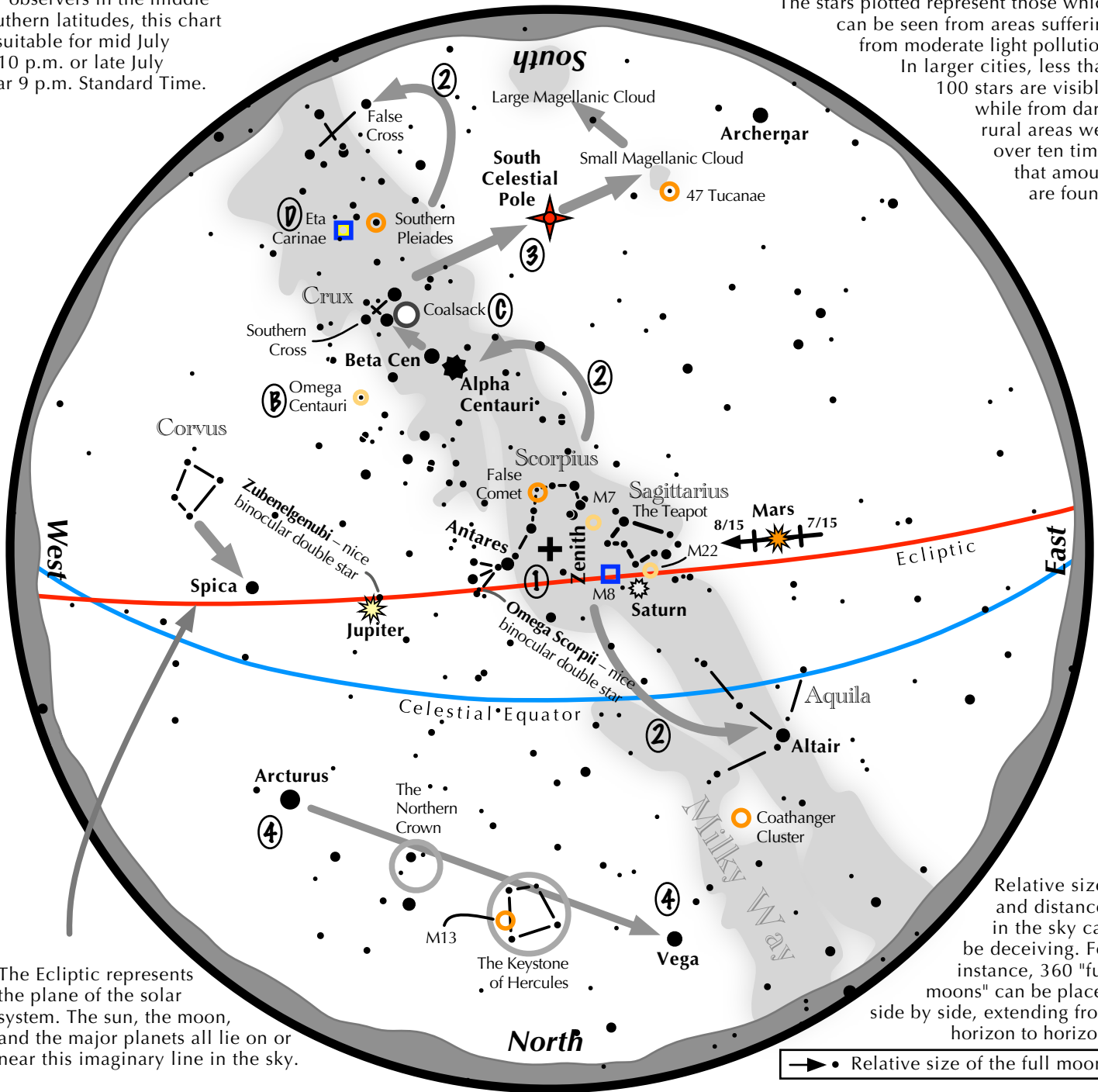


Navigating the late July Night Sky

For observers in the middle southern latitudes, this chart is suitable for mid July at 10 p.m. or late July near 9 p.m. Standard Time.

The stars plotted represent those which can be seen from areas suffering from moderate light pollution. In larger cities, less than 100 stars are visible, while from dark, rural areas well over ten times that amount are found.



The Ecliptic represents the plane of the solar system. The sun, the moon, and the major planets all lie on or near this imaginary line in the sky.

Relative sizes and distances in the sky can be deceiving. For instance, 360 "full moons" can be placed side by side, extending from horizon to horizon.

→ • Relative size of the full moon.

Navigating the late July night sky: Simply start with what you know or with what you can easily find.

- 1 Directly overhead lies the "J" hook shape of Scorpius with its bright red star Antares.
- 2 Follow the Milky Way from Antares, past Sagittarius, towards the northeast to Altair. Then jump from Antares to the southwest past the brightest star in the July sky, Alpha Centauri, to the four distinct stars of the Southern Cross, then to the False Cross.
- 3 The long vertical-bar of the Southern Cross points south past the South Celestial Pole to the Small and Large Magellanic Clouds, two satellite galaxies of the Milky Way.
- 4 Arcturus twinkles in the northwest and Vega sparkles in the northeast, two bright stars of similar brightness.

Binocular Highlights

A: Sweep along the Milky Way from Altair to Antares to the False Cross to see many star clusters and nebulous areas – and an astounding number of faint glows and dark bays. **B:** Just north of the Southern Cross lies Omega Centauri, a cluster of over 1 million stars and easily visible to the unaided eye. **C:** Next to the Southern Cross is the Coalsack, a dark nebula showing few stars. **D:** The Eta Carinae nebula, the birthplace of stars, glows low in the southwest.

