

# Winter 2026

# Prairie Sky

Full Moon



December 4th  
January 3rd  
February 1st  
March 3rd

Last Quarter



December 11th  
January 10th  
February 9th  
March 11th

New Moon



December 19th  
January 18th  
February 17th  
March 18th

First Quarter



December 27th  
January 25th  
February 24th  
March 25th

## December

7th Mercury high in east,  
Jupiter and Moon high  
in south before sunrise  
13th-14th Geminid meteor shower  
21st Winter Solstice

## January

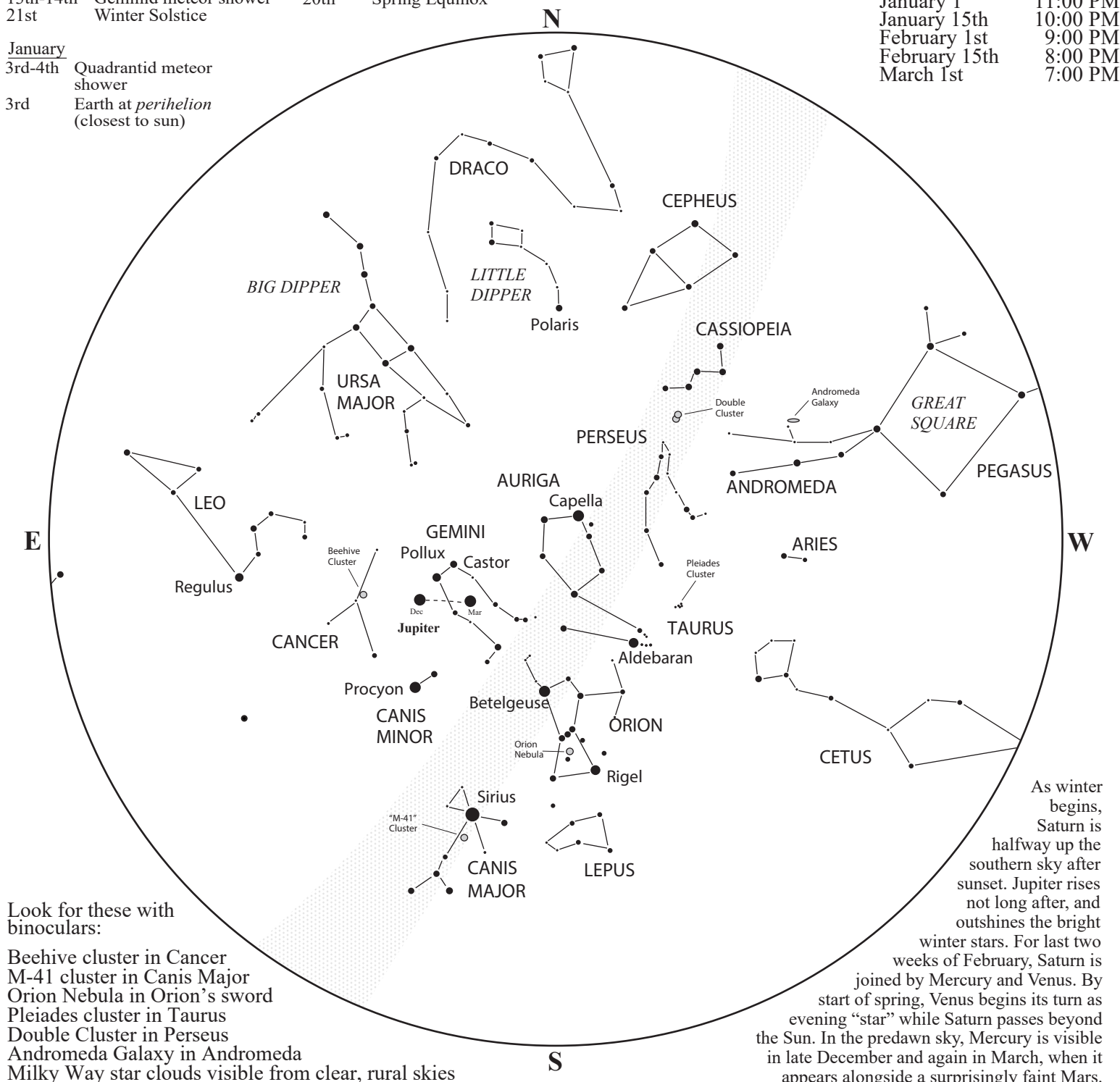
3rd-4th Quadrantid meteor  
shower  
3rd Earth at *perihelion*  
(closest to sun)

## March

8th Daylight Saving Time begins  
3rd \* Total Lunar Eclipse  
20th (\* *before sunrise* on the 3rd)  
Spring Equinox

To use this chart, hold it face-down, above your head,  
so that the directions match your surroundings.

December 15th 12:00 AM  
January 1 11:00 PM  
January 15th 10:00 PM  
February 1st 9:00 PM  
February 15th 8:00 PM  
March 1st 7:00 PM



Look for these with  
binoculars:

Beehive cluster in Cancer  
M-41 cluster in Canis Major  
Orion Nebula in Orion's sword  
Pleiades cluster in Taurus  
Double Cluster in Perseus  
Andromeda Galaxy in Andromeda  
Milky Way star clouds visible from clear, rural skies

As winter  
begins,  
Saturn is  
halfway up the  
southern sky after  
sunset. Jupiter rises  
not long after, and  
outshines the bright  
winter stars. For last two  
weeks of February, Saturn is  
joined by Mercury and Venus. By  
start of spring, Venus begins its turn as  
evening "star" while Saturn passes beyond  
the Sun. In the predawn sky, Mercury is visible  
in late December and again in March, when it  
appears alongside a surprisingly faint Mars.

For Planetarium schedules and more information about the night sky, call the "showline"  
at 217/351-2446, or check out our website at [planetarium.parkland.edu](http://planetarium.parkland.edu)



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