

2. Stars and Constellations in the Planetarium

Each lab class will have a session scheduled in the Rauch Planetarium to help you learn to identify constellations, bright stars, and the planets that are currently visible. It will help if you work on this with a star chart of your own, such as you might find in an astronomy book, or in one of these free resources:

<http://www.skymaps.com/> Monthly sky maps

<http://www.heavens-above.com/> Tonight's sky including artificial satellites

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/ataglance> Weekly guide and news

<http://www.stellarium.org/> Beautiful planetarium software for your computer

If want to pursue this and learn the night sky well, you should consider getting a planisphere “star finder” if one was not already required for the lecture class. This is a rotating map of the sky that will show you how it appears on any date and time. We will provide star charts to help you in the lab. You may install the free Stellarium software to review the appearance of the sky at home.

The table below lists the constellations and a few stars you should learn.

Summer	Fall
Aquila (<i>Altair</i>)	Andromeda
Corona Borealis	Cepheus
Cygnus (<i>Deneb</i>)	Cassiopeia
Draco	Pegasus
Hercules	Perseus (<i>Algol</i>)
Lyra (<i>Vega</i>)	
Sagittarius	
Scorpius (<i>Antares</i>)	

Winter	Spring
Auriga (<i>Capella</i>)	Bootes (<i>Arcturus</i>)
Canis Major (<i>Sirius</i>)	Cancer
Canis Minor (<i>Procyon</i>)	Leo (<i>Regulus</i>)
Gemini	Virgo (<i>Spica</i>)
Orion (<i>Betelgeuse and Rigel</i>)	Ursa Major (<i>pointer stars</i>)
Taurus (<i>Aldebaran and the Pleiades</i>)	Ursa Minor (<i>Polaris</i>)