



What's in the Sky

June 2023

June 3: Full Moon

This month's Moon is called the Strawberry Moon and it is a supermoon. Begin looking toward the East around 8:30pm and you should see the Moon beginning to rise on the horizon. It will be golden, not the color of strawberries. This Moon gets its name from Native American tribes who named it the Strawberry Moon because it marked the ripening of strawberries ready to be picked.

June 18: New Moon

This is the best time to look at dark sky objects. Last month a new supernova was discovered in a popular dark sky target called the Pinwheel galaxy, aka M101. A supernova is a dramatic explosion of a massive star. This new supernova is in one of the arms of the Pinwheel Galaxy. The explosion won't impact our planet because it is 21 million light-years away. It was discovered by an amateur astronomer, Koichi Itagaki, on May 19, 2023. You may be able to see it with a backyard telescope for the next few months. It is near the end of the handle of the Big Dipper. If you see a star that blinks in and out in the upper arm of this galaxy, that's it.

Moon Terms: Waxing and Wanning. Waxing means the Moon is on the way to being full and waning means it is on the way to being new.

June 21: Solstice

In the Northern Hemisphere the 21st marks the first day of summer and the longest day of 2023.

Planets

June 1: Jupiter rises in the predawn sky around 4:15am. Saturn rises in the early morning sky approximately 1:45am. Jupiter and Saturn will continue to rise earlier with each day throughout the month. Venus will end the month of June at maximum brightness on the 30th and continue to glow brightly through July 20.

June 21: About 40 minutes after sunset, Venus, Mars, and the crescent Moon will form a lovely conjunction. First look for the crescent Moon. Venus will be to the moon's left and very bright.

June 22: Between 9:00 and 10:00pm the Moon, Venus and Mars will form another spectacular conjunction. This time dim Mars will hover halfway between the crescent Moon and Venus.