

## September Skies

Venus and Jupiter and Jupiter will continue their close association in the early evening hours. On September 1<sup>st</sup> they will only be 1.2 degrees apart! As the month progresses, Venus will maintain its altitude in the sky while moving noticeably southward. Jupiter, on the other hand, will continue its westward migration and be lost in the glow of sunset by the end of the month.

Saturn continues to rise earlier each morning and will rise as early as 2 AM by the end of the month. During the middle of the month it will be between 1 to 2 degrees southwest of the famous Beehive Cluster. During this time both objects can be seen in the same field of view with either binoculars or a wide field telescope.

Mercury will put in a brief appearance in the early morning during the first week of September. The best day for viewing will be the 4<sup>th</sup>. It will rise about one hour before sunrise about one degree south of the bright star Regulus in the constellation of Leo, The Lion.

Mars is setting the stage for its spectacular opposition at the end of October. During September Mars will double in brightness to a very bright magnitude of -1.7 by the end of the month, rising just before 9 PM local time. Surface features on the planet should be easily viewable through small telescopes.

The moon will be new on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, first quarter on the 11<sup>th</sup>, full on the 17<sup>th</sup> and last quarter on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Enchanted Skies Star Party will be held from October 4<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>. This year it will feature a night of observing at 10,000 ft on Magdalena Ridge and most of the lecture series will take place at our brand new astronomy resource building at the Etscorn Campus Observatory. This is a wonderful new facility that will greatly improve the star party's venue. Make your plans now to attend by contacting the City of Socorro Visitors and Tourism Department at 835-0424.

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