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Tel.: (+264) 61 225 372

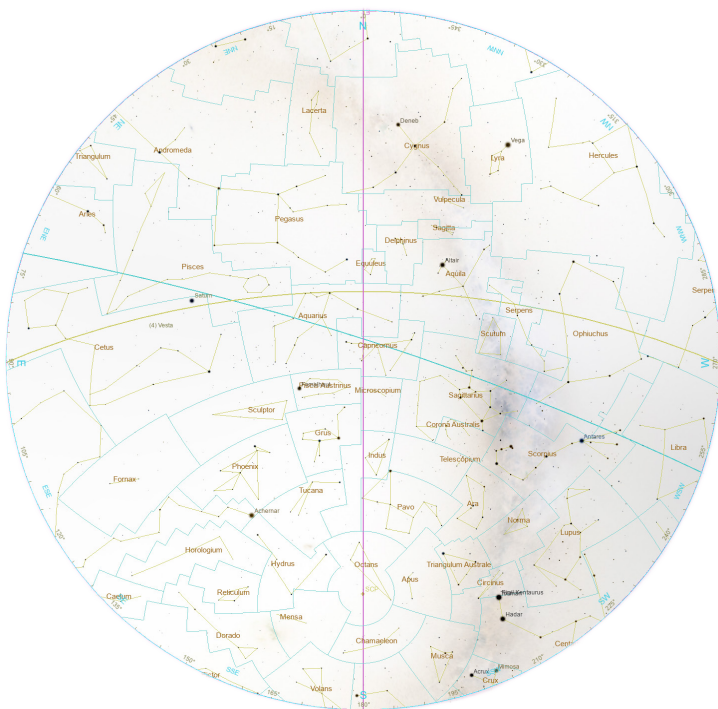
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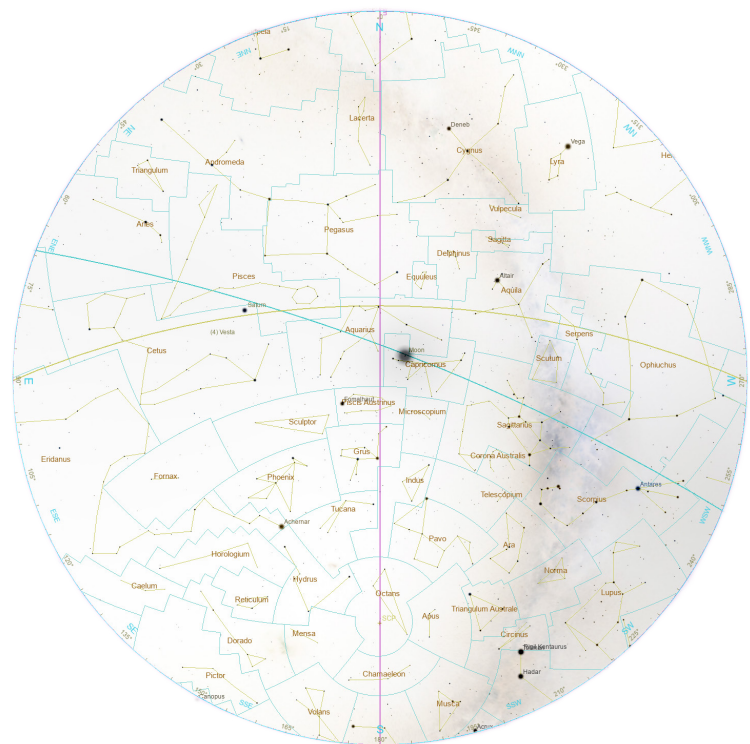
110 Robert Mugave Ave, Windhoek

Astro News October 2026

2026 by Lutz von Dewitz for the Namibia Scientific Society

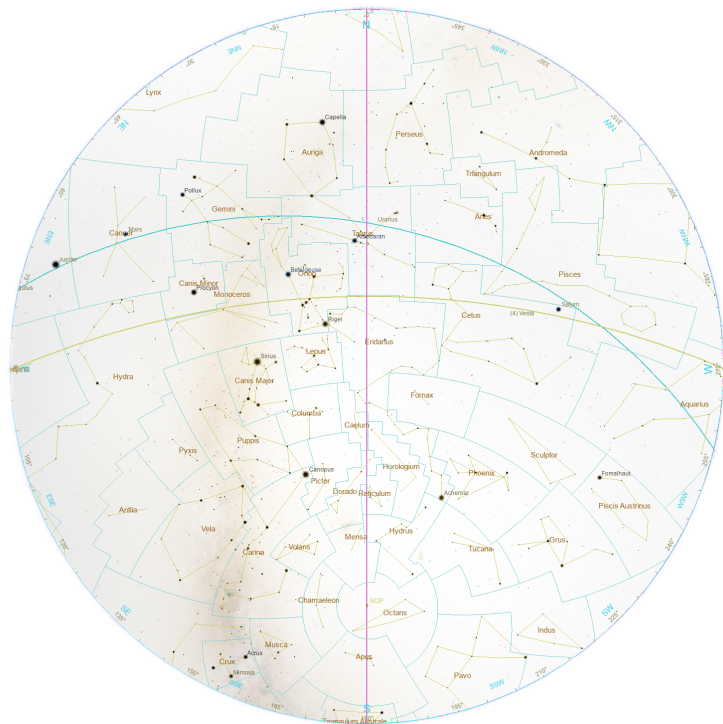


Skychart at Windhoek on 10 October 2026
at 21h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)

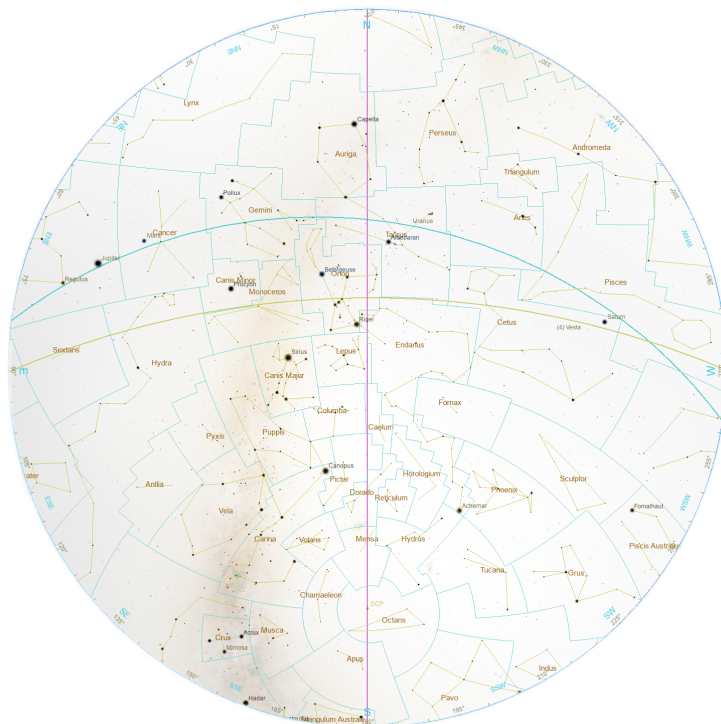


Skychart at Windhoek on 20 October 2026
at 21h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)

Ecliptic Line – Celestial Equator – Meridian – Constellation Borders / SCP = Southern Celestial Pole – Z = Zenith



Skychart at Windhoek on 10 October 2026
at 04h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)



Skychart at Windhoek on 20 October 2026
at 04h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)

Ecliptic Line – Celestial Equator – Meridian – Constellation Borders / SCP = Southern Celestial Pole – Z = Zenith

Moon Phases

03 Oct 2026	– Last Quarter
10 Oct 2026	– New Moon
18 Oct 2026	– First Quarter
26 Oct 2026	– Full Moon

Solar System

Planet Visibility	Rise	Culm.	Set
Mercury	07:29	14:06	20:42
Venus	06:39	13:17	19:55
Mars	02:35	08:04	13:33
Jupiter	03:15	08:52	14:30
Saturn	17:55	23:55	05:55

Planets in gray are not visible

Above Times accurate for 15 October 2026 and CAT

Mercury is emerging into the evening sky as it approaches greatest eastern elongation. From Namibia, it becomes visible around 19:15 as dusk gives way to darkness, then sinks towards the horizon and sets 1 hour 40 minutes after the Sun. Mercury reaches its highest point during its September–October 2026 evening apparition on 12 October, shining brightly at magnitude -0.1 . Observation is reasonably favourable, with the planet reaching a peak altitude of 23° above the horizon at sunset on 13 October 2026.

Venus is approaching inferior solar conjunction, when it will pass in front of the Sun. From Windhoek, it becomes visible around 19:09 as dusk fades, then sinks towards the horizon and sets at 19:55, one hour after the Sun.

Mars is visible in the dawn sky, rising at 02:35 and reaching an altitude of 36° above the north-eastern horizon before fading from view as dawn breaks.

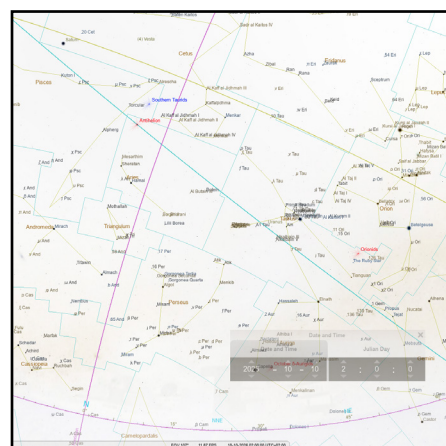
Jupiter is also visible before dawn, rising at 03:15 and climbing to 34° above the north-eastern horizon before fading in the morning light.

Saturn becomes visible in the evening sky at around 19:20 when it is 18° above your eastern horizon. It will then reach its highest point in the sky at midnight. It will continue to be observable until around 05:00, when it sinks below 10° above your western horizon.

Saturn reaches opposition on 4 October, offering the best viewing conditions as it remains visible for much of the night in the constellation Cetus. Opposition occurs when a planet appears opposite the Sun in the sky. For planets orbiting farther from the Sun than Earth, such as Saturn, this alignment happens as Earth passes between the Sun and the planet, bringing the two planets to their closest approach, known as perigee.

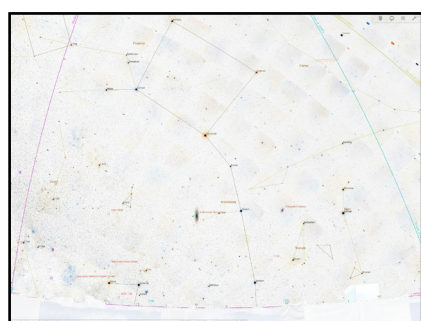
Other Occurrences:

The **Southern Taurid meteor shower** is expected to peak on 10 October 2026, with the best views likely after the radiant rises.



Southern Taurid meteors may be visible from 20:00, once the radiant in constellation Cetus rises above the horizon. Visibility should improve as the radiant climbs, with the best display expected around 02:00, when it reaches its highest point. The shower will remain active until

dawn begins at about 05:59.



The **Andromeda Galaxy M31** which has a magnitude of 3.4 will be well positioned in the evening sky over the coming weeks. On 2 October, it will reach its highest point at around local midnight, culminating four minutes

earlier on each subsequent evening.

From Namibia, it is visible from 22:17 to 03:26. It becomes observable at about 22:17, when it rises to 16° above the north-eastern horizon, and reaches its highest point at 00:51, 26° above the northern horizon. At around 03:26, it drops below 16° above the north-western horizon and is no longer visible.

Finding and Viewing the Andromeda Galaxy

Choose an unobstructed northern view as Andromeda sits low in Namibia's northern sky, so mountains, trees, or buildings can easily hide it.

Navigate by nearby stars

- Locate the Great Square of Pegasus in the northern sky.
- Begin at Alpheratz, the star at the square's upper-right corner.
- Follow Andromeda's chain of stars to Mirach.
- Look slightly above and left of Mirach.

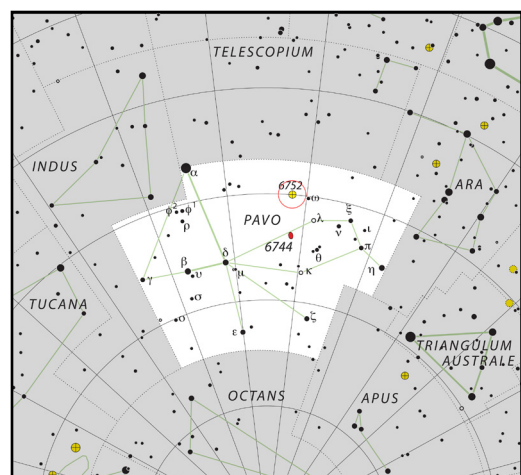
What you will see

- With the naked eye: Under exceptionally dark Namibian skies, such as those in the NamibRand Nature Reserve, Andromeda appears as a faint, elongated haze or milky smudge.
- With binoculars or a small telescope: Even basic binoculars show its bright central core within a diffuse, oval disc.

Constellation of the Month

Pavo Constellation

Compiled by Lutz von Dewitz



Pavo constellation lies in the southern sky. Its name means "the peacock" in Latin.

The constellation was introduced by the Dutch astronomer Petrus Plancius from the observations of Dutch navigators Frederick de Hout-

man and Pieter Dirkszoon Keyser in the late 16th century. Pavo was first depicted in 1598 on Plancius' globe and first appeared in a star atlas in 1603, in Johann Bayer's Uranometria and belongs to the Johann Bayer family of constellations, along with Apus, Chamaeleon, Dorado, Grus, Hydrus, Indus, Musca, Phoenix, Tucana and Volans..

In Australia, a part of the constellation is known as "the Saucepan" and used as a guide to finding the south but this is seemingly more complicated than using the Southern Cross.

Pavo contains five stars with confirmed planets and has no Messier objects. The constellation is believed to represent the Java green peacock which the Dutch navigators de Houtman and Keyser probably encountered on their journey to the East Indies.



In Greek mythology, the peacock was Hera's sacred bird. The goddess drove through the air in a chariot drawn by peacocks. There is a myth specifically associated with the peacock's tail and how it came to have eyes on it. When Zeus fell in love with Io, a nymph and priestess of Hera in Argos, he turned her into a cow to hide her from Hera when

the goddess almost caught the two. Hera was suspicious nonetheless and tasked the giant Argus with keeping an eye on the heifer. Argus had a hundred eyes, which made him an excellent guard. Argus tied Io to an olive tree in Nemea, and Zeus dispatched Hermes to free the nymph from the giant. Hermes obliged and came to Earth disguised as a shepherd. He spent a day telling Argus stories and playing reed pipes until all of Argus' eyes became tired. When the giant fell asleep, Hermes hit him with a stone. To honour Argus' memory, Hera placed his eyes on her sacred bird's tail.



Pavo's brightest star is Peacock, or Alpha Pavonis, near the border with Telescopium. This blue-white B2 IV subgiant has an apparent magnitude of 1.94 and lies about 179 light-years from Earth. Peacock has six times the Sun's mass and 5-6 times the solar radius. It is 2,200 times

more luminous than the Sun.

It is a spectroscopic binary with an orbital period of 11.753 days. Because its two stars cannot be resolved separately, the companion's stellar classification remains unknown.

Her Majesty's Nautical Almanac Office named the star Pea-

cock in the late 1930s. Now part of the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, HMNAO produces astronomical data and publishes the Nautical Almanac. The name was assigned to Alpha Pavonis while the office was compiling the Air Almanac, a Royal Air Force navigation guide featuring 57 bright stars. At the time, only Alpha Pavonis and Epsilon Carinae in Carina lacked proper names. Because the RAF required every listed star to be named, Alpha Pavonis became Peacock, after its constellation, while Epsilon Carinae was named Avior.

Great Peacock Globular – NGC 6752 is a globular cluster. It is the third brightest globular star cluster in the night sky, fainter only than 47 Tucanae (NGC 104) in the constellation Tucana and Omega Centauri (NGC 5139) in Centaurus.



Star cluster NGC 6752

Compiled by Lutz von Dewitz

Credits

SkyChart: Cartes du Ciel / Stellarium / Wikipedia

Data / Photos: <https://in-the-sky.org> / ASSA Sky Guide 2026, Wikipedia, constellationdirectory.org, constellation-guide.com / NASA, STScI, WikiSky, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4576771>, ESA-Hubble