



Namibia  
Scientific  
Society

*Science for Society*

**Tel.: (+264) 61 225 372**

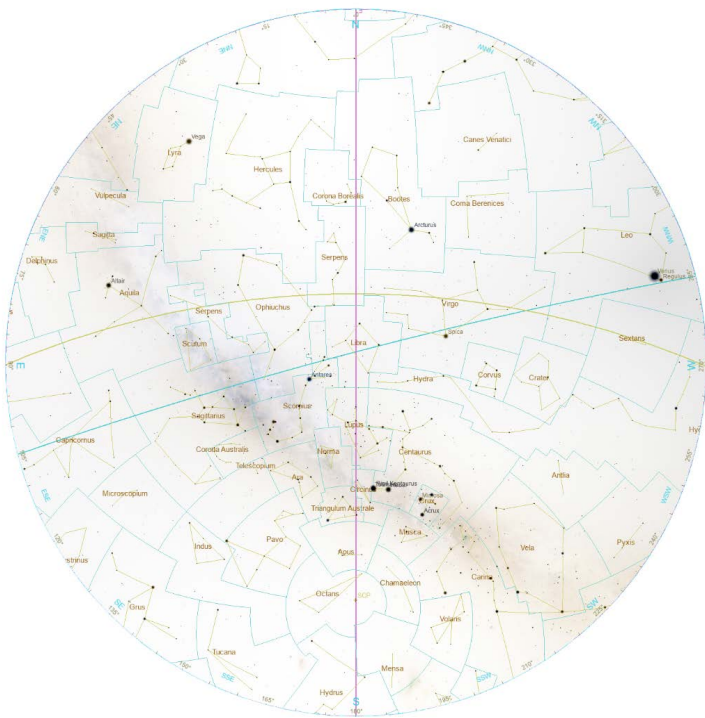
**email: [info@namscience.com](mailto:info@namscience.com)**

**[www.namscience.com](http://www.namscience.com)**

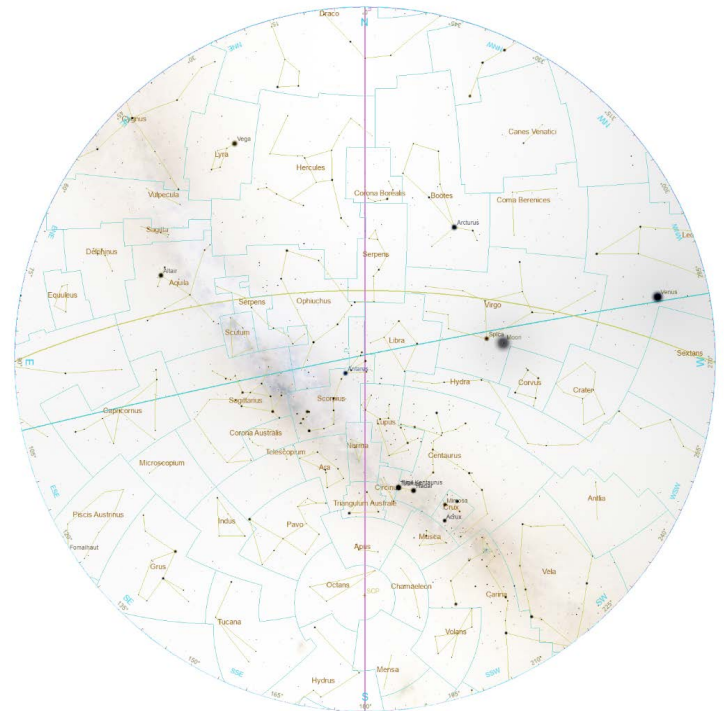
**110 Robert Mugave Ave, Windhoek**

## Astro News July 2026

2026 by Lutz von Dewitz for the Namibia Scientific Society

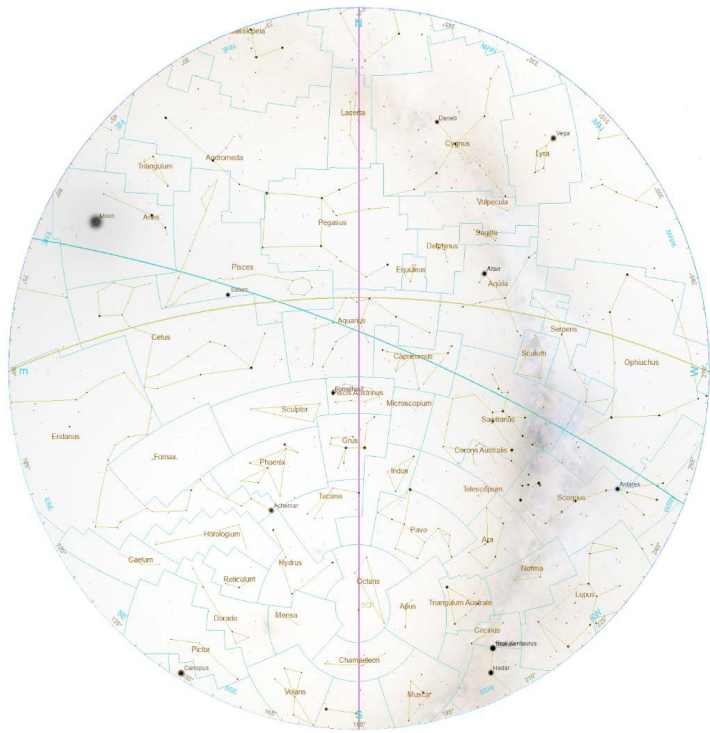


Skychart at Windhoek on 10 July 2026  
at 21h00 (GMT + 2h Central African Time)

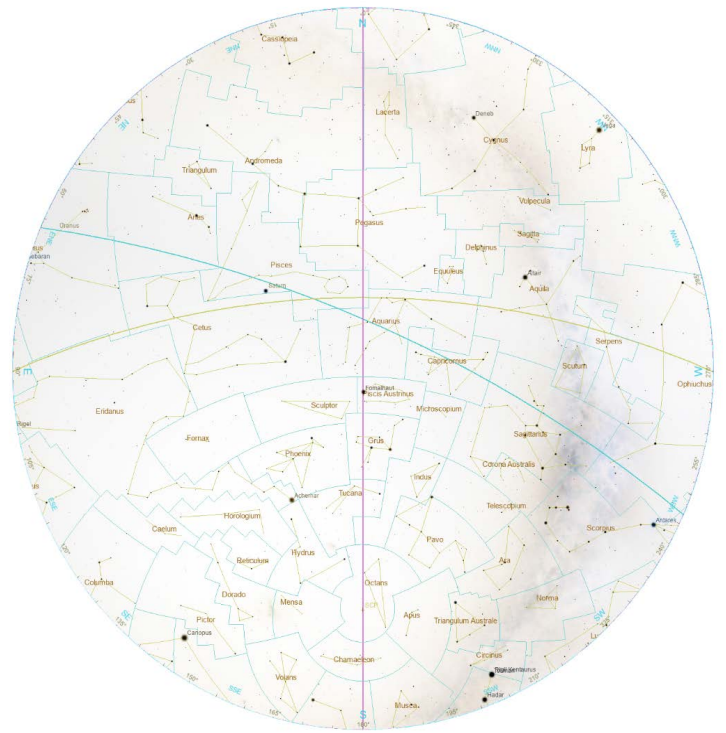


Skychart at Windhoek on 20 July 2026  
at 21h00 (GMT + 2h Central African Time)

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



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



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

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

### Moon Phases

- 30 June 2026 - Full Moon
- 07 July 2026 - Last Quarter
- 14 July 2026 - New Moon
- 21 July 2026 - First Quarter
- 29 July 2026 - Full Moon

### Solar System

Planet Visibility	Rise	Culm.	Set
Mercury	07:05	12:38	18:11
Venus	10:03	15:48	21:33
Mars	04:32	09:56	15:20
Jupiter	08:11	13:39	19:07
Saturn	00:18	06:15	12:12

*Planets in gray are not visible*

**Above Times accurate for 15 July 2026 and CAT**

**Mercury** will pass in front of the Sun at inferior solar conjunction in the middle of July. It will then rise in the morning but will be too close to the sun to observe.

**Venus** is still emerging into the evening sky. It will become visible at around 18:40 about 36° above your north-western horizon as dusk fades to darkness, setting after the Sun at 21:30. Venus will soon pass behind the Sun.

**Mars** recently passed behind the Sun at solar conjunction. From Namibia, it is visible in the dawn sky, rising at 05:00 and climbing to an altitude of 21° above the north-eastern horizon before fading from view as dawn breaks.

**Jupiter** will, in the beginning of July, still become visible at around 18:33 above your north-western horizon as dusk fades to darkness. In mid-July it will disappear behind the sun and reach apogee, its farthest point from Earth, at a distance of 6.30 AU on 30 July. As a result, it will appear at its smallest and faintest. In practice, however, it will be too close to the Sun to observe.

**Saturn** is visible in the night sky, rising at shortly after 02:00 and reaching an altitude of 56° above the north-eastern horizon before fading from view as dawn breaks at around 06:55.

## Other Occurrences:

**Komet 10P/Tempel** is visible in the morning sky, becoming accessible in the constellation Capricornus around 23:30, when it reaches an altitude of 21° above your eastern horizon. It will then reach its highest point in the sky at 04:02, 76° above your northern horizon. It should be visible under a dark sky with binoculars from end of July when it is predicted to reach Mag 7. at perihelion.

**The Earth at aphelion.** The Earth reaches aphelion, its farthest point from the Sun, on 6 Jul 2026 at a distance of 1.0166 AU. This annual change in distance is caused by Earth's slightly elliptical orbit, which makes the planet about 3% farther from the Sun at aphelion than at perihelion. In practice, however, the difference is small because Earth's orbit is close to circular. Perihelion or its closest point to the sun occurs every year around 3 to 5 January.

**Close approach of the Moon and Saturn** On 7 July, the 22-day-old Moon and Saturn will pass within 5°58' of each other. The pair will become visible in the morning sky around 01:40, at an altitude of 10° above the eastern horizon. They will reach their highest point at 06:46, 64° above the northern horizon, and fade into dawn twilight around 07:00, when they will still be 63° high. The Moon will shine at magnitude -11.9 and Saturn at magnitude 0.5.

Both will appear in the constellation Pisces. The Moon and Saturn will be too far apart to fit in the same telescope or binocular field of view, but both will be easily visible to the naked eye.

**New Moon & Peak Milky Way Season** The New Moon on 14 July is not visible, but its absence creates the best naked-eye observing window of the month. During Namibia's mid-winter nights, the Milky Way's core in Sagittarius passes almost directly overhead. Under these dark, moonless skies, observers can enjoy striking, high-contrast views of the galactic centre's dense star fields and dark dust lanes.

**The Southern  $\delta$ -Aquariid meteor shower** is active from 12 July to 23 August and will peak around 30 July. Throughout this period, meteors may be seen whenever the shower's radiant in Aquarius is above the horizon. Rates generally improve as the radiant climbs higher in the sky.

From Namibia, the shower becomes visible each night from about 20:30, when the radiant rises above the eastern horizon, and remains observable until dawn at around 07:00. The best viewing is likely around 03:00 CAT, when the radiant is highest in the sky. The shower's parent body is comet P/2008 Y12 (SOHO).

---

## Constellation of the Month

### Corona Borealis

Compiled by Lutz von Dewitz



Corona Borealis is a small but distinctive constellation in the northern sky. Its Latin name means "Northern Crown." Only four of its stars are brighter than magnitude 3.0. The Greek astronomer Ptolemy first catalogued the constellation in the 2nd century, when it was known simply as Corona.

The Greeks regarded its southern counterpart, Corona Australis, as a wreath.

Located between Boötes and Hercules, Corona Borealis is identified in Greek mythology as the crown of Ariadne, daughter of King Minos, who helped Theseus defeat the Minotaur and escape the labyrinth. In Celtic tradition, it is known as Caer Arianrhod, or the Castle of Arianrhod, home of the mythical Lady Arianrhod. Corona Borealis is home to the famous Blaze Star, T Coronae Borealis, a recurrent nova. Its neighbouring constellations are Boötes, Hercules, and Serpens Caput.

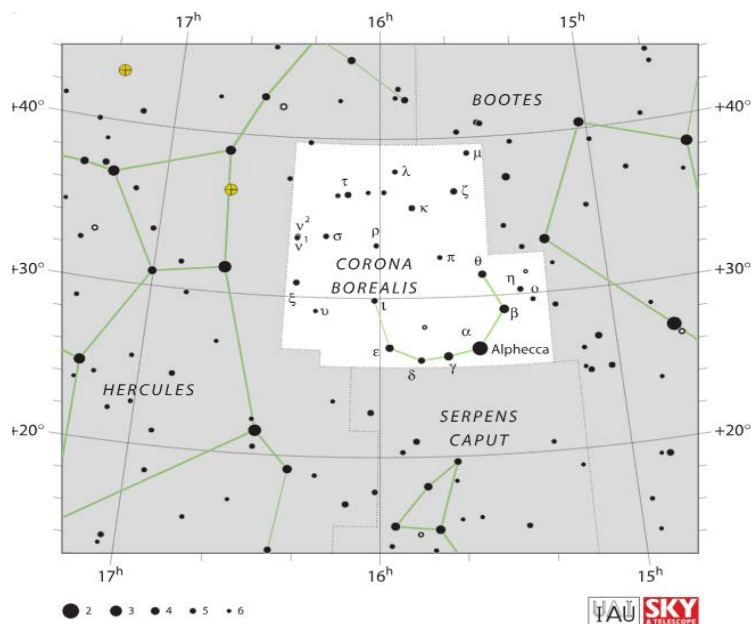
In English, Corona Borealis is called the Northern Crown. It has four known exoplanet-hosting stars and no Messier objects. Its brightest star is Alphecca, also known as Gemma; other named stars in the constellation include Blaze Star, Kamui, Moldoveanu, and Nusakan.

Myth - Corona Borealis is linked to Princess Ariadne of Crete, who helped Theseus defeat the Minotaur in Daedalus's labyrinth. Later, Ariadne married Dionysus, and the constellation's ring of stars is said to represent the crown Hephaestus made for her wedding.

Minos hid the creature in a labyrinth so complex that no one could escape.

When Theseus was sent into the labyrinth, Ariadne fell in love with him and, on Daedalus's advice, gave him a ball of thread so he could find his way out after killing the Minotaur. He agreed to take her with him and escaped by following the thread.

Ariadne left Crete with Theseus, but he abandoned her on Naxos. Dionysus later found and married her. After the wedding, Ariadne cast her crown into the sky, where it became Corona Borealis; its brightest star, Gemma, takes its name from the Latin word for "jewel."



The Arabs know the constellation as "the poor people's bowl" or Alphecca, which means "broken up." The name Alphecca was later given to the constellation's brightest star, Alpha Coronae Borealis.

The Cheyenne called the constellation the Camp Circle because its shape was similar to the way they arranged their camps, in a semi-circle. In Australia, Corona Borealis is known as Woomera, the Boomerang, and the Welsh associate it with the castle of Lady Arianrhod, the Welsh goddess who gave birth to two sons through magical means.

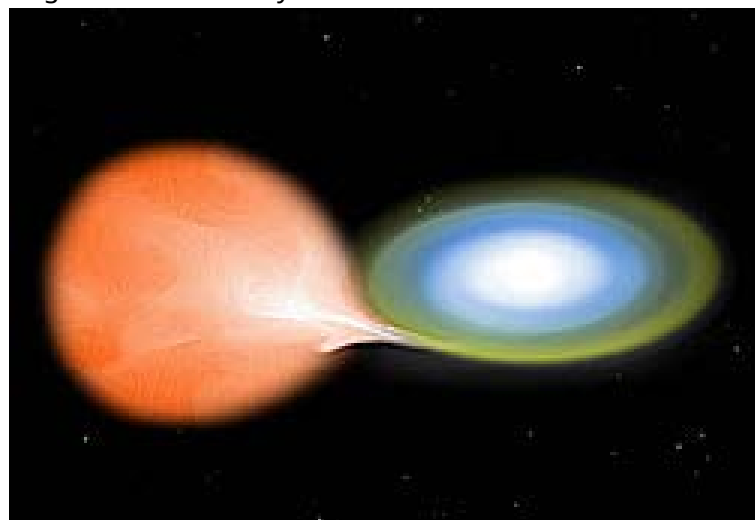
**Corona Borealis stars** - Alphecca (Gemma) –  $\alpha$  Coronae Borealis Alpha Coronae Borealis, the brightest of the seven stars in Ariadne's crown, is an eclipsing binary with a 17.36-

period. Its apparent magnitude varies from 2.21 to 2.32, and it lies about 75 light-years away.

The primary star is a white A0V main-sequence star with excess infrared emission, suggesting a substantial disc of dust and material and possibly a planetary or protoplanetary system. Its companion is a young yellow main-sequence star of spectral class G5.

**T Coronae Borealis** - is a recurrent nova and binary star system about 3,000 light-years away in Corona Borealis. Although its official proper name is Blaze Star, the variable-star designation T Coronae Borealis is more commonly used in astronomy. The system erupted in 1866, when John Birmingham observed it in outburst, though it had earlier been recorded at about 10th magnitude in its quiet state. It may also have been seen in 1217 and 1787. Another outburst was independently reported in February 1946 by A. S. Kamenchuk, Michael Woodman, and N. F. H. Knight. These eruptions led astronomers to suggest a roughly 80-year cycle, with the next nova expected before 2027.

The system consists of a cool red giant and a smaller hot white dwarf. The red giant transfers material to the white dwarf, which is surrounded by an accretion disc and embedded in dense gas from the giant. In its quiet state, the red giant dominates visible light, making the system appear as an M3 giant, while the white dwarf contributes mainly ultraviolet emission. During outbursts (nova), mass transfer increases sharply, the white dwarf expands, and the system brightens dramatically.



*Artist's impression of the scenario with a red giant feeding the accretion disk of a white dwarf.*

**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](https://constellationdirectory.org/), [constellation-guide.com](https://constellation-guide.com/) / NASA, STScI, WikiSky, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4576771>, ESA-Hubble