Namibia
Scientific
Society
Science for Society

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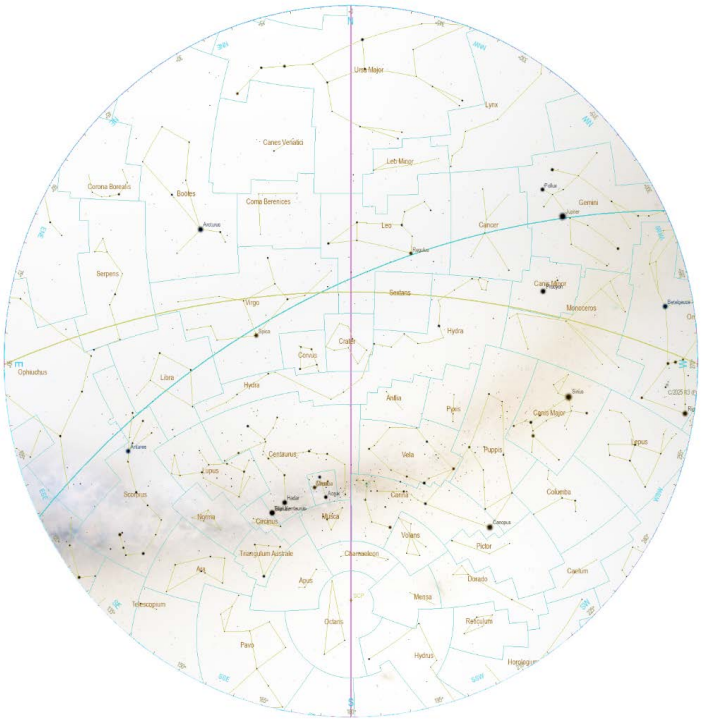
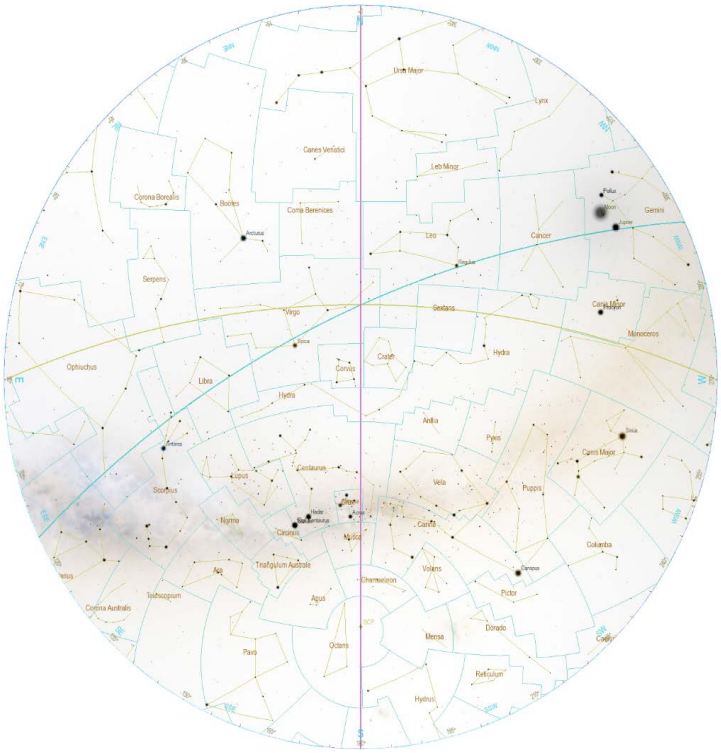
# Astro News May 2026

**2026 by Lutz von Dewitz for the Namibia Scientific Society**

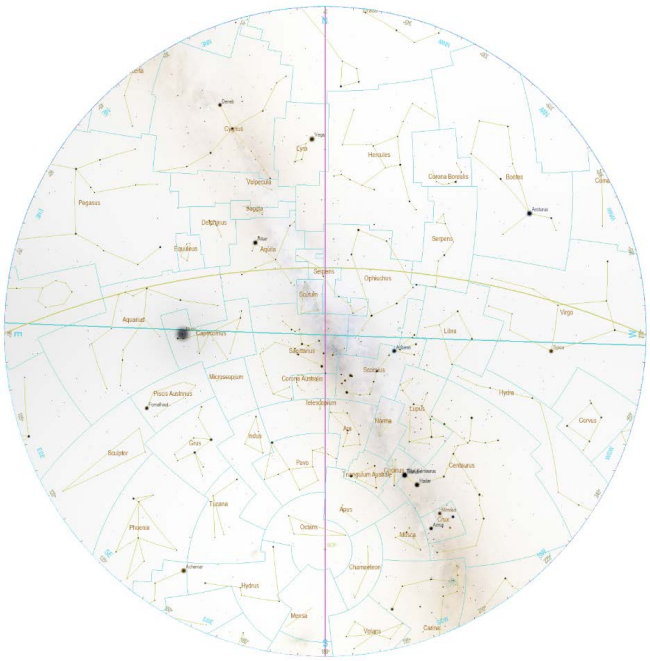


Skychart at Windhoek on 10 May 2026
at 21h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)



Skychart at Windhoek on 20 May 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 May 2026
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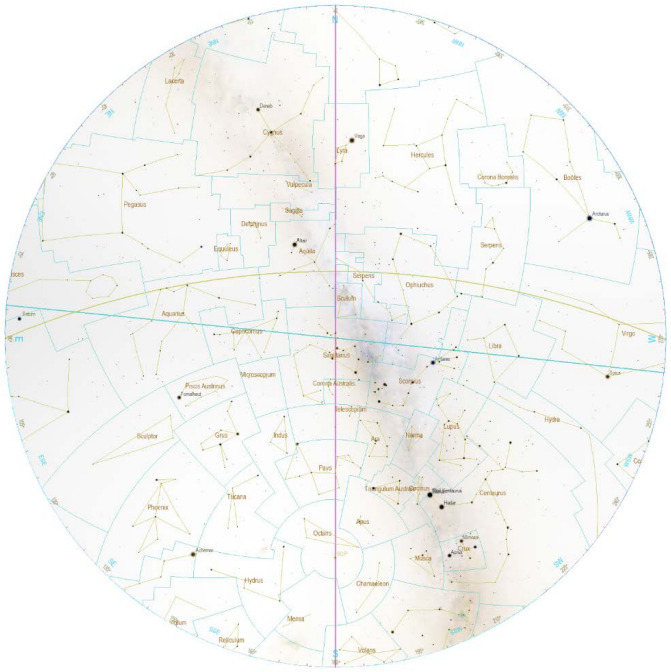

Skychart at Windhoek on 20 May 2026
at 04h00 (GMT + 2hH Central African Time)

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

**Moon Phases**
01 May 2026 - Full Moon
09 May 2026 - Last Quarter
16 May 2026 - New Moon
23 May 2026 - First Quarter
**31 May 2026 - Blue Moon**

**Solar System**

| Planet Visibility | Rise | Culm. | Set |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mercury | 07:16 | 12:45 | 18:15 |
| Venus | 09:36 | 14:55 | 20:13 |
| Mars | 05:12 | 10:59 | 16:45 |
| Jupiter | 11:24 | 16:47 | 22:11 |
| Saturn | 04:01 | 10:00 | 15:59 |

*Planets in gray are not visible*
**Above Times accurate for 15 May 2026**

Mercury will soon pass behind the Sun. From Windhoek, it is not readily observable since it is very close to the Sun, at a separation of only 0° from it.

Venus will become visible at around 18:33 above the north-western horizon, as dusk fades to darkness. It will then sink towards the horizon, setting at 20:00.

Mars visible in the dawn sky, rising at 05:12 and reaching an altitude of 18° above the eastern horizon before fading from view as dawn breaks at around 06:39.will become.

Jupiter is currently an early evening object. From Namibia, it is visible in the evening sky, becoming accessible around 18:33, 42° above your north-westerm horizon. It will sset in the West at around 22:00.

Saturn recently passed behind the Sun at solar conjunction. It is visible in the dawn sky, rising at 04:00. and reaching an altitude of 35° above the eastern horizon before fading from view as dawn breaks at around 06:43.

Other Occurrences:

## Blue Moon

This phenomenon is commonly referred to as a Blue Moon will be occur on Sunday 31 May 2026 at 10:45 CAT it will be the second full moon within the same month. The use of the term “blue moon” in this context first appeared in the March 1946 issue of Sky & Telescope magazine. In that issue, it was incorrectly stated that calling the second full moon in a month a “blue moon” was an established tradition. This was a new interpretation of the term.
Previously, the Farmers’ Almanac had used the expression

*The picture is hypothetical*

## Eta Aquariid meteor shower

The Eta Aquariid meteor shower was the first to be linked to Halley’s comet and is usually two to three times stronger than the October Orionids. The Eta Aquariids are the third strongest annual meteor shower observable at Earth and occur at the descending node of Halley’s comet. The meteor shower will be active up to 28 May, producing its peak rate of meteors around 6 May.

During this period, observation of η-Aquariid meteors is possible whenever the shower’s radiant point, located in the constellation Aquarius, is above the horizon. The quantity of observable meteors increases as the radiant climbs higher in the sky.

In Namibia, the shower becomes visible from approximately 02:23 local time each night, when the radiant emerges above the eastern horizon, and continues to be active until dawn at around 06:46.

The radiant point reaches its highest elevation after sunrise, at about 08:00 CAT; therefore, optimal meteor displays are generally observed shortly before dawn, when the radiant is near its peak.

At this stage, Earth’s rotation positions Windhoek favorably toward the incoming meteors, enhancing the rate of meteors descending vertically and producing shorter trails proximal to the radiant point.

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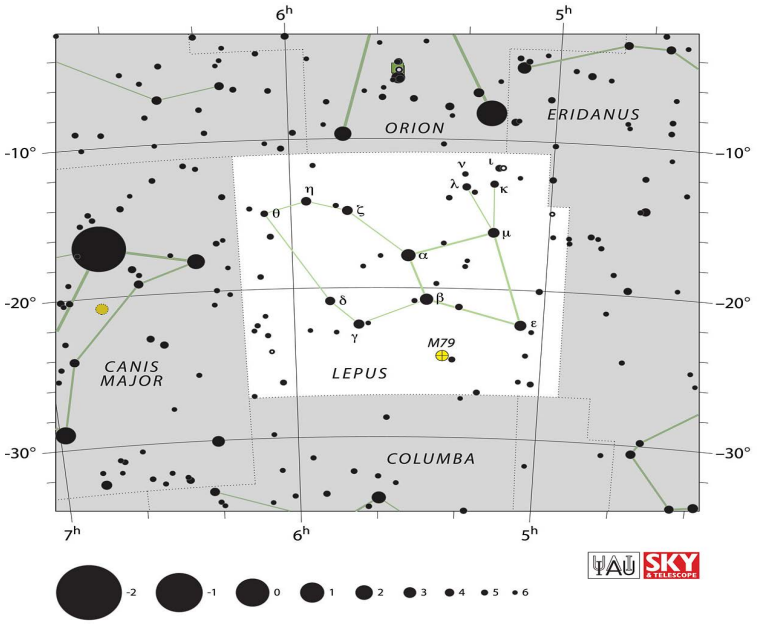
**Constellation of the Month**

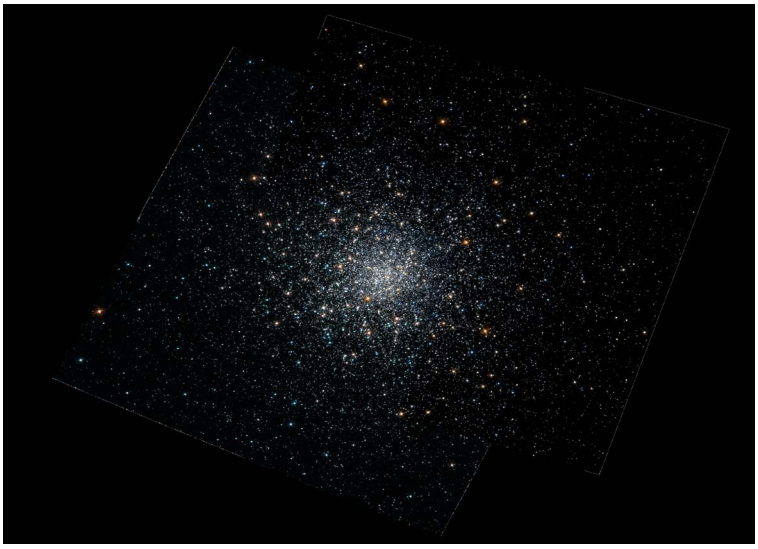
## Lepus

Lepus lies immediately south of Orion. It is the 51st constellation in size, occupying an area of 290 square degrees. The neighboring constellations are Caelum, Canis Major, Columba, Eridanus, Monoceros and Orion.

The name ‘Lepus’ comes from the Latin word for hare. In mythology, the hare depicted in the constellation is often believed to be pursued by Orion’s two dogs, Canis Major and Canis Minor. Interestingly, these dogs rise and set about an hour after Lepus. Despite these stories, the hare is not usually shown fleeing; instead, it is typically positioned at the hunter’s feet.



Lepus is considered a relatively faint constellation. Its brightest star, Arneb, has a third magnitude and its name is derived from Arabic, meaning ‘hare’. Arneb is a white supergiant with a magnitude of 2.6 and is located 1,300 light-years from Earth. Beta Leporis, also known as Nihal, is a yellow giant star with a magnitude of 2.8, situated 159 light-years away. Gamma Leporis is a double star visible through binoculars, consisting of a yellow primary star (magnitude 3.6, 29 light-years away) and an orange secondary star (magnitude 6.2).



Its only Messier object is the eighth-magnitude globular cluster M79 discovered by Pierre Méchain in 1780. Visible best in January with an apparent magnitude of 8, its dense core appears as a fuzzy patch through binoculars; a medium-sized telescope is needed to see individual stars and out-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**Compiled by Lutz von Dewitz**

Credits:
SkyChart: Cartes du Ciel / Stellarium / Wikipedia
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