

Sky Highlights for February

February 1	Venus and Saturn $_^\circ$ apart in morning sky
February 6	New Moon Mercury in inferior conjunction
February 10	Neptune in conjunction
February 13	First quarter moon
February 19	Moon occults the Beehive Cluster (M44) in Cancer
February 20	Full Moon February's full moon is called the Snow or Hunger Moon. Total lunar eclipse for North America (see below *)
February 29	Last quarter moon

Venus— High up in the southeast before sunrise, magnitude -4.0. Dropping nearer the sun throughout the month

Mars— A beautiful golden magnitude -0.2 in Taurus, and fading fast

Saturn— In Leo, magnitude 0.2, just east of Regulus. Rings narrowing, tilted less than 10° .

Jupiter— Rises about 2 hours before the sun, at magnitude -2

*** Total Lunar Eclipse**

On the night of February 20-21, a total lunar eclipse will be visible across North America. The Moon will be situated between the bright star Regulus in Leo and the planet Saturn.

Eclipse Times (February 20 CDT)

7:43 PM	Moon enters penumbra; partial eclipse begins
9:00 PM	Moon enters umbra; totality begins
9:52 PM	Moon exit umbra; totality ends
11:09 PM	Moon exits penumbra; partial eclipse ends

Sky Highlights for March

March 3	Mercury at greatest western elongation
March 7	New Moon
March 8	Uranus at conjunction
March 10	Moon at perigee (closest point to Earth)
March 13	First quarter moon
March 21	Full Moon. March's full moon is called the Sap or Crow Moon.
March 26	Moon at apogee (furthest point from Earth)
March 29	Last quarter moon

Mercury and Venus— Both low in the southeast before sunrise. Mercury is heading out of the sun's glare, while Venus is dropping closer to it.

Mars— Moves from Taurus into Gemini. It's getting smaller and dimmer as Earth speeds ahead and away from it.

Jupiter— Rising earlier in the morning sky at magnitude -2, 30° to the upper right of Venus.

Saturn—Magnitude +0.3, near Regulus in Leo, and visible all night. The shadow of the planet against the rings begins to be visible at higher magnification. The shadow will become more obvious over the coming weeks.

Did you know...

...that Saturn's rings will be edge-on in 2009 for the first time in 14 years?