

What's Up: March 2024 (compiled by Barry & Colin)

Note: This second month trial is compiled from Night Sky sections in Astronomy Now, Sky & Telescope, Sky at Night. There may be more specialist alerts (please advise). What do you want to see included? Input welcome from all members (with acknowledgement).

Object	Date - Time	Event
Galaxy Season starts!	March onwards	NGC 2903, spiral in Leo, plus others! Pinwheel (M101), spiral in UMa (& last year's supernova) Bodes (M81)/Cigar (M82), a great pair M108, inclined spiral near Merak (β UMa) M109, spiral near Phaeda (γ UMa)
Moon phases	March	Last Q 3 rd , New 10 th , First Q 17 th , Full 25 th
Moon/Mars conjunction	8 th March, 05:00UTC	Moon (7% illuminated) passes 3° S of Mars
Moon/Venus conjunction	8 th March, 17:00UTC	Moon (4% illuminated) passes 3.1° S of Venus
Moon/Jupiter conjunction	14 th March, 01:03UTC	
Mercury	10 th March, early evening	Near Pisces. Low and to W 40min after sunset. Look for different phases as the month progresses
Jupiter	2 nd March, Io transit 7 th Ganymede	Early evening 19:00-22:00 best for viewing 2/3/24, 19:00-19:30 look for Io & its shadow 7/3/24, 19:30 G moves behind Jupiter's W limb
Uranus	March	In Aries, early evening
Comet 12P/Pons Brooks	March	2.5° NE of 73 Pegasi
Comet 13P/Olbers	March	1° E of Menkar (α Ceti)
Comet C/2021 S3 (PANSTARRS)	1 st March	At its brightest
Minor Planet Juno	March-April	In Leo, traversing between σ and α Leo (Regulus). Possible astrometry project?
Variable star Z UMa	All month	2.7° W-SW Megrez (δ UMa), mag6-9 over 6mo period. Another astrometry project?
'Double Quasar' possible imaging project?	March	14°N-NW of NGC3079, Quasar 0957+561 (RA 10h01m21s, Dec +55°53'50"), mag 16.7, is 9Bn LY away. Appears double due to gravitational lensing by galaxy YGAKOW G1, 4Bn LY away.
Spring Equinox	20 th March	Best time to photograph Zodiacal Light