



*I hope your year is progressing smoothly and you have taken advantage of the many teaching opportunities presented by the International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009).*

*A key event in the the IYA 2009 Calendar is the 100 Hours of Astronomy cornerstone project occurring over the period 2 - 5 April. It is a worldwide event with a wide range of public outreach activities including live webcasts, observing events and more taking place over a 100-hour period. The dedicated website for this event can be found at <http://www.100hoursofastronomy.org/>*

*If you are keen to get your students out observing but don't have access to telescopes, you will be interested in the IYA 2009 Telescope Initiative. Information on ordering the low cost scope was meant to be put on the website in the middle of January 2009. It hasn't as yet but keep checking. The site can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/awvkvs> There is also a Galileo Teacher Training Programme under development as part of IYA 2009. More information on that can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/ael5pp>*

*Finally, for the latest news on Earth & Beyond learning opportunities for your students in South East Queensland, visit my website. You will also find the next issue of this newsletter online there in May 2009.*

Regards,

**Paul Floyd**

[www.nightsonline.info](http://www.nightsonline.info)

## Best nights for a star party in Term 2 2009

Amateur astronomical societies are generally happy to assist schools by running a star party. This mean that they will bring telescopes and volunteers to your school so that your students can look through them at the night sky. Book ahead and avoid the time just between First Quarter Moon and two nights after Full Moon to avoid the light of the Moon washing out other sky objects. Using this criteria, the best nights therefore are:

- \* Tuesday 31 March to Thursday 2 April
- \* Wednesday 29 April to Friday 1 May
- \* Thursday 28 May to Saturday 30 May

A list of astronomical societies across South East Queensland can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://tinyurl.com/7k7fb4>

## Planets visible to the eye

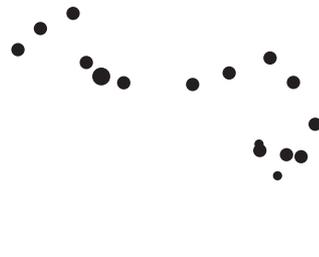
During Term 2, Saturn will be the only planet visible in the early evening sky. Mercury, Venus and Mars will be visible at various times in the pre-dawn sky.

**April / May:** Your students can easily find Saturn without a telescope by looking above the North Eastern horizon at the end of evening twilight. Saturn appears to the unaided eye as a pale yellow moderately bright star.

**June:** By mid-June, Jupiter will be rising around 10 pm. If you have older students, you may want them to look for Jupiter by looking low on the Eastern horizon.

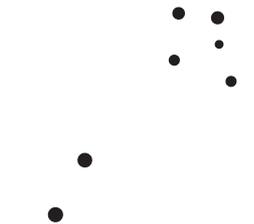
## Easy Constellations

### Scorpius 'The Scorpion'



Look low above the South Eastern horizon at 7.30 pm in early May and 6.30 pm in early June.

### Crux 'The Southern Cross' and 'The Pointers'



Look above the Southern horizon at the end of evening twilight

## Moon Phases



New

First Quarter

Full Moon

Last Quarter

**April**

25

3

10

17

**May**

24

2 & 31

9

17

**June**

23

29

8

16

Newsletter and website sponsored by



[www.ioptron.com](http://www.ioptron.com)