



2009 is now drawing to a close and you are most likely already considering when your school will cover the 'Beyond' section of the Earth & Beyond topic in 2010. If you are, you may want to consider covering it when there are real life events that your students can go outside and look at in the real sky. There is nothing like seeing the real thing in the night sky to increase the impact of what you teach them in the classroom

Predictable easily visible astronomical events in 2010, which you may want to plan your teaching around, include the following:

\* The 2010 Opposition of Mars. This occurs at the very start of the school year on January 30<sup>th</sup>. By coincidence the Moon will be located to the right of Mars on the same night making it very easy for your students to locate Mars.

\* The 2010 oppositions of Jupiter and Saturn. These occur on 22 March and 21 September 2010 respectively. As with the opposition of Mars, the few months after opposition are the ideal times to look at these planets as they are at their brightest.

\* The Partial Lunar Eclipse on 26 June 2010. Maximum eclipse occurs at 9.38pm.

\* There are also the regular cycles of the Moon, which your students can observe. Information on the 2010 Moon phases can be found on my site now.

\* Early August 2010 sees the planets Mercury, Saturn, Venus and Mars appear together in the dusk sky. Over the period of a few weeks, their positions relative to each other will change quite noticeably.

## Paul Floyd

### Best nights for a star party in Term 4 2009

Amateur astronomical societies are generally happy to assist schools by running a star party. This means 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 between First Quarter Moon and two nights after Full Moon. This avoids the light of the Moon washing out other sky objects. Using this criteria, the best nights therefore are:

- \* Thursday 22 October to Sunday 25 October
- \* Friday 20 November to Tuesday 24 November

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

Jupiter is the only planet easily visible to the unaided eye in the evening sky during the last term of 2009. It will appear as the brightest star like object in the night sky.

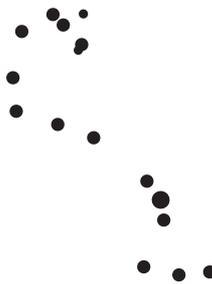
**October:** Jupiter is easily visible to the unaided eye as a very bright star high above the North Western horizon.

**November:** Look above the Western horizon to locate the planet Jupiter.

**December:** Look above the Western horizon to locate the planet Jupiter.

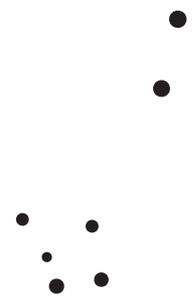
### Easy Constellations

#### Scorpius 'The Scorpion'



Look above the Western horizon at 7.30 pm in mid October.

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



Look above the South Western horizon at the end of evening twilight.

### 2009 Moon Phases



New

First Quarter

Full Moon

Last Quarter

	New	First Quarter	Full Moon	Last Quarter
<b>October</b>	18	26	4	11
<b>November</b>	17	25	3	10
<b>December</b>	16	25	2	9

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