

May Evening Skies

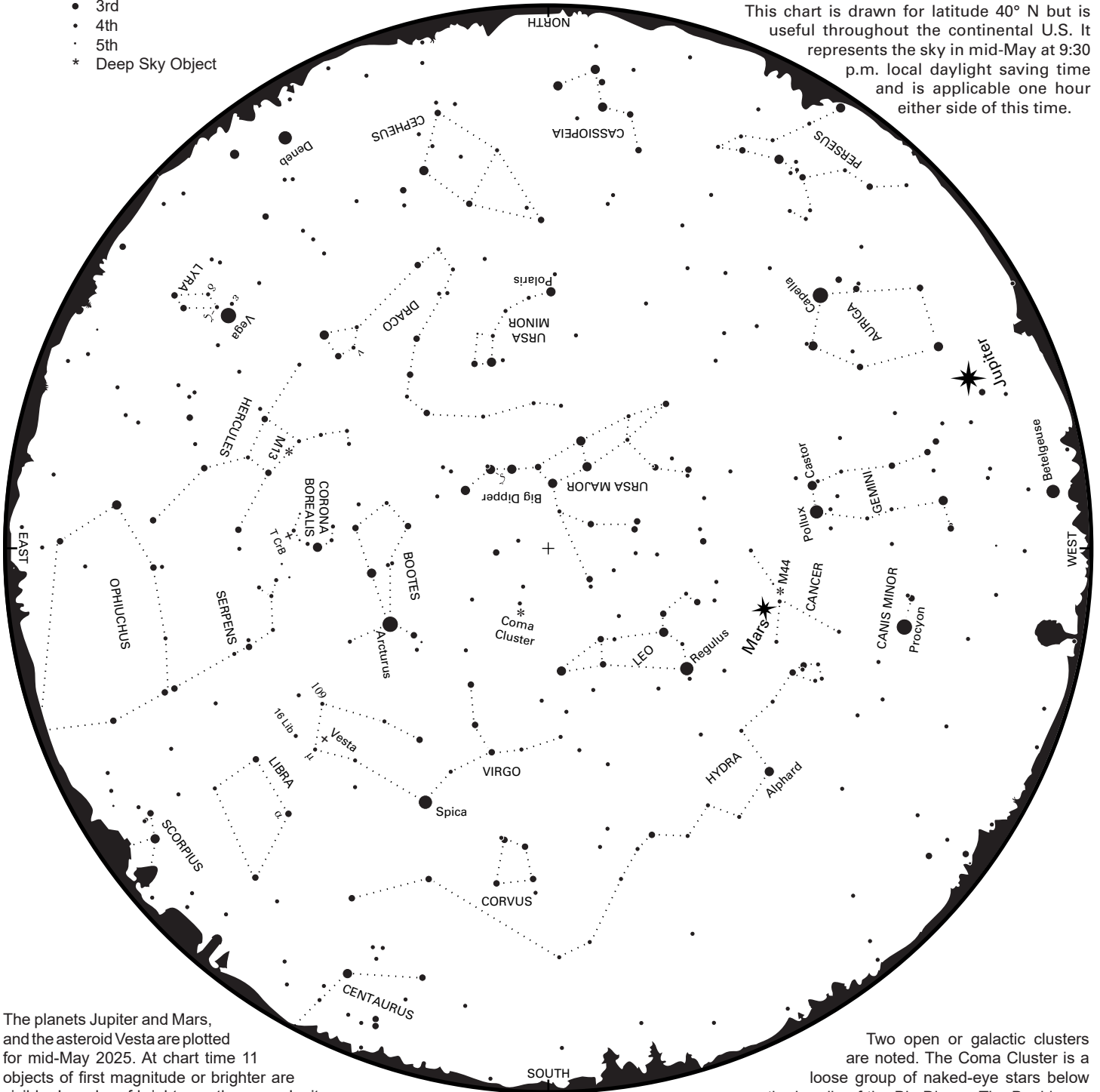
LEGEND Star Magnitudes

- Zero or brighter
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- * Deep Sky Object

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This chart is drawn for latitude 40° N but is useful throughout the continental U.S. It represents the sky in mid-May at 9:30 p.m. local daylight saving time and is applicable one hour either side of this time.



The planets Jupiter and Mars, and the asteroid Vesta are plotted for mid-May 2025. At chart time 11 objects of first magnitude or brighter are visible. In order of brightness they are: Jupiter, Arcturus, Vega, Capella, Procyon, Betelgeuse, Spica, Pollux, Mars, Deneb, and Regulus.

Our usual monthly maps are designed for stargazers just beginning to find their way around the sky. This month's map is useful for serious stargazers from dark locations. It contains many more stars, inclusive to magnitude 4.5, and some fainter stars as needed to complete patterns or assist in locating special objects.

A selection of double stars (labeled with Greek letters) and "deep sky objects" is also plotted. All are visible with modest equipment; most are within the range of the unaided eye or binoculars.

The double stars, in order of decreasing separation, are ζ in Ursa Major, δ in Lyra, α in Libra, ε in Lyra, ν in Draco, and ζ in Lyra,

Two open or galactic clusters are noted. The Coma Cluster is a loose group of naked-eye stars below the handle of the Big Dipper. The Beehive or Praesepe (M44) in Cancer is much more compact, resembling a hazy patch of light.

The Hercules Cluster (M13) appears still more compact. It is a fine example of a globular cluster, a dense concentration of about a million stars.

T Coronae Borealis (T CrB) is a recurrent nova that flares every 80 years and last erupted in 1946. It's predicted to flare again soon.