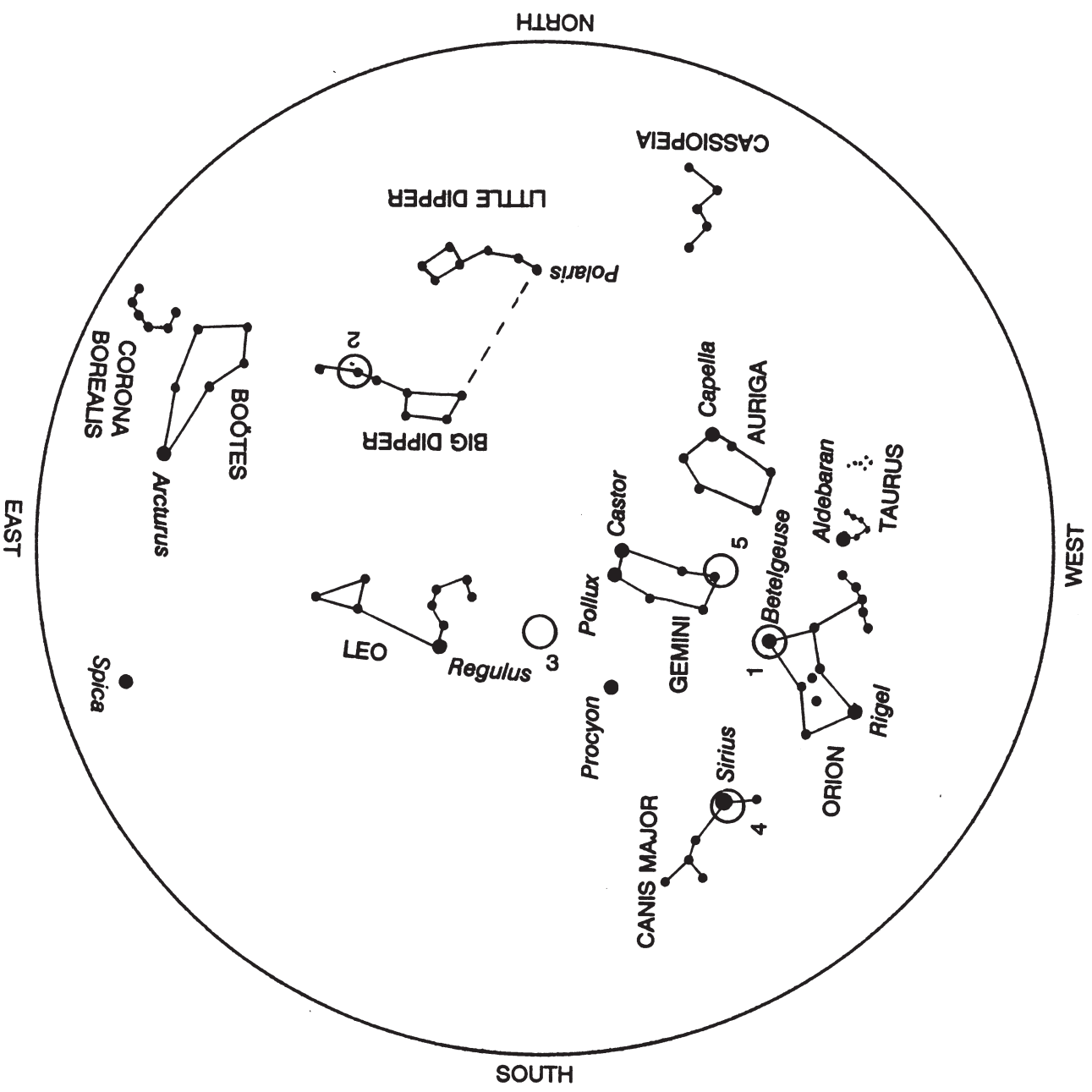
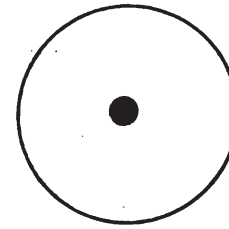


April (Approximately 9:00 p.m.)



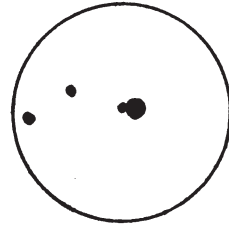
1. Betelgeuse

Red Supergiant Star in Orion R.A. 05^h52.5^m Dec. 07°24'
 Other names: α Orion, Armpit of the giant
 This red star marks the shoulder of Orion, the hunter. Betelgeuse is the largest star we know of, with a diameter of 800 million miles or over 900 times the size of our sun. Placed in the center of our solar system, Betelgeuse would swallow our sun, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars and reach almost out to Jupiter. This huge star is 14,000 times brighter than our sun and is 520 ly away from us. It is the 11th brightest star in the sky.



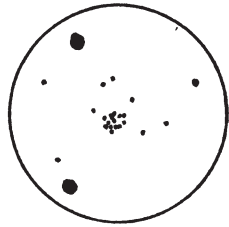
2. Mizar/Alcor

Double Star in Ursa Major R.A. 13^h21.9^m Dec. 55°11'
 Mizar, the brighter of the two stars, is the second star in the handle of the Big Dipper. Alcor lies very close to Mizar and is sometimes accused of riding piggy-back on Mizar. These two stars are considered an optical double star. They look as if they belong to the same system, but they do not. Both Mizar and Alcor have actual companion stars, but each companion is too faint to be seen with binoculars.



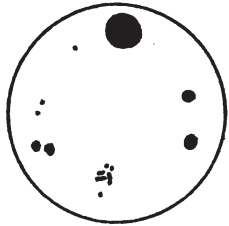
3. M44

Open Cluster in Cancer R.A. 08^h37.5^m Dec. 19°52'
 Other names: NGC 2632, the Praesepe, the Beehive cluster
 M44 is one of the largest and brightest open cluster that can be seen from Earth. It lies 525 ly away and most of its 200 stars lie within a space of 13 ly. M44 can easily be seen with the naked eye on a dark, clear night. The cluster will appear as a faint cloud.



4. M41

Open Cluster in Canis Major R.A. 06^h44.9^m Dec. -20°42'
 Other name: NGC 2287
 Just below the brightest star in the night sky, Sirius, this cluster can be seen with the naked eye in a very dark sky. M41 lies at a distance of 2350 ly and has a diameter of 20 ly. The cluster contains 25 bright stars and as many as 150 fainter stars.



5. M35

Open Cluster in Gemini R.A. 06^h05.7^m Dec. 24°20'
 Other name: NGC 2168
 A few individual stars can be resolved in this bright cluster. M35 is 2200 ly away and has a diameter of 30 ly. On dark clear nights, this cluster can sometimes be seen with the naked eye as a faint cloud.

