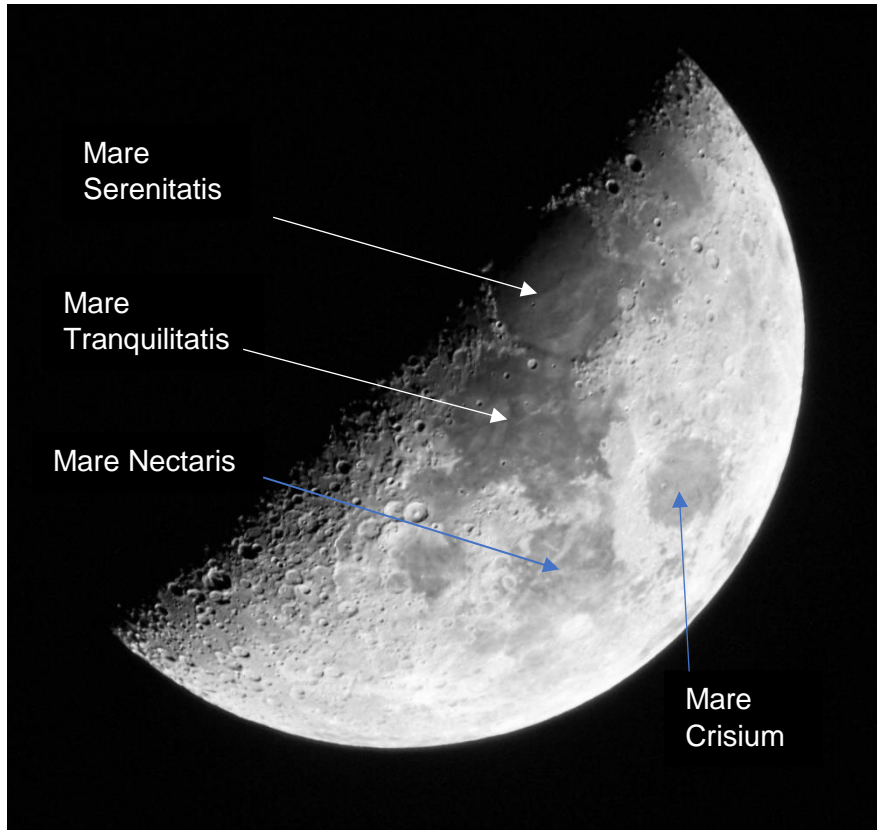


Lunartics

Some Sky Notes for December 2022 and January 2023

Firstly, a view of the Moon towards the end of December. The image shows a 'First Quarter' moon. Visible with the naked eye are the darker areas on the moon known as 'Mare' (Latin for Sea). Through Binoculars or small telescope stunning views can be had, especially along the 'Terminator', the line between the light and dark sections of the Moon



What's in store for January?

Well, we have a fine view of the planets, given clear skies of course! On the 3rd January the Moon is high in the constellation Taurus and just above to the right is the planet Mars. This is a good opportunity to compare the 'eye' of Taurus, a red giant star, with the Red Planet. Above and to the right of Mars is the open cluster the Pleiades also known as the 'Seven Sisters', although there are more stars in the cluster than that. It is visible with the naked eye, but the view in Binoculars or small telescope is really stunning. Jupiter of course is still a grand sight in the south west.

Below is the majestic constellation Orion 'The Hunter'. Find the 3 belt stars and about half way along there is Orion's sword, the centre of the sword looks a bit fuzzy. This is the M42 Nebula, a great star forming 'factory' and lovely to observe in Binoculars or telescopes of any size!

The night of the 3rd and 4th January is also the peak of the Quadrantid meteor shower

Low in the West on the 22 January look for a thin crescent Moon, Venus and Saturn.

There is also a Comet to be seen, Comet 2022 E3, discovered back in March it is becoming visible to us northern observers in January around the 3rd onwards (Better late January). Look towards the north star Polaris and scan looking north and south you are looking for a faint fuzzy patch. The exact co-ordinates for the Comet can be found on the BAA Website.

Ho Humm!

Comet 2022 E3 Finder Chart Courtesy of the British Astronomical Association

