

1  
00:00:07,440 --> 00:00:11,460  
Your guide to constellations, deep-sky objects,

2  
00:00:11,460 --> 00:00:14,400  
planets, and events.

3  
00:00:14,400 --> 00:00:24,179  
Tonight's Sky – highlights of the April sky:

4  
00:00:37,899 --> 00:00:40,159  
Venus blazes brightly,

5  
00:00:40,159 --> 00:00:48,619  
low in the western sky at nightfall.

6  
00:00:52,659 --> 00:00:54,719  
With a backyard telescope,

7  
00:00:54,719 --> 00:00:58,659  
we can clearly see the sunlight reflecting off the thick

8  
00:00:58,659 --> 00:01:05,019  
clouds that shroud its surface.

9  
00:01:14,680 --> 00:01:22,600  
Bright Jupiter rises in the east before midnight.

10  
00:01:26,799 --> 00:01:28,780  
Even a small telescope

11  
00:01:28,780 --> 00:01:36,939  
can reveal its two most prominent cloud bands.

12  
00:01:55,719 --> 00:01:58,939  
Late in the evening, high in the northern sky,

13  
00:01:58,939 --> 00:02:05,959  
lies the Great Bear, Ursa Major.

14  
00:02:05,959 --> 00:02:09,060  
The constellation of Ursa Major contains

15  
00:02:09,060 --> 00:02:13,280  
the well-known star pattern called the Big Dipper.

16  
00:02:13,280 --> 00:02:17,919  
It resembles a large drinking cup with a handle.

17  
00:02:17,919 --> 00:02:21,119  
The two stars that make up the front side of the cup

18  
00:02:21,120 --> 00:02:24,480  
are called "pointer stars" because they point

19  
00:02:24,479 --> 00:02:34,500  
toward the star Polaris, also known as the North Star.

20  
00:02:44,500 --> 00:02:54,699  
The Big Dipper overflows with interesting  
stars and deep-sky objects.

21  
00:02:54,699 --> 00:02:58,539  
The stars Mizar and Alcor make up a double-

22  
00:02:58,539 --> 00:03:03,099  
star system that can be seen without a telescope.

23  
00:03:03,099 --> 00:03:06,780  
In ancient times, when Mizar and Alcor were even

24  
00:03:06,780 --> 00:03:09,740  
closer together, they were used as a test of

25  
00:03:09,740 --> 00:03:14,200  
keen eyesight.

26  
00:03:14,199 --> 00:03:20,060  
M81 and M82 are a magnificent pair of galaxies,

27  
00:03:20,060 --> 00:03:23,759  
showpieces of the northern night sky.

28  
00:03:23,759 --> 00:03:28,399  
M82 has an irregular shape, bestowed by a collision

29

00:03:28,400 --> 00:03:36,219  
with its larger neighbor, M81.

30

00:03:47,240 --> 00:03:50,939  
Turning to the south, we see Leo, the Lion,

31

00:03:50,939 --> 00:03:55,579  
heralding the coming of spring.

32

00:03:55,580 --> 00:03:59,280  
In Greek mythology, Leo is the great beast

33

00:03:59,280 --> 00:04:01,659  
slain by Hercules.

34

00:04:01,659 --> 00:04:05,520  
The star Denebola, which in Arabic means "tail,"

35

00:04:05,520 --> 00:04:08,560  
represents exactly that.

36

00:04:08,560 --> 00:04:14,020  
The bright star Regulus is the heart of the Lion.

37

00:04:14,020 --> 00:04:18,480  
Leo has several galaxies in his belly.

38

00:04:18,480 --> 00:04:26,420  
M65, M66, and NGC 3628 make up the "Leo Triplet,"

39

00:04:26,420 --> 00:04:28,960  
a lovely grouping of galaxies

40

00:04:28,959 --> 00:04:32,279  
easily seen with a telescope.

41

00:04:32,279 --> 00:04:39,159  
Close by is another group.

42

00:04:39,160 --> 00:04:48,260  
M95 and M96 are large spiral galaxies.

43

00:04:48,259 --> 00:04:51,519  
Between the Big Dipper and the head of Leo

44  
00:04:51,519 --> 00:04:55,120  
are three pairs of bright stars known to ancient

45  
00:04:55,120 --> 00:05:03,459  
Arab astronomers as "The Three Leaps of the Gazelle."

46  
00:05:22,100 --> 00:05:25,340  
In the hours before dawn, Saturn and Mars

47  
00:05:25,339 --> 00:05:28,839  
rise in the summer constellation of Sagittarius,

48  
00:05:28,839 --> 00:05:32,399  
joining Jupiter in the sky.

49  
00:05:32,399 --> 00:05:40,919  
The 3 planets differ in apparent brightness and size.

50  
00:05:40,920 --> 00:05:44,699  
The distinctive color of Mars, rings of Saturn,

51  
00:05:44,699 --> 00:05:48,079  
and cloud bands of Jupiter make these planets

52  
00:05:48,079 --> 00:05:55,579  
easy to distinguish with a backyard telescope.

53  
00:06:01,920 --> 00:06:05,259  
The Lyrid meteor shower will peak in the early morning

54  
00:06:05,259 --> 00:06:09,180  
hours of April 22.

55  
00:06:09,180 --> 00:06:13,319  
Expect to see up to 20 bright meteors per hour

56  
00:06:13,319 --> 00:06:17,959  
after midnight.

57  
00:06:17,959 --> 00:06:24,579

The night sky is always a celestial showcase.

58

00:06:24,579 --> 00:06:32,699

Explore its wonders from your own backyard.