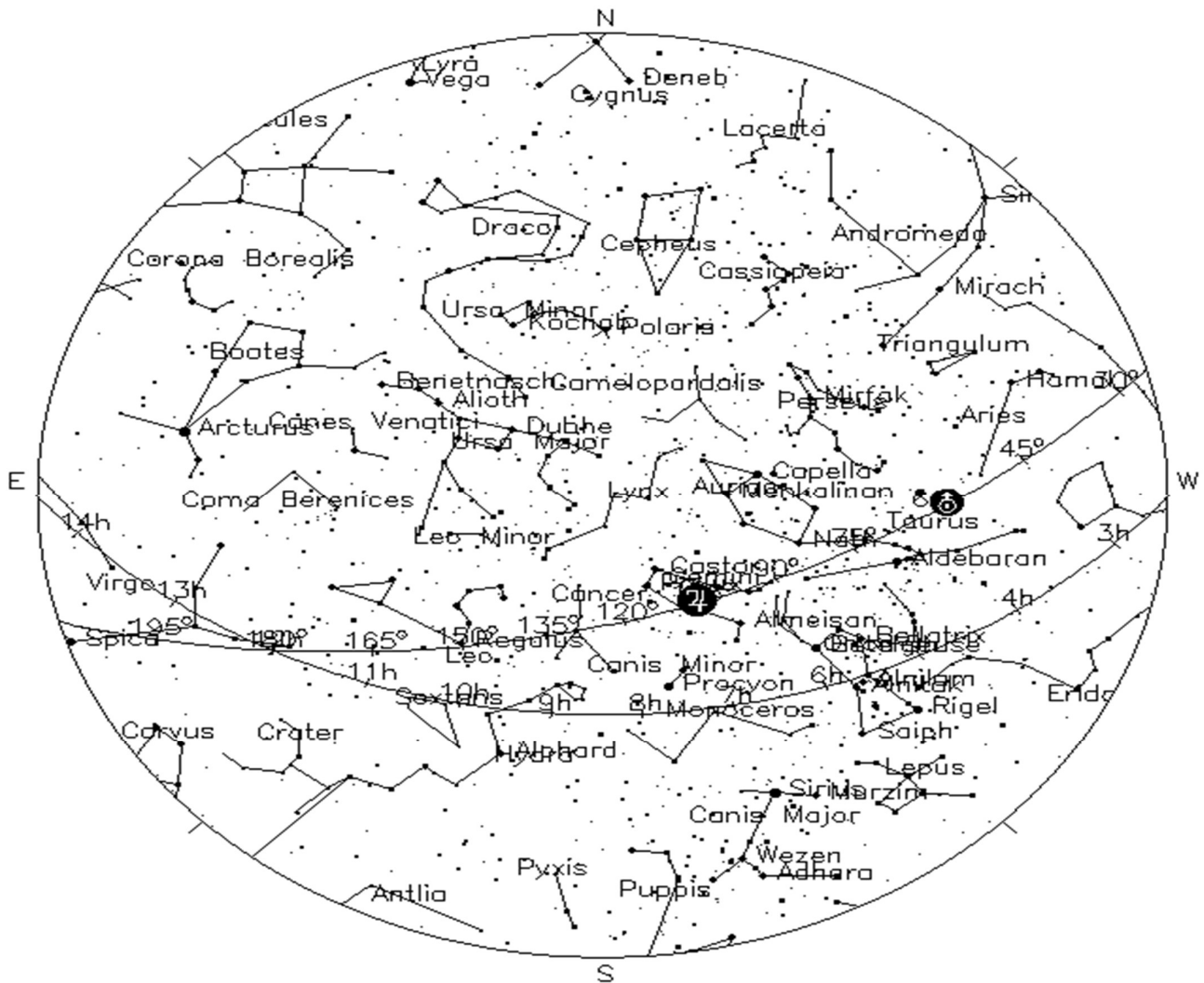


Wessex Sky Notes – 2026 March 15 at 21:00 Vol 20 No. 3



Aspect of the sky from 50° 45' N : 2° 00' W at 21:00 UTC

Chart from www.fourmilab.ch

The **Spring (Vernal) Equinox** occurs on Friday, March 20th at 2.46 pm. The sun crosses the equator going north.

Lunar Phases Full: Mar. 3 at 11:38; Last Qtr: Mar. 11 at 09:38; New: Mar. 19 at 01:23 and First Qtr: Mar.25 at 07:18.

Apsides: Perigee (closest) Mar. 22 at 11:39, 366857 km, (32' 32"); Apogee (furthest) Mar. 10 at 13:43 404385 km (29' 14").

Mercury (☿): is at inferior conjunction on the 7th and maximum western elongation on the 29th, but will be too low on the eastern horizon to be seen at dawn. There is a cluster of 4 planets close to the western horizon, Mercury, low down, Venus Saturn and Neptune (telescope required) and with Jupiter in Gemini and Uranus nearby there are potentially 6 planets on view, at dusk, on the 1st. This was recently highlighted on the BBC news.

Venus (♀): continues as an evening star, mag.-3.9, and is close to Saturn on the 8th (1°), with Venus 6° above the western horizon at dusk. Venus increases its eastern elongation during the month reaching 20° by month's end. Moon is nearby on the 19th and 20th

Mars (♂): is just past solar conjunction last month, and will not be seen as it will be below the eastern horizon at dawn all month, only reaching 18° on a very shallow ecliptic, by the 31st.

Jupiter (♃): is in the centre of Gemini all month, so is visible for a reasonable time during the night, mag.-2.7, setting at 02:51 on the 31st. Moon is close on the 25th and 26th. See later for the GRS passes.

Saturn (♄): is visible for the first few days in March, mag. 1.0 with Venus nearby on the 8th, as noted in Venus's notes. Saturn is at solar conjunction on the 25th.

Uranus (♅): is in Taurus just below the Pleiades, and sets around midnight.

Neptune (♆): is at solar conjunction on the 22nd.

The **Moon** is close to Regulus on the 2nd, to Spica on the 6th and Antares on the 10th. There is potentially a lunar occultation of Regulus on the 29th.

Sunrise-set times:

Date	Rise	Transit	Set	Date	Rise	Transit	Set
01 Mar 2026	06:52:20	12:20:17	17:49:07	21 Mar 2026	06:08:42	12:15:08	18:22:34
06 Mar 2026	06:41:42	12:19:13	17:57:37	26 Mar 2026	05:57:33	12:13:38	18:30:44
11 Mar 2026	06:30:51	12:17:58	18:06:01	31 Mar 2026	05:46:26	12:12:08	18:38:51
16 Mar 2026	06:19:49	12:16:35	18:14:19				

Moonrise-set times:

Date	Rise	Transit	Set	Date	Rise	Transit	Set
01 Mar 2026	15:25:59	23:10:03	06:15:27	21 Mar 2026	06:41:38	14:14:54	22:10:17
06 Mar 2026	21:55:09	02:08:49	07:23:37	26 Mar 2026	10:22:17	19:16:16	03:15:09
11 Mar 2026	02:39:10	06:02:41	09:24:14	31 Mar 2026	17:07:25	23:21:03	05:07:25
16 Mar 2026	05:30:38	10:14:47	15:11:22				

B Persei, (Algol) (Mag 2.1 to 3.4) – the 1 visible minimum is 19th at 21:30.

RZ Cassiopeiae (mag 6.2 to 7.7) – the visible minima are: 6th at 21:20; 12th at 20:48; 18th at 20:14; 24th at 19:40; and 31st at 23:47.

Lambda Tauri (mag 3.4 to 3.9) no reliable minima this month.

For observation of the ISS during the month, log-in to <http://www.heavens-above.com>. See page 3, for evening passes, starting on the 11th.

The next Durlston meeting will be on Saturday the 14th at 7.0 pm. when Jupiter will be observed with Europa being occulted at 10.30pm. and Spring constellations. These events are, of course, subject to favourable weather. February's meeting was cancelled due to poor weather

Solar news

Recently there have been several occasions when the Kp reached 5 or more in the last week of February, with no reported auroral events occurring. The Sun is evidently still active. Keep watching!

Timings for Jupiter's **Great Red Spot (GRS)**: this month up to early morning:

1st at 23:10; 2nd at 19:00; 4th at 20:40; 6th at 22:20; 8th at 23:58; 9th at 19:50; 11th at 21:30; 13th at 23:05; 14th at 19:00; 16th at 20:35; 18th at 22:15; 20th at 23:55; 21st at 19:45; 23rd at 21:25; 25th at 23:04; 26th at 18:55; 27th at 23:15; 28th at 20:34 and 30th at 22:13. End of listing.

Meteor Activity: There is no known meteor shower during March.

Good observing. Robert Hatch.

1st March 2026

continued on page 3

Passes of the ISS for March.

Date	Brightness (mag)	-----Start-----		---- Highest point--			-----End-----		Pass type	
		Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.
morning passes:										
3 Mar	-2.6	05:01:34	29°	SSW	05:01:34	29°	SSW	05:04:05	10°	SSE visible
4 Mar	-1.1	04:16:52	14°	SE	04:16:52	14°	SE	04:17:27	10°	SE visible
5 Mar	-1.3	05:05:20	11°	S	05:05:20	11°	S	05:05:38	10°	S visible
Now evening passes:										
11 Mar	-1.4	20:18:04	10°	SW	20:18:50	15°	SSW	20:18:50	15°	SSW visible
12 Mar	-2.4	19:31:20	10°	SSW	19:34:07	23°	SE	19:34:14	23°	SE visible
12 Mar	-0.6	21:07:13	10°	WSW	21:07:15	10°	WSW	21:07:15	10°	WSW visible
13 Mar	-1.9	18:44:51	10°	S	18:47:05	17°	SE	18:49:20	10°	E visible
13 Mar	-2.8	20:20:05	10°	WSW	20:22:28	40°	SW	20:22:28	40°	SW visible
14 Mar	-3.4	19:33:00	10°	SW	19:36:17	46°	SSE	19:37:31	30°	E visible
14 Mar	-1.0	21:09:38	10°	W	21:10:30	17°	W	21:10:30	17°	W visible
15 Mar	-2.8	18:46:01	10°	SW	18:49:07	33°	SSE	18:52:14	10°	E visible
15 Mar	-3.5	20:22:21	10°	W	20:25:25	70°	W	20:25:25	70°	W visible
16 Mar	-3.8	19:35:05	10°	WSW	19:38:30	80°	SSE	19:40:12	27°	E visible
16 Mar	-1.2	21:11:59	10°	W	21:13:12	20°	W	21:13:12	20°	W visible
17 Mar	-3.6	18:47:51	10°	WSW	18:51:12	63°	SSE	18:54:34	10°	ENE visible
17 Mar	-3.6	20:24:38	10°	W	20:27:54	72°	NNW	20:27:54	72°	NNW visible
18 Mar	-3.7	19:37:17	10°	W	19:40:41	77°	N	19:42:32	25°	ENE visible
18 Mar	-1.3	21:14:12	10°	WNW	21:15:30	22°	WNW	21:15:30	22°	WNW visible
19 Mar	-3.7	18:49:54	10°	W	18:53:18	86°	N	18:56:43	10°	ENE visible
19 Mar	-3.7	20:26:49	10°	W	20:30:04	77°	NW	20:30:04	77°	NW visible
20 Mar	-3.7	19:39:25	10°	W	19:42:49	75°	N	19:44:36	26°	E visible
20 Mar	-1.3	21:16:17	10°	W	21:17:34	21°	W	21:17:34	21°	W visible
21 Mar	-3.6	18:51:58	10°	W	18:55:23	74°	N	18:58:46	10°	E visible
21 Mar	-3.6	20:28:51	10°	WNW	20:32:04	68°	SW	20:32:04	68°	SW visible
22 Mar	-3.8	19:41:24	10°	WNW	19:44:48	86°	SSW	19:46:33	27°	ESE visible
22 Mar	-1.1	21:18:25	10°	W	21:19:31	17°	W	21:19:31	17°	W visible
23 Mar	-3.7	18:53:55	10°	W	18:57:20	82°	N	19:00:44	10°	E visible
23 Mar	-2.9	20:30:50	10°	W	20:33:59	39°	SSW	20:33:59	39°	SSW visible
24 Mar	-3.3	19:43:17	10°	W	19:46:37	53°	SSW	19:48:28	23°	SE visible
24 Mar	-0.7	21:21:06	10°	WSW	21:21:26	11°	WSW	21:21:26	11°	WSW visible
25 Mar	-1.8	20:33:01	10°	W	20:35:33	20°	SW	20:35:57	19°	SSW visible
26 Mar	-2.1	19:45:12	10°	W	19:48:09	28°	SSW	19:50:28	14°	SSE visible
28 Mar	-1.1	19:47:39	10°	WSW	19:49:25	14°	SW	19:51:09	10°	S visible