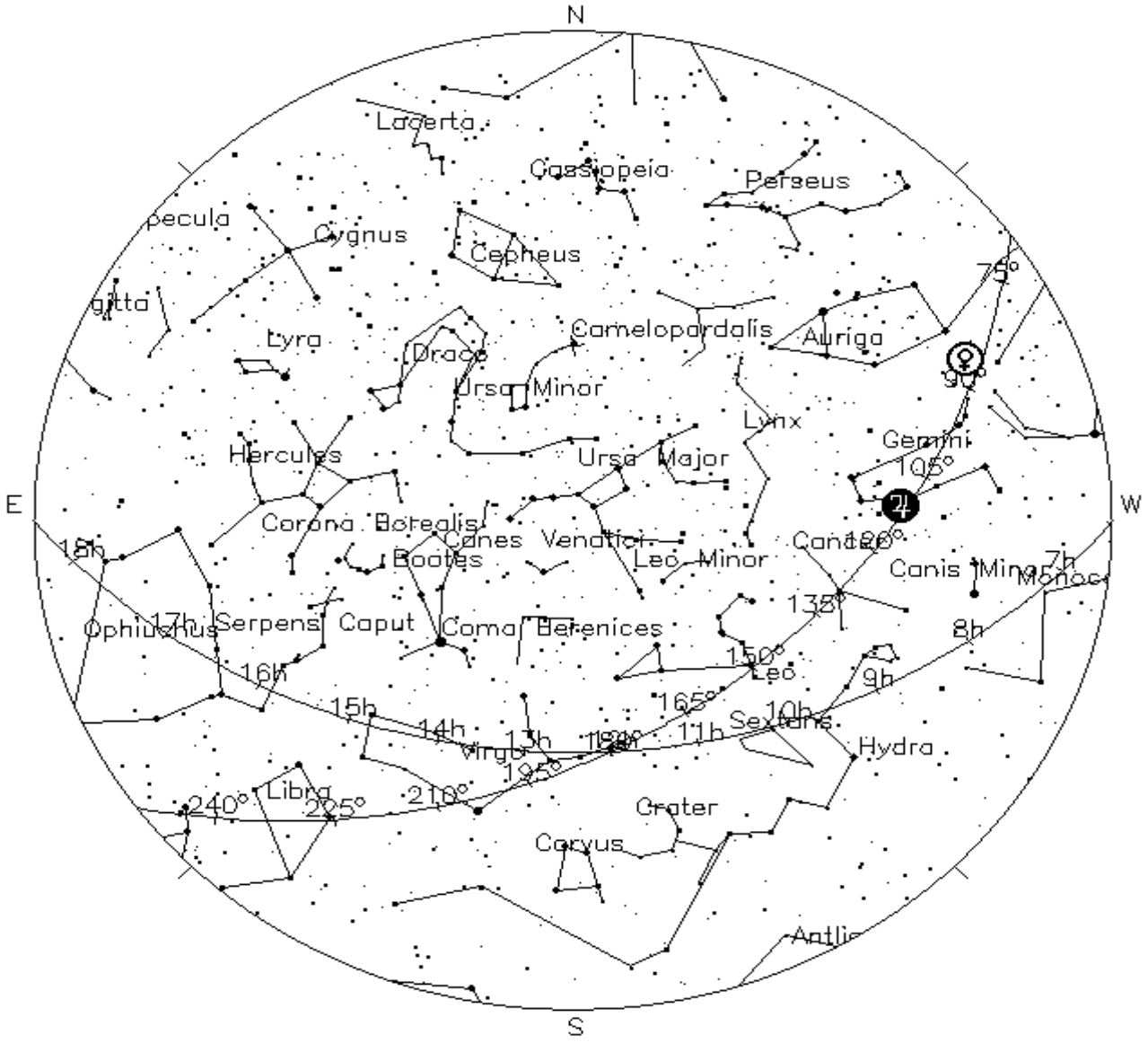
Wessex Sky Notes – 2026 May 15 at 21:00 Vol 20 No. 5



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

Chart from www.fourmilab.ch

Lunar Phases: Full: May 1st at 18:23 and 31st at 09:45 (blue moon); Last Qtr: May 9th at 22:10; New: May 16th at 21:01 First Qtr: May 23rd at 12:11

Apsides: Apogee (furthest) May 4th at 22:29, 405839 Km (29’24”); Perigee (closest) May 17th at 13:43, 358075 km (33’ 54”)

Mercury (☿): starts the month technically a morning star but is below the horizon at dawn and moves to superior conjunction on the 14th.thence becoming an evening ‘star’ on a steepish evening ecliptic and by month’s end is mag.-0.6 but only 5° above the NNW horizon.

Venus (♀): continues as an evening star, reaching an elongation of 46° east of the sun mag.-4., and 9° above the horizon at sunset by month’s end, when it will be in Gemini, close to Jupiter at mag.-4.0. Moon is close by on the 18th. (Venus is closest to Jupiter on June 9th)

Mars (♂): is a morning object but will be too close to the eastern horizon at dawn to be seen.

Jupiter (♃): is still in Gemini until the 12th, mag -2.0. Moon near on the 20th and 21st. Jupiter sets at 23.15 at month’s end.

Saturn (♄): continues to improve in the morning sky, and at month’s end will be 14° above the eastern horizon just before dawn, mag 0.8 reaching 57° west of the Sun at mag 1.1, by month’s end. Moon close on the 13th. 26F

Uranus (♅): is in solar conjunction on the 22nd.but will be too close to the Sun in the evening sky, even at month’s start (elongation 8°) to be seen.

Neptune (♆): is 5° west of Saturn, at month’s start, but at mag 7.9, will not be easy to observe, if at all.

Moon is near Antares on the 3rd and 4th, (am) and again on the 30th, Regulus on the 22nd and Spica on the 26th and 27th.

Notes continued on page 2.

Sunrise set times:

Date	Rise	Transit	Set	Date	Rise	Transit	Set
01 May 2026	04:42:19	12:05:05	19:28:53	21 May 2026	04:11:19	12:04:36	19:58:43
06 May 2026	04:33:29	12:04:36	19:36:44	26 May 2026	04:05:41	12:05:03	20:05:09
11 May 2026	04:25:18	12:04:21	19:44:23	31 May 2026	04:01:06	12:05:41	20:10:55
16 May 2026	04:17:53	12:04:21	19:51:45				

Moonrise set times:

Date	Rise	Transit	Set	Date	Rise	Transit	Set
01 May 2026	19:50:02	--:--:--	04:06:01	21 May 2026	08:40:51	16:56:08	00:25:06
06 May 2026	00:06:20	03:30:41	06:57:08	26 May 2026	15:13:26	20:42:49	01:46:53
11 May 2026	02:08:40	07:27:50	13:00:58	31 May 2026	21:07:11	--:--:--	03:20:50
16 May 2026	03:28:15	11:38:32	20:10:41				

B Persei, (Algol) (Mag 2.1 to 3.4) – no minima are visible this month.

RZ Cassiopeiae (mag 6.2 to 7.7) –binoculars required; the visible 3 minima are:
19th at 23:40; 25th at 23:20 and 31st at 22:45. most in the sky area to the north of Polaris. These are provisional timings only, they are not reliable.

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

Keep a watching brief for ***T Corona Borealis*****.**

For observation of the ISS during the month, log-in to http://www.heavens-above.com. This listing starts on the 1st, morning passes which become evening passes as the month progresses.

The next Durlston event will be on Thursday, August 13th the peak of the Perseid meteor shower. More details in August's notes.

Solar news

Geomagnetic activity has been moderate during April. Keep watching. The Sun is becoming less active just now.

Jupiter's ***Great Red Spot (GRS):*** times are UT; the 11 possibilities of seeing the red spot are:
3rd at 20:29; 5th at 22:09; 7th at 23:48; 10th at 21:15; 12th at 22:55; 17th at 22:05; 19th at 23:40; 22nd at 21:14; 24th at 22:50; 27th at 20:20 and 29th at 22:00 Many very low in the NW sky.
Please let me know if you manage to observe it, and at what time.

Meteor Activity: The May Eta Aquarids peak on the 6th in the early morning. The Moon is waning gibbous after being full on the 1st.

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Good observing Robert Hatch

01 May 2026

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Passes of the ISS for May.

Date	Brightness (mag)	Start Time	Start Alt.	Start Az.	Highest point Time	Highest point Alt.	Highest point Az.	End Time	End Alt.	End Az	Pass type
1 May	-2.0	02:16:01	26°	E	02:16:01	26°	E	02:17:39	10°	ENE	visible
1 May	-3.6	03:48:58	20°	W	03:51:09	74°	N	03:54:31	10°	E	visible
2 May	-0.8	01:30:04	10°	E	01:30:04	10°	E	01:30:07	10°	E	visible
2 May	-3.7	03:03:00	56°	W	03:03:37	79°	N	03:07:00	10°	E	visible
2 May	-3.8	04:37:09	10°	WNW	04:40:32	89°	NNE	04:43:54	10°	ESE	visible
3 May	-2.9	02:17:03	44°	ENE	02:17:03	44°	ENE	02:19:29	10°	ENE	visible
3 May	-3.7	03:50:00	13°	W	03:53:00	79°	N	03:56:23	10°	E	visible
4 May	-1.3	01:31:06	17°	ENE	01:31:06	17°	ENE	01:31:57	10°	ENE	visible
4 May	-3.6	03:04:02	32°	WNW	03:05:27	74°	N	03:08:49	10°	E	visible
4 May	-3.7	04:38:56	10°	WNW	04:42:15	58°	SSW	04:45:35	10°	ESE	visible
5 May	-3.5	02:18:07	69°	NE	02:18:07	69°	NE	02:21:15	10°	E	visible
5 May	-3.9	03:51:23	10°	WNW	03:54:45	75°	SSW	03:58:07	10°	ESE	visible
6 May	-1.8	01:32:16	23°	ENE	01:32:16	23°	ENE	01:33:40	10°	E	visible
6 May	-3.9	03:05:13	23°	WNW	03:07:12	89°	NNE	03:10:35	10°	ESE	visible
6 May	-2.9	04:40:47	10°	W	04:43:47	31°	SSW	04:46:48	10°	SSE	visible
7 May	-3.7	02:19:34	79°	N	02:19:37	79°	N	02:22:59	10°	E	visible
7 May	-3.4	03:53:06	10°	W	03:56:20	43°	SSW	03:59:32	10°	SE	visible
7 May	-1.7	22:16:04	10°	SSW	22:16:44	14°	S	22:16:44	14°	S	visible
8 May	-1.5	01:34:27	17°	E	01:34:27	17°	E	01:35:22	10°	E	visible
8 May	-3.8	03:07:29	32°	W	03:08:48	58°	SSW	03:12:07	10°	ESE	visible
8 May	-2.0	04:43:04	10°	WSW	04:45:06	15°	SW	04:47:08	10°	S	visible
8 May	-2.0	21:29:19	10°	S	21:31:18	15°	SE	21:33:17	10°	ESE	visible
8 May	-3.8	23:04:17	10°	WSW	23:07:35	58°	SSE	23:08:12	47°	ESE	visible
9 May	-1.1	00:41:01	10°	W	00:41:20	12°	W	00:41:20	12°	W	visible
9 May	-1.4	02:23:58	15°	ESE	02:23:58	15°	ESE	02:24:36	10°	ESE	visible
9 May	-2.5	03:57:10	21°	SW	03:57:41	22°	SW	04:00:21	10°	SSE	visible
9 May	-3.4	22:16:51	10°	SW	22:20:02	42°	SSE	22:23:14	10°	E	visible
9 May	-3.7	23:53:22	10°	W	23:56:44	79°	N	23:57:20	56°	ENE	visible
10 May	-1.0	01:30:16	10°	WNW	01:30:21	11°	WNW	01:30:21	11°	WNW	visible
10 May	-2.9	21:29:32	10°	SSW	21:32:31	30°	SSE	21:35:30	10°	E	visible
10 May	-3.9	23:05:44	10°	WSW	23:09:05	90°	NW	23:12:02	13°	ENE	visible
11 May	-2.9	00:42:37	10°	W	00:45:00	42°	WNW	00:45:00	42°	WNW	visible
11 May	-3.9	22:18:06	10°	WSW	22:21:27	75°	SSE	22:24:49	10°	ENE	visible
11 May	-3.6	23:54:58	10°	W	23:58:19	74°	N	23:59:13	44°	ENE	visible
12 May	-1.2	01:31:48	10°	WNW	01:32:10	12°	W	01:32:10	12°	W	visible
12 May	-3.7	21:30:32	10°	WSW	21:33:50	57°	SSE	21:37:08	10°	ENE	visible
12 May	-3.6	23:07:16	10°	W	23:10:38	74°	N	23:13:16	15°	E	visible
13 May	-2.6	00:44:08	10°	WNW	00:46:12	34°	W	00:46:12	34°	W	visible
13 May	-3.7	22:19:35	10°	W	22:22:55	79°	N	22:26:17	10°	E	visible
13 May	-3.9	23:56:27	10°	WNW	23:59:49	89°	NNW	00:00:09	70°	E	visible
14 May	-3.8	21:31:52	10°	WSW	21:35:14	90°	ENE	21:38:35	10°	ENE	visible
14 May	-3.7	23:08:45	10°	W	23:12:07	79°	N	23:14:05	23°	E	visible
15 May	-1.9	00:45:37	10°	W	00:47:00	21°	W	00:47:00	21°	W	visible
15 May	-3.6	22:21:02	10°	W	22:24:23	74°	N	22:27:45	10°	E	visible
15 May	-3.6	23:57:53	10°	WNW	00:00:53	55°	SW	00:00:53	55°	SW	visible

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16 May-3.5	21:33:17	10°	W	21:36:39	74°	N	21:40:00	10°	E	visible
16 May-3.9	23:10:09	10°	WNW	23:13:30	76°	SSW	23:14:45	35°	ESE	visible
17 May-1.2	00:47:17	10°	W	00:47:41	12°	W	00:47:41	12°	W	visible
17 May-3.8	22:22:25	10°	WNW	22:25:46	89°	N	22:28:37	14°	ESE	visible
18 May-3.6	21:34:39	10°	W	21:38:01	79°	N	21:41:22	10°	E	visible
18 May-3.3	23:11:31	10°	W	23:14:43	43°	SSW	23:15:24	37°	S	visible
19 May-3.6	22:23:42	10°	WNW	22:27:01	59°	SSW	22:29:16	18°	SE	visible
20 May-1.4	00:01:15	10°	WSW	00:02:12	14°	WSW	00:02:12	14°	WSW	visible
20 May-3.8	21:35:56	10°	WNW	21:39:16	77°	SSW	21:42:37	10°	ESE	visible
20 May-2.3	23:13:03	10°	W	23:15:43	22°	SW	23:16:05	22°	SSW	visible
21 May-2.7	22:25:04	10°	W	22:28:04	31°	SSW	22:29:59	18°	SSE	visible
22 May-3.1	21:37:09	10°	W	21:40:23	44°	SSW	21:43:34	10°	SE	visible
22 May-1.2	23:15:55	10°	SW	23:16:29	10°	SW	23:16:49	10°	SW	visible
23 May-1.6	22:26:49	10°	W	22:28:54	16°	SW	22:30:46	11°	S	visible
24 May-2.0	21:38:34	10°	W	21:41:15	22°	SW	21:43:56	10°	SSE	visible

End of passes for May.

It occurred to me that RZ is not an easy star to find even with some star maps, so here is a chart hopefully showing where to find RS Cassiopeia, always circumpolar in our latitude. (Mag 6.2 -7.8) so bins required!