

CAS Sky Notes for April 2023

Planets:

Mercury: Mercury reaches greatest Eastern elongation on the 11th and is reasonably well placed for observing. So – mid April is your best time when it is around 17 degrees from the Sun and has a good northerly declination which puts it higher in the sky. You will still need a good clear western horizon to catch it after sunset, but it is well worth the effort to see this elusive planet.

Venus: This is now a very prominent evening object and becoming increasingly bright and higher in the sky. The apparent diameter is slowly increasing as the phase drops to about 75%.

Mars is still visible in the evening sky in Taurus. The disc size drops to less than 6 arc seconds this month and it is getting low in the western sky by the time it gets dark.

Jupiter is no longer visible, reaching conjunction with the Sun on the 11th April.

Saturn is not currently visible. It will become a morning object later in the spring.

Uranus and **Neptune** are also lost in the twilight.

Lyrid Meteor Shower: This is the main meteor shower this month.

They may be visible from the 14th to the 30th with the maximum on the 23rd April.

The best time to see them is after midnight, mainly because that is when the constellation of Lyra is high enough in the sky, but also as the maximum is reached at 05:00 hours on the 23rd. They should be favourable this year and occasionally produce fine displays, the last being in 1982.

6th April: Full Moon.

20th April: New Moon

13th April: Moon is at last quarter.

27th April: Moon is at First Quarter