

Big Dipper



The big dipper is a very common constellation that most people would think is a stand-alone; but in fact, it is part of a larger constellation called Ursa Major or the Great Bear. When using it for navigation the right end of the pan lines up with the north star Polaris which stays in the same point year-round.

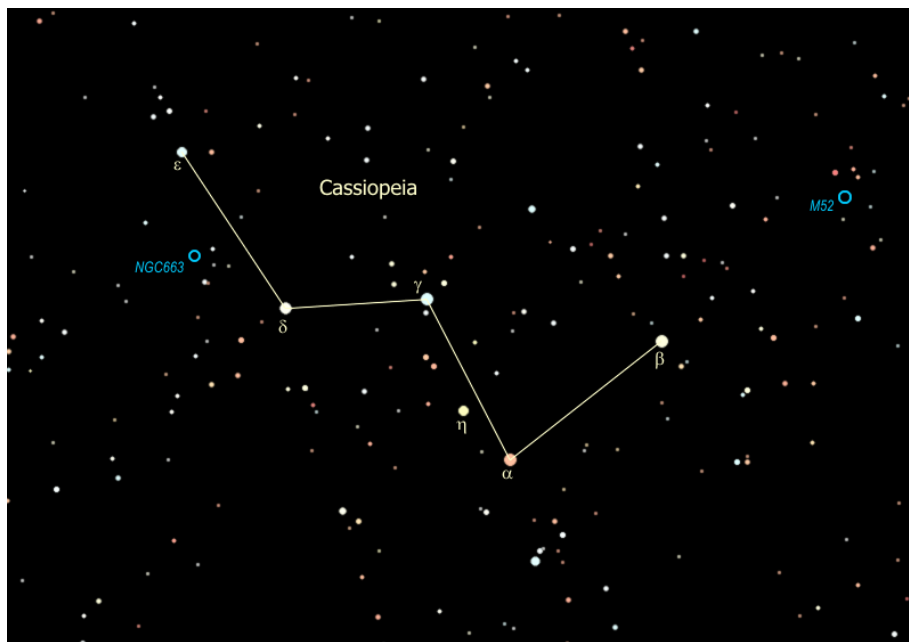
Orion



Orion was the son of Poseidon and Euryale. One day after angering Oenopion he was blinded and driven away. He found Hephaestus who helped him regain his sight. After Orion was healed he hunted with Artemis but after threatening to hunt every

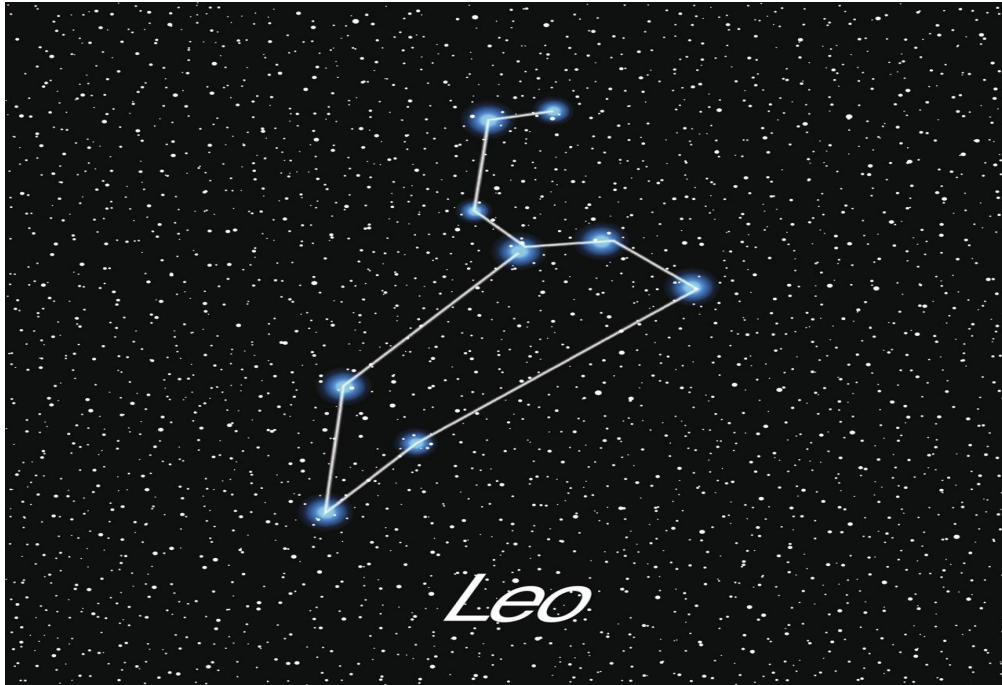
beast on the planet; Mother Earth sent a scorpion to kill him. After she succeeded Zeus added both Orion and the scorpion to the stars. Both his belt and sword were used in navigation as the belt ran east-west and his sword north-south.

Cassiopeia



The Queen of Aethiopia (upper Nile region) was the wife of King Cepheus and mother of Andromeda. All three of them were placed into the sky as constellations but she was forced into the sky as punishment. She claimed that her daughter was more beautiful than the Nereids (sea nymphs who help friendly sailors). So, Poseidon had Andromeda be sacrificed to Cetus but Perseus saved her.

Leo



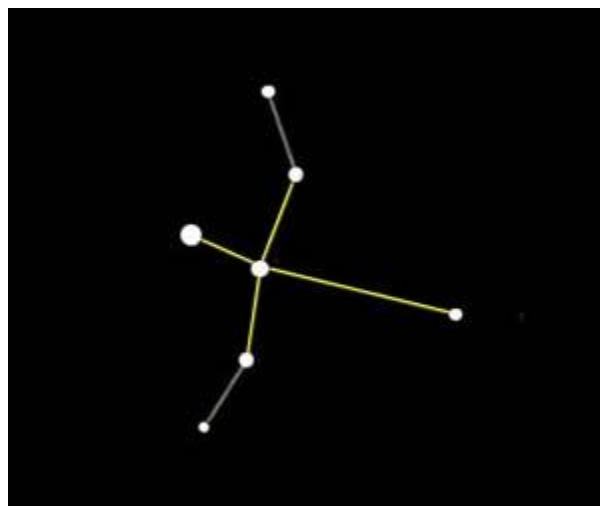
One of the earliest recognized constellations, first mentioned around 4000 B.C. In Greek mythology this was the Nemean Lion. The lion would capture women and lure warriors to their demise. Killing this lion was one of Hercules' 12 labors, and since the lion's pelt could not be pierced with any weapon so he had to kill it with his bare hands.

Lyra



Lyra represents Orpheus' lyre. It was made by Hermes from a turtle shell and is said to be the first lyre ever made. Orpheus was a legendary musician and poet from ancient Greek mythology. He married Eurydice and when she died from a snakebite he went to the underworld to save her, but failed and he spent the rest of his life playing the lyre.

Cygnus



In Greek mythology Cygnus represented a swan. Swans were mentioned several times, one as Zeus, Orpheus was turned into a swan and placed by his lyre (lyra) after he died. King Cygnus was also turned into a swan after his death during the Trojan War.