



# CAROLINA SKIES

APRIL 2024



1.5 hours after sunset  
early April 2024

Larger dots mark  
brighter stars

To use your star chart, hold it over your head. To avoid ruining your night vision with a bright flashlight, use a red light. Or stretch a red balloon or brown paper bag over your flashlight for a muted glow.

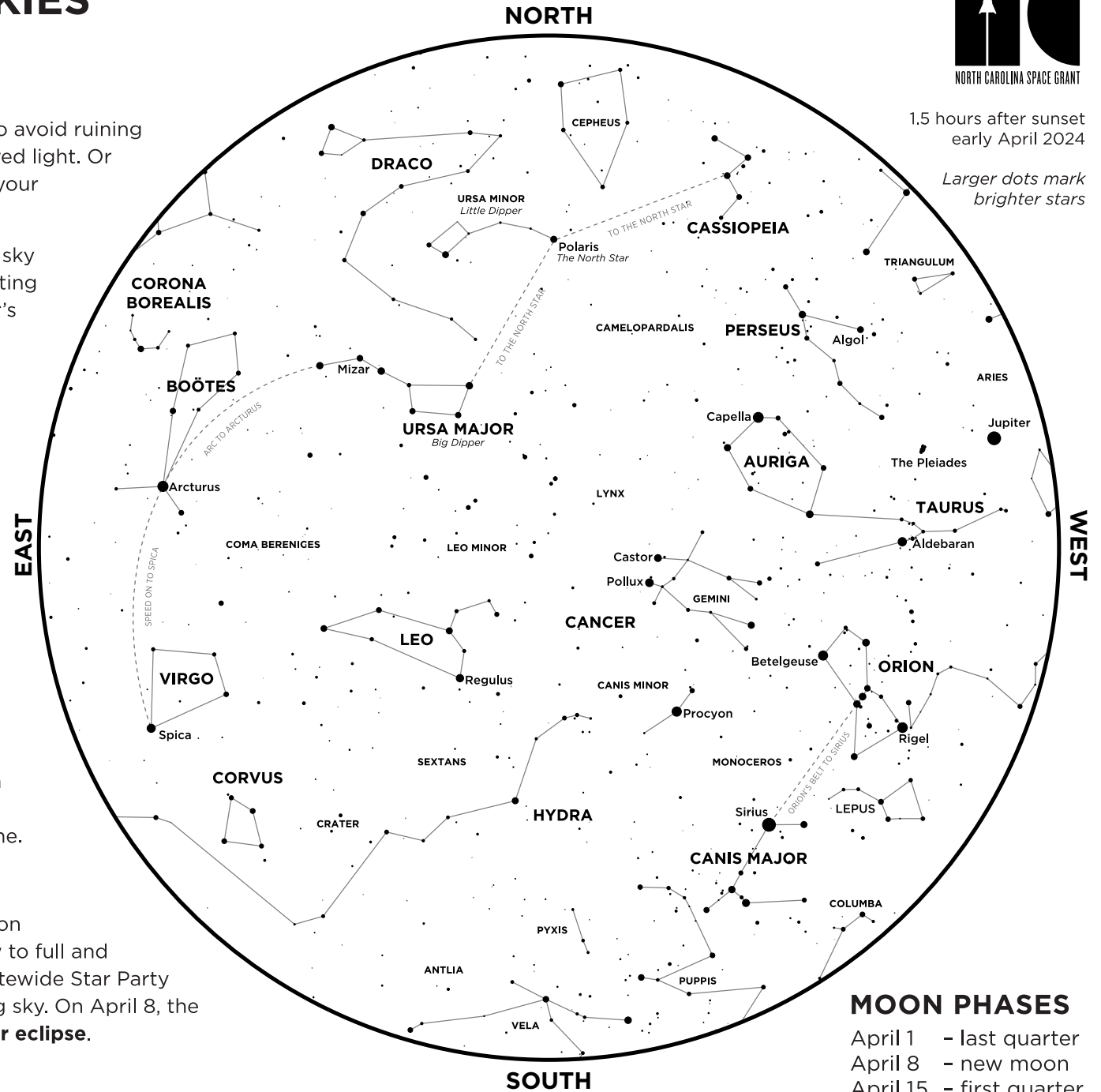
Align north on the chart with north in the night sky by finding Polaris, the North Star. Begin by locating the **Big Dipper**. Draw a line between the Dipper's "pointer stars" **to guide you to Polaris**, going about four and a half times the distance between the two pointer stars. The Dipper's handle "arcs" toward the orange star **Arcturus**, where you can "speed on to Spica" and then "curve on to Corvus."

The winter constellations Orion, Taurus, and Gemini are still visible in early spring in the west. Tracing a line through **Orion's belt** will lead you westward to **Aldebaran** (the orange "eye" of Taurus) or eastward to **Sirius** (the brightest star in the night sky).

These winter stars and constellations are followed across the sky by the spring patterns Leo, Ursa Major (which includes the Big Dipper), and Virgo. Find **Leo** the Lion just south of the Big Dipper by locating the backward question mark that outlines Leo's head and mane.

At nightfall, bright **Jupiter** appears in the west.

Where's the **Moon**? The Moon's apparent position changes as it goes through its phases from new to full and back again in about a "moonth." During the Statewide Star Party (April 5-8, 2024), the Moon is not in the evening sky. On April 8, the Moon passes in front of the Sun, creating a **solar eclipse**.



## MOON PHASES

- April 1 - last quarter
- April 8 - new moon
- April 15 - first quarter
- April 23 - full moon

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