

The Northern Sky

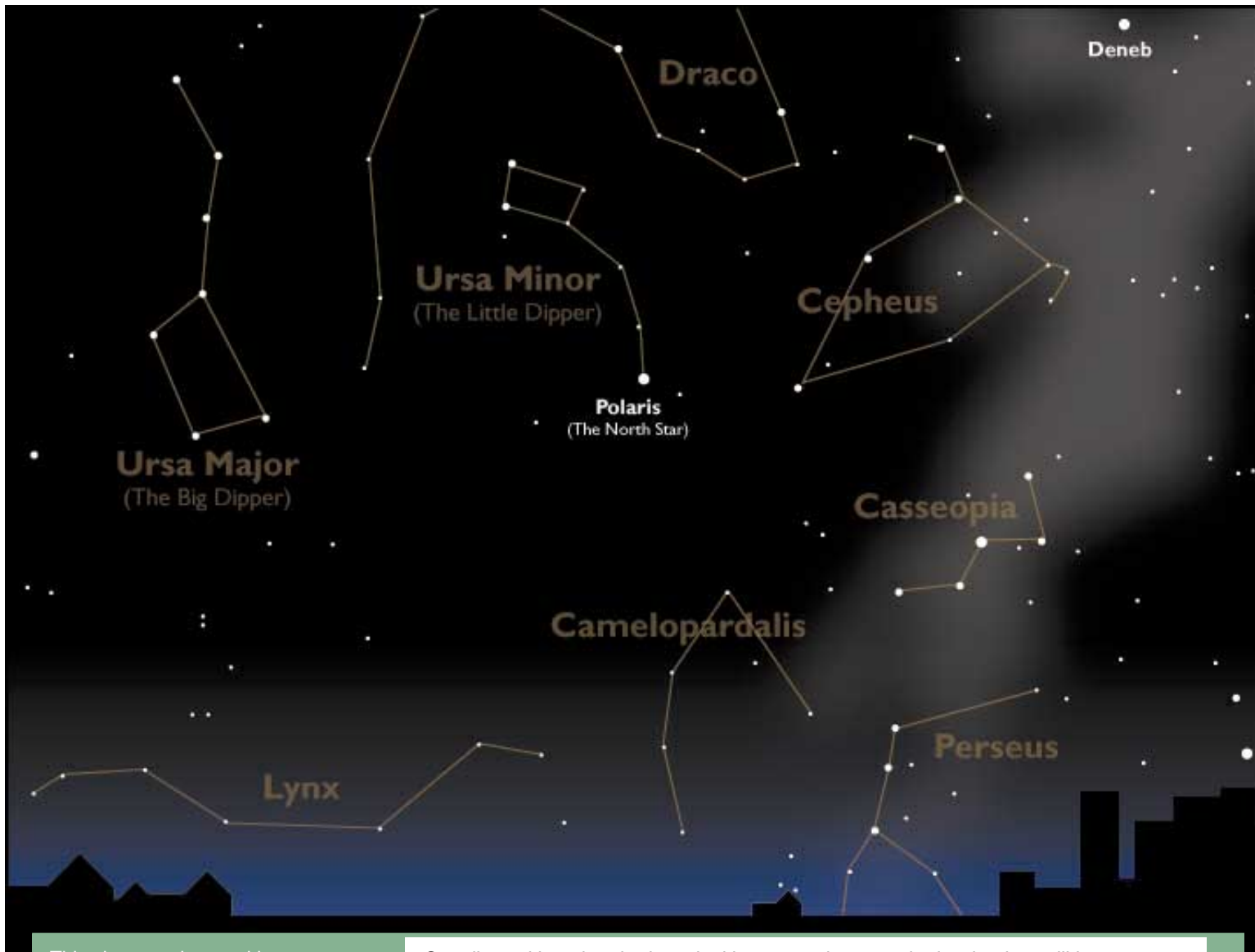
The Stars and Constellations

Polaris, or the **North Star**, is so-called because it always points to the north. This star lies directly above the **Earth's** north pole and as the Earth spins each day, the stars in the sky rotate around it.

Most people are familiar with the **Big and Little Dippers**. But few know they are actually small parts of much larger constellations. As long as the night sky is clear, they are visible all year round.

Casseopia is easily recognized by the familiar "W" in the sky - it sits "on top" of the fuzzy **Milky Way**. Like the Dippers, it is visible above the horizon in any season.

Our galaxy, the **Milky Way**, is the cloudy patch on the right of the chart. The milky effect is actually billions of stars so far away that, from a dark sky, they look like a cloud.



This chart can be used in any year, during the following dates and times...

July 1 at Midnight
July 15 at 11:00pm
August 1 at 10:00 pm
August 15 at 9:00 pm

Standing, with a clear horizon, looking due North.

This view spans horizontally from north west to north east (left to right).

The brightness of the stars is indicated by their size, but the nearer to the horizon

they are, the harder they will be to see.

The stars on the chart are the stars you should see from within city limits, there will be many more visible if you are far in the country.



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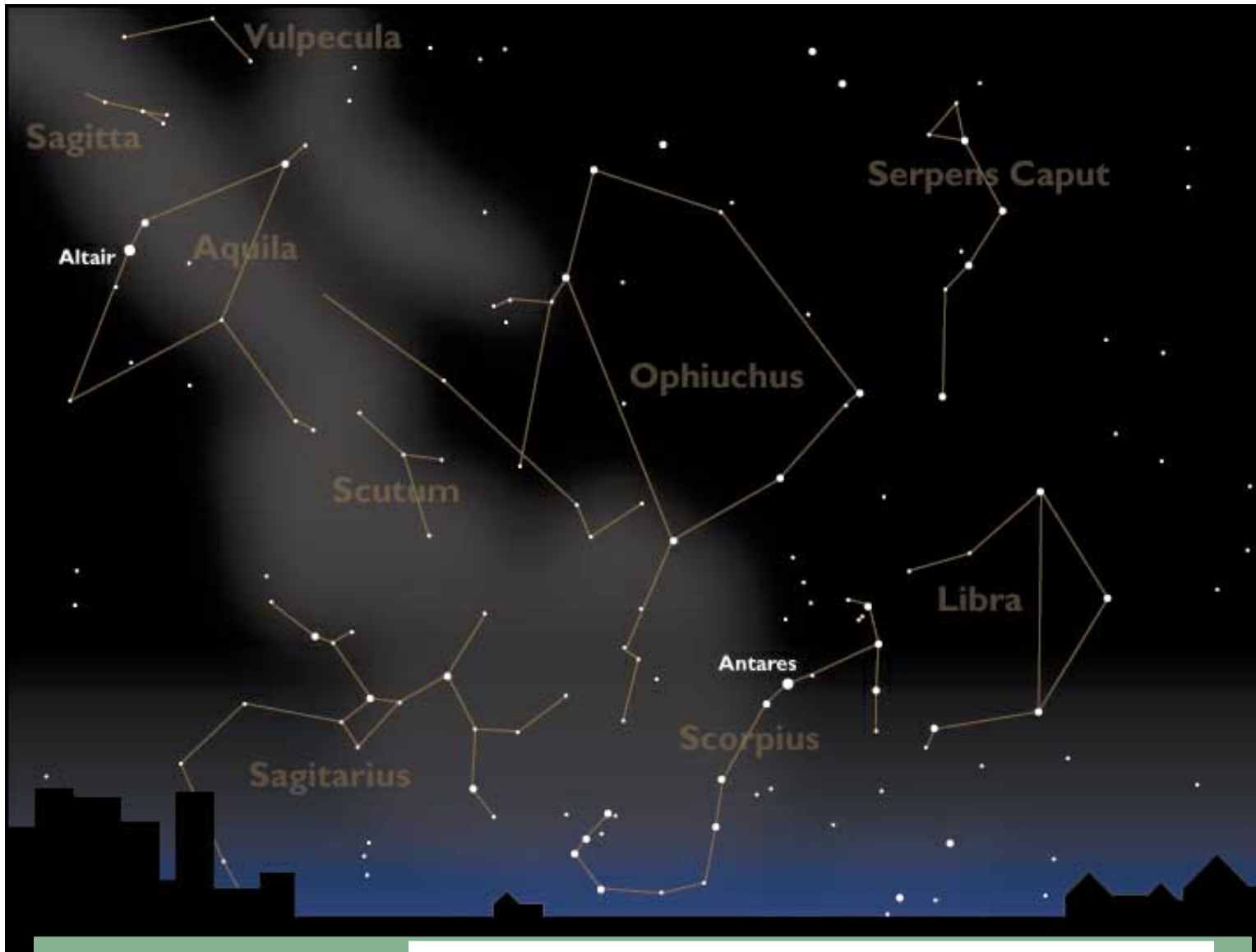
The Stars and Constellations

In the southern sky, you can find the constellations of the **Zodiac**. During the summer months, **Sagittarius**, **Scorpius** and **Libra** are low, near the horizon. The **Sun** will actually travel through these constellations six months from now.

Sagittarius is the easiest constellation to spot. It appears to be a teapot, and like the **Big Dipper**, is a smaller part of a much larger constellation. **Can you see the teapot?**

The centre of the **Milky Way** is located in **Sagittarius**. This is the densest area of the **Milky Way** and with the aid of binoculars, you can see many star clusters and nebulae (glowing balls of gas and dust).

The reddish star **Antares**, known as the **"Heart of the Scorpion"**, is a huge red-giant star. This star is so large, that if placed at the centre of our solar system, its surface would extend past the orbit of **Mars**, almost to **Jupiter**!



This chart can be used in any year, during the following dates and times...

July 1 at Midnight
July 15 at 11:00pm
August 1 at 10:00 pm
August 15 at 9:00 pm

Stand, with a clear horizon, looking due South.

This chart spans horizontally from southeast to southwest (left to right).

The brightness of the stars is indicated by their size; however the closer they are to

the horizon, the harder they will be to see.

You should be able to see these stars in the city, however if you are in the country you will be able to see many more.

