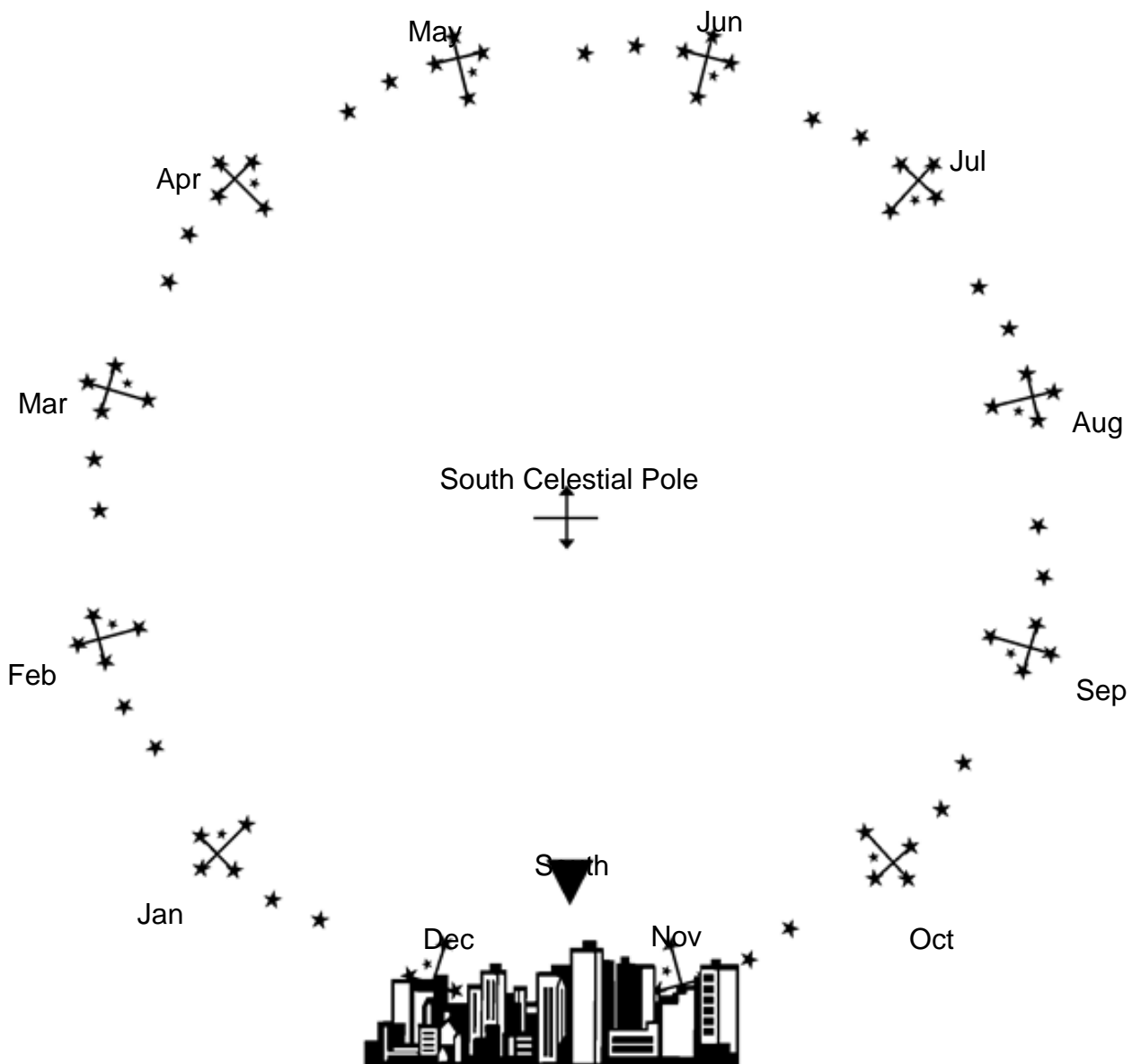


The Southern Cross and how to find south

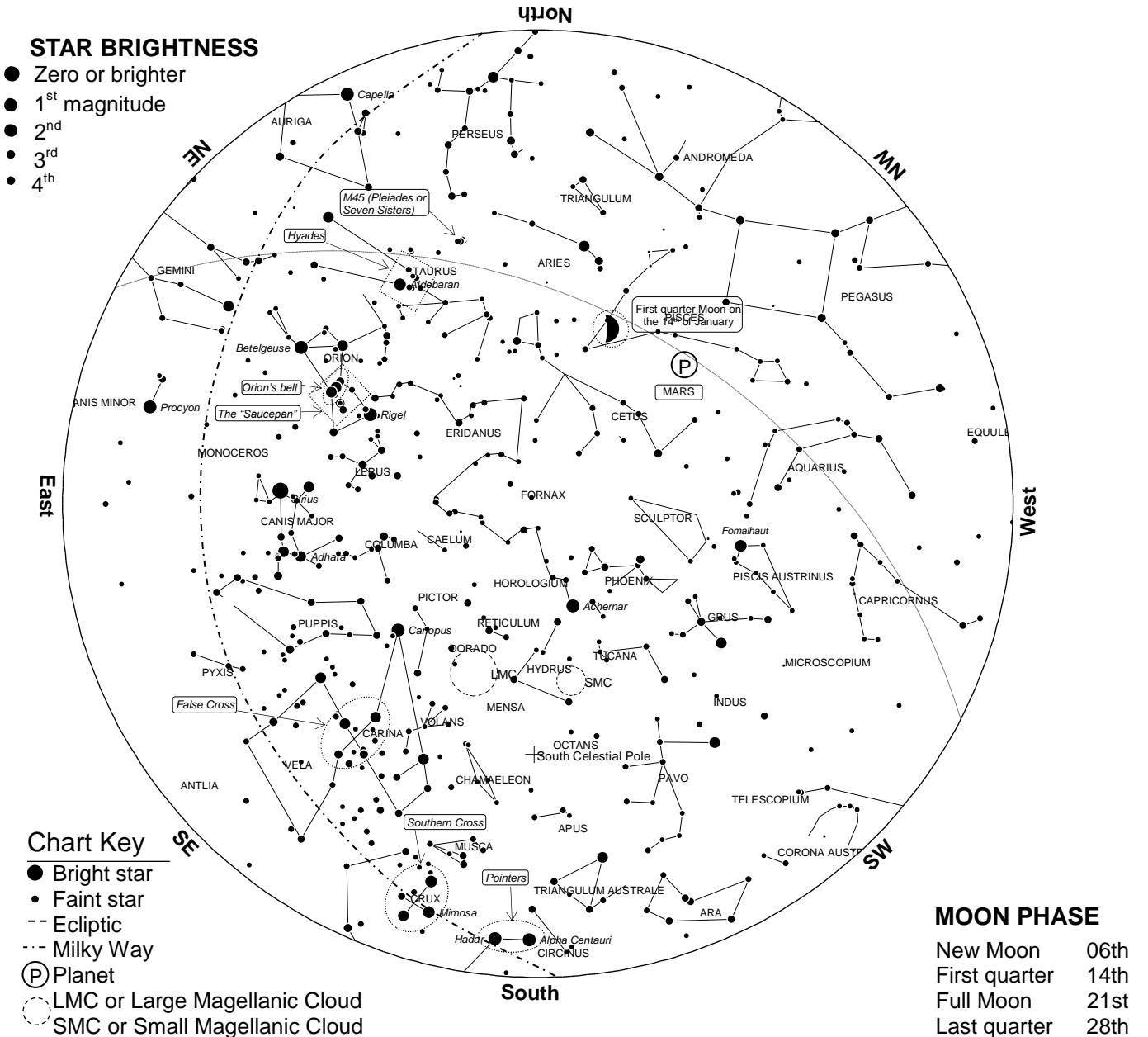
The Southern Cross can be seen to rotate around the south celestial pole. The picture below shows the position of the Southern Cross on the 15th of each month at 8pm EST. To locate the Southern Cross simply look south and note its position for the current month. The spacing between each month on the image also corresponds to 2 hours, so if you look on March 15 at 10 pm, the Cross will be found in the April position. If you look on September 15 at 6pm it will be in the August position.

Once you have located the Southern Cross it can be used to find true south. Simply extend the longer axis of the Southern Cross from top to bottom by 4.5 times its length and you will reach the south celestial pole. Then drop a line straight down to the ground to find south, and you'll never get lost again!



Night sky map

January 2019



THE CHART

This star chart shows the stars and constellations visible in the night sky for Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Hobart in January at about 8:30pm (Daylight Savings Time), or 7:30pm (Local Standard Time) for Perth and Brisbane. For Darwin and similar northerly locations, the chart will still apply, but some stars will be lost off the southern edge while extra stars will be visible to the north. Stars down to a brightness or magnitude limit of 4.5 are shown on the star chart. To use this star chart, rotate the chart so that the direction you are facing (north, south, east or west) is shown at the bottom. The centre of the chart represents the point directly above your head, called the zenith point, and the outer circular edge represents the horizon.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JANUARY 2019

The best time to view the Moon with a small telescope or pair of binoculars is a few days either side of its first quarter phase on the 14th of January. Mars is high in the north-western sky after sunset in the constellation of Pisces. Prominent in the sky this month, are the constellations of Canis Major (the Great Dog) which includes Sirius – the brightest star in the sky, Orion (the Hunter), which includes the recognisable southern hemisphere asterism of the “Saucepan”. Crux (the Southern Cross) is low in the south-eastern sky and can be located by looking for the two adjacent Pointer stars in the constellation of Centaurus (the Centaur).