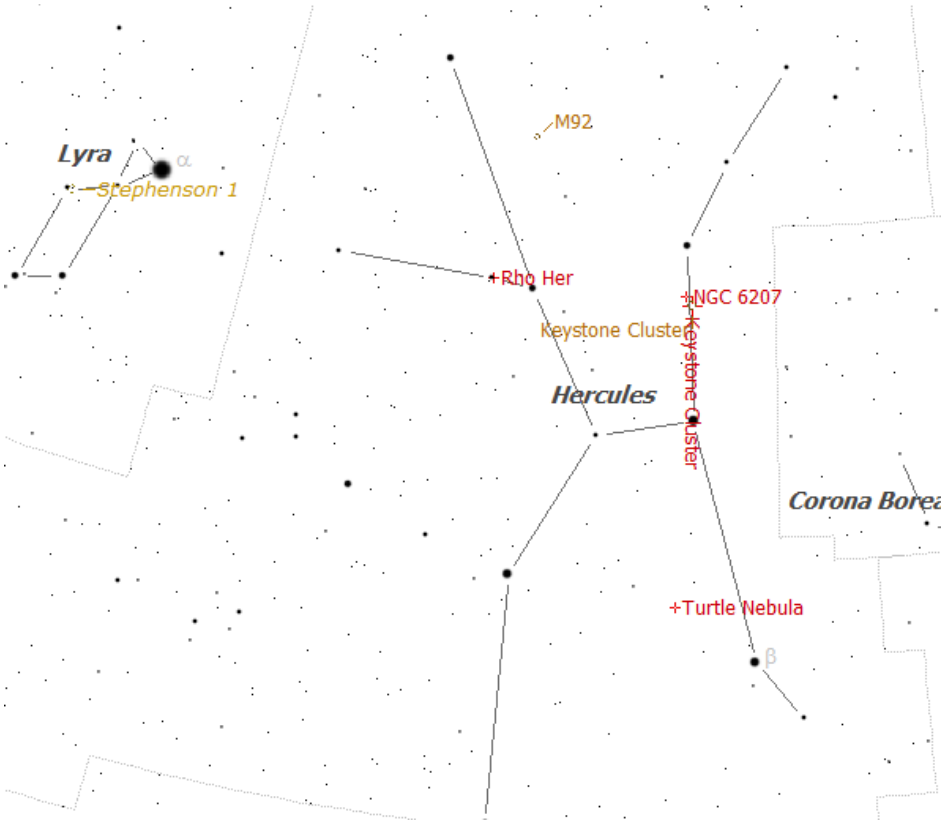
Objects of the Month—Hercules

Volume 1, Issue 1 May—2012

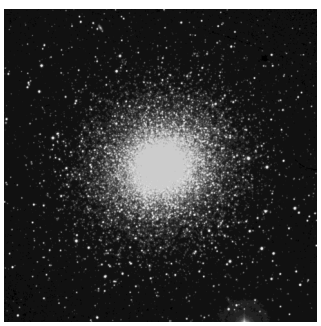
Finder chart



Hercules is rising in the east this month placing it in a good position for observing after 9:30pm local time.

Four objects are presented here. Observe each one of these objects over the next month and bring your observations to the next club meeting where we will discuss what we saw and a new list will be distributed.

Binocular Object—M13, The Keystone Cluster

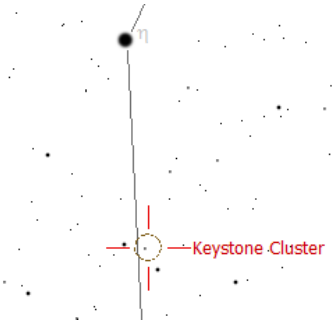


M13 is a beautiful globular cluster with a visual magnitude of 5.8 and a diameter of 20 arc minutes. It is truly a show case object in the telescope. However, because of its brightness it is on the very edge of being visible to the unaided eye. This makes it a great binocular object.

Globulars are classified 1 to 12 by how concentrated they are., 1 being low, 12 being highly concentrated. M13 is classified as a 5.

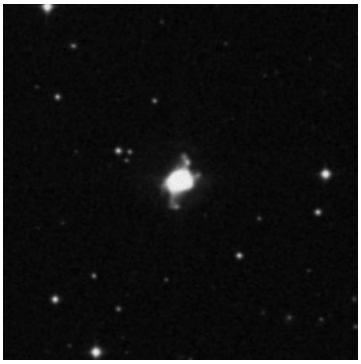
M13 is 145 light years in diameter and about 25,000 light years distant.

Look for the chains of stars radiating from the core. Do they remind of something?



Objects of the Month—Hercules

Telescopic Image—NGC 6210, The Turtle Nebula

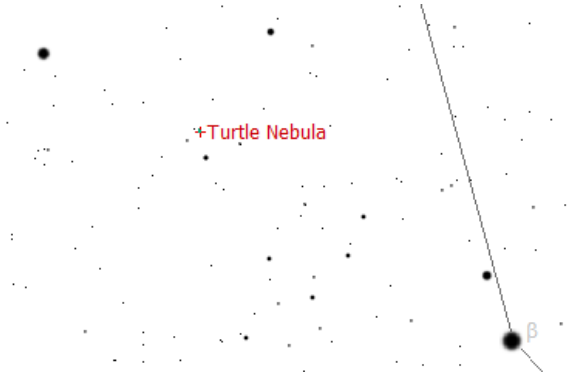


NGC 6210 is a planetary nebula. It has a visual magnitude of 12.7 and measure 20 arc seconds across.

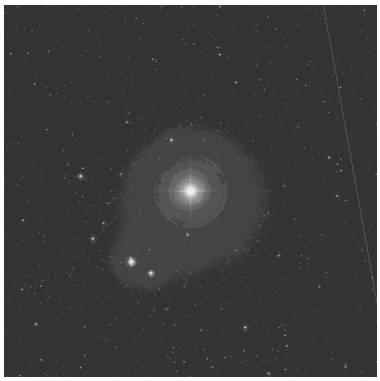
This is the remains of a star that is slightly less massive than our sun. The star has thrown off its outer layers to make this beautiful object.

Successive spheres of gas overlay one another to make the turtle shape for which it is named.

If you are having difficulty seeing the turtle shape, try using averted vision and see what happens to the size and shape of the nebula.

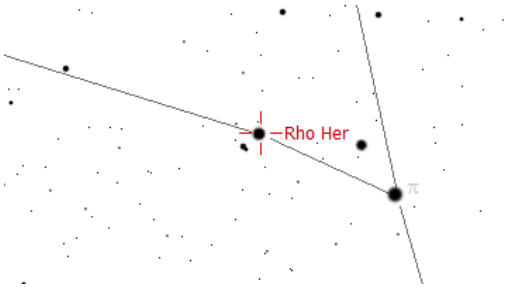


Binary Star—Rho Hercules

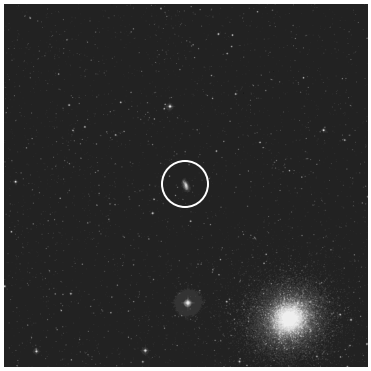


Binaries can be a nice challenge and change of pace for telescopes. The challenge part is trying to split the pair. Rho and its close neighbor have a separation of only 4 arc seconds which can be difficult except for the fact that the two are pretty close in brightness, 4.17 and 5.47.

The other thing one needs to observe for is the color of the pair. Some can exhibit spectacular color contrasts. Unfortunately, this pair are pretty close in color.



Challenge Object - NGC 6207



This month's challenge object is a faint galaxy about 30 arc minutes away from M13.

NGC6207 is a mag 12 galaxy, measuring 1x3 arc minutes.

The galaxy is a spiral tipped about half way toward us.

Use as high of magnification as possible to reveal the core. Does it appear stellar like, or is there some diameter to it?