

WEEKLY SKY REPORT

May 3 – May 9, 2026

SPACE STATIONS

The International Space Station is back in the night sky! There are seven crew members on board as part of Expedition 74, which began on December 8, 2025 and will end this summer. It is being led by Sergey Kud-Sverchkov, who has during two missions spent 336+ days in space. Here are some good passes visible from Berkeley:

May 7 9:58pm South West, Altitude 20°; 10:00pm North West, Altitude: 66°; Mag. -3.5

May 8 9:10pm South West, Altitude 20°; 9:13pm South East, Altitude 68°; Mag. -3.9

CONSTELLATIONS

The Gemini Twins are high overhead as it gets dark with Jupiter seeming to be a jewel in Pollux's navel. Heading towards San Francisco for a night of adventure are Orion and Taurus, though Orion's dog Sirius may end up in South San Francisco. Leo the lion is a bit south of the middle of the sky around 10pm. On the other side of the sky from Leo, Ursa Major is pointing the way with the two stars on the right of the pitcher to her North Star, her cub Ursa Minor. Mama bear's tail is also pointing to the red giant star Arcturus, known as the Guardian of the Bear. It is the fourth-brightest star in the sky and is an aging star, about 7 billion years old. While it has close to the same mass as our sun, Arcturus is 25 times our star's size and 170 times as luminous. This star rests at the bottom of the constellation Boötes, also known as the asterism The Giant Ice Cream Cone; next to it is Corona Borealis, or the asterism The Scoop of Ice Cream that Fell off the Giant Ice Cream Cone.

PLANETS

Our sister planet Venus is now easily visible as the Evening Star, which it will remain until fall. The mighty Jupiter is almost drifting toward San Francisco as it gets dark. Saturn is now sharing the morning sky with Mercury and Mars. Come August, Saturn will return to the east in the late night sky.

Telescopes @ Berkeley Public Library!

We have a Orion StarBlast Astro Reflector Telescope that you can borrow for 1 week. Place a hold on it and then pick it up from your branch when it is ready. It is fairly easy to carry at 13 lbs., and stands about 2 feet tall.

Here's what you get:

"A great compact grab-and-go telescope designed for entry-level and intermediate astronomy enthusiasts. Substantial 4.5" aperture and fast f/4 focal ratio provides bright, detailed views of solar system targets like the Moon and planets, as well as wide-field celestial objects like nebulas and star clusters."

We also have pairs of binoculars to check out!



Much of the information for this report comes from the wonderful web site, Heavens Above. You can enter your home city location and bookmark it for easy access: <http://www.heavens-above.com>. Other stellar sources include: <http://www.space.com> and <http://www.nasa.gov>. And check spacex.com for launches.

Binoculars @ Berkeley Public Library!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cal Falcons program, we have 9 Vortex-Raptor binocular kits that you can put on hold and pick up at the location of your choice.

Here's what you get:

Porro prism performance in a mid-size, wide-angle design, the Raptors deliver a bright, crisp image with excellent color fidelity - even in low light conditions. With a wide range of interpupillary distance, they can easily be adjusted to fit anyone in the family, making them ideal for serious, hard-core youth hunters. The kit comes with a copy of The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western America and a pocket guide to local birds of the SF Bay Area. But it is also great for looking at planets, the moon and the stars!

