

World Asterisms Project

An Introduction to the Sky Cultures of the World



Volume Two, Appendix One:

Occurrence of Asterisms in Each IAU Constellation

Version 2025.9

© Charles Ennis, Sunshine Coast Centre, RASC 2025

Asterisms in IAU Constellations:

From the beginning of this World Asterisms project, we've been keeping track of how many of the over 17,000 asterisms we've listed so far are associated with each of the 88 IAU constellations. This is recorded under each constellation listed in the Handbook, but we've also created the table below to show these statistics. In some cases, we know that a peoples had a particular asterism, but we do not yet know precisely where it was located in the sky: In this case they are listed under the "unknown" category at the bottom of the list. As research continues asterisms will hopefully get moved from this list to the appropriate constellation.

Creation of asterisms began with unaided visual observing by our ancestors. You can clearly see how brighter constellations got more attention than dimmer ones. Some of those dimmer constellations were created to fit into the zodiac. After optical aids such as telescopes and binoculars came into use, the number of asterisms beyond the view of the unaided eye increased, and this began to show which constellations had nebulae, clusters, and galaxies to view. Most recently technical advancements in astrophotography and the use of space telescopes has revealed even dimmer objects, many of which end up with names due to human pareidolia. In 2025 I started recording how many asterisms in each constellation were visible to the unaided eye VS telescopic observations.

IAU Constellation	Abbreviation	Total	Unaided	Telescopic
Andromeda, the Chained Maiden	And	264	195	69
Antlia, the Air Pump	Ant	42	6	36
Apus, Bird of Paradise	Aps	33	14	19
Aquarius, the Water Bearer	Aqr	306	248	58
Aquila, the Eagle	Aql	310	248	62
Ara, the Altar	Ara	84	58	26
Aries, the Ram	Ari	211	191	20
Auriga, the Charioteer	Aur	376	304	72
Boötes, the Herdsman	Boo	373	320	53
Caelum, the Engraving Tool	Cae	14	7	7
Camelopardalis, the Giraffe	Cam	105	45	60
Cancer, the Crab	Cnc	211	183	28
Canes Venatici, the Hunting Dogs	CVn	114	37	77
Canis Major, the Great Dog	CMa	422	361	61
Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog	CMi	138	133	5

Capricornus, the Sea Goat	Cap	190	170	20
Carina, the Keel	Car	271	203	68
Cassiopeia, the Seated Queen	Cas	356	184	172
Centaurus, the Centaur	Cen	385	257	128
Cepheus, the King	Cep	267	106	161
Cetus, the Sea Monster	Cet	244	141	103
Chamaeleon, the Chameleon	Cha	14	5	9
Circinus, the Compass	Cir	20	10	10
Columba, the Dove	Col	51	39	12
Coma Berenices, Berenices' Hair	Com	170	98	72
Corona Australis, the Southern Crown	CrA	79	65	14
Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown	CrB	173	163	10
Corvus, the Crow	Crv	109	92	17
Crater, the Cup	Crt	80	63	17
Crux, the Southern Cross	Cru	299	289	10
Cygnus, the Swan	Cyg	450	213	237
Delphinus, the Dolphin	Del	142	107	35
Dorado, the Swordfish	Dor	121	87	34
Draco, the Dragon	Dra	331	228	103
Equuleus, the Little Horse	Equ	42	34	8
Eridanus, the River	Eri	206	119	87
Fornax, the Furnace	For	54	9	45
Gemini, the Twins	Gem	430	377	53
Grus, the Crane	Gru	72	35	37
Hercules	Her	253	175	78
Horologium, the Clock	Hor	19	3	16
Hydra, the Female Water Snake	Hya	312	178	134
Hydrus, the Male Water Snake	Hyi	17	8	9
Indus, the Indian	Ind	31	11	20
Lacerta, the Lizard	Lac	69	31	37
Leo, the Lion	Leo	460	366	94

Leo Minor, the Lesser Lion	LMi	47	21	26
Lepus, the Hare	Lep	74	45	29
Libra, the Scales	Lib	193	156	37
Lupus, the Wolf	Lup	111	91	20
Lynx, the Lynx	Lyn	118	76	42
Lyra, the Lyre	Lyr	221	193	28
Mensa, the Table	Men	12	6	6
Microscopium, the Microscope	Mic	25	17	8
Monoceros, the Unicorn	Mon	115	24	92
Musca, the Fly	Mus	37	26	11
Norma, the Carpenter's Square	Nor	30	12	18
Octans, the Octant	Oct	23	6	17
Ophiuchus, the Serpent Bearer	Oph	261	156	105
Orion, the Hunter	Ori	1058	948	110
Pavo, the Peacock	Pav	66	14	52
Pegasus, the Winged Horse	Peg	327	211	116
Perseus, the Hero	Per	235	158	77
Phoenix, the Phoenix	Phe	45	21	24
Pictor, the Painter's Easel	Pic	12	2	10
Pisces, the Fishes	Psc	227	169	58
Piscis Austrinus, the Southern Fish	PsA	108	94	14
Puppis, the Stern	Pup	157	75	82
Pyxis, the Compass	Pyx	32	20	12
Reticulum, the Reticule	Ret	21	8	13
Sagitta, the Arrow	Sge	65	43	22
Sagittarius, the Archer	Sgr	415	256	159
Scorpius, the Scorpion	Sco	599	514	85
Sculptor, the Sculptor	Scl	52	10	42
Scutum, the Shield	Sct	38	10	28
Serpens, the Serpent	Ser	122	75	47
Sextans, the Sextant	Sex	39	8	31
Taurus, the Bull	Tau	1176	1101	75
Telescopium, the Telescope	Tel	36	22	14

Triangulum, the Triangle	Tri	80	62	18
Triangulum Australe, the Southern Triangle	TrA	31	19	12
Tucana, the Toucan	Tuc	98	76	22
Ursa Major, the Great Bear	UMa	959	790	169
Ursa Minor, the Lesser Bear	UMi	403	385	18
Vela, the Sails	Vel	145	86	59
Virgo, the Maiden	Vir	482	296	186
Volans, the Flying Fish	Vol	21	9	12
Vulpecula, the Fox	Vul	65	15	52
Unknown		323		