

Exploring Boötes and Canes Venatici - Educator's Guide (Ages 8-11)



At the end of these Night Sky activities students will understand:

- Boötes and Canes Venatici are springtime constellations
- The orange giant star Arcturus is the brightest star in Boötes
- Cor Caroli is the brightest star in Canes Venatici
- The globular cluster Messier 3 is located in Canes Venatici

Astronomy background information

According to myth, Boötes represents a herdsman guarding his flock from the two bear constellations, Ursa Major and Minor. Boötes the Herdsman has released his two hunting dogs Canes Venatici, represented by a constellation of their own.

The second brightest star in the sky, Arcturus is a near neighbour of the Sun being only about 36 light years away from us. Arcturus is slightly more massive than the Sun and considerably older. It has expanded into its orange giant stage.

The brightest star in Canes Venatici is Cor Caroli, meaning “Charles’s Heart”. This name was given to it to commemorate the executed King Charles I of England. Cor Caroli is actually a binary (double) star, this can be seen with a small telescope.

The spectacular globular cluster Messier 3 is part of Canes Venatici. Through binoculars it appears as a fuzzy star but it is actually a tight ball of about half a million stars squeezed together.

Night Sky App Essential Settings

Go to Night Sky Settings  and make sure the following Preferences are set.

Turn On these Effects:

Real Sky Representation
Environment Based Horizon
Show Constellation Lines
Enable Messier Objects

Turn Off these Effects:

Show Satellites
Daytime Effect
Show Trajectories and Orbits
Show Ecliptic Line
Show Glass Mythology (at start of Activity)

Accessible Learning:

- Text size can be increased in the Preferences section
- Star numbers can be reduced by sliding two fingers down the screen

