



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

- The constellation Taurus depicts a bull
- Its brightest star is Aldebaran
- It contains the Pleiades, a cluster of young stars
- The Crab Nebula is found in the constellation

Astronomy background information

The constellation Taurus represents a bull. In the sky it seems to be charging towards Orion. Aldebaran is the brightest star in the constellation. Its orange colour shows that it is an aging star. It is about 65 light years away, so we are seeing with light that left it 65 years ago. Aldebaran means “the Follower” as it seems to follow the Pleiades star cluster across the sky. The very young stars in the Pleiades all formed together. Eventually they will drift apart.

Despite being called the Seven Sisters it is virtually impossible to see more than six stars in the cluster without a telescope. In fact, the whole cluster contains more than 500 stars.

The Crab Nebula is also in Taurus. This shows where a star destroyed itself in a rare explosive event called a supernova. It was witnessed by people in China, North America and the Middle East in 1054 CE. The Nebula is a mass of expanding gas. In the 1840s, the Irish astronomer Lord Rosse observed the nebula and named it the Crab as it reminded him of one.

Night Sky App Essential Settings

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

Turn On these Effects:

Show Glass Mythology (at start of activity)
Show Constellation Lines (at start of activity)
Show Messier Objects

Turn Off these Effects:

Show Satellites
Real Sky Representation

Accessible Learning:

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

