



## August 2018 Highlight: Sirius and the “Dog Days” of Summer

- ★ The ancient Romans and other cultures were aware that the brightest star in the nighttime skies, **Sirius** (nicknamed the **Dog Star** because it is located in the constellation Canis Major – the Greater Dog), rose in conjunction with the Sun during the period from July 3 to about August 11 each year.
- ★ They felt that the combination of the Sun and Sirius, rising and crossing the daytime skies together, was responsible for the extreme heat at the height of summer!
- ★ Some say that **summer's "dog days"** signify hot, sultry days not fit for a dog!



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On **August 11<sup>th</sup>** and the next few mornings, look low in the east-southeast about 20 minutes before sunrise – around 6:30 a.m. – for the **helical rising** (first dawn visibility) of **Sirius** as it emerges from the Sun’s glare.