

[Astronomy Club of Asheville](#)

April 2022 Sky Events

The Planet Mercury Visits the Pleiades Star Cluster

On the nights of **April 28-30**, the innermost planet Mercury passes nearby and in front of the Pleiades open star cluster. This action takes place in the zodiac constellation Taurus, the Bull. The Pleiades star cluster, also known as the “Seven Sisters”, is some 440 light years behind Mercury.

Because Mercury orbits so close to the Sun, it is rarely seen, and it is usually only visible during dawn and dusk, when it appears close to the horizon. It is the most elusive of the classic “naked-eye” planets to observe.

But on April 29th, Mercury reaches a very high eastern elongation – the best of this year for mid-northern observers. So, here is your chance to catch this elusive planet. Go out about 45 minutes after sunset, and find Mercury and the Pleiades low in the sky. Using binoculars will help; enjoy the view!

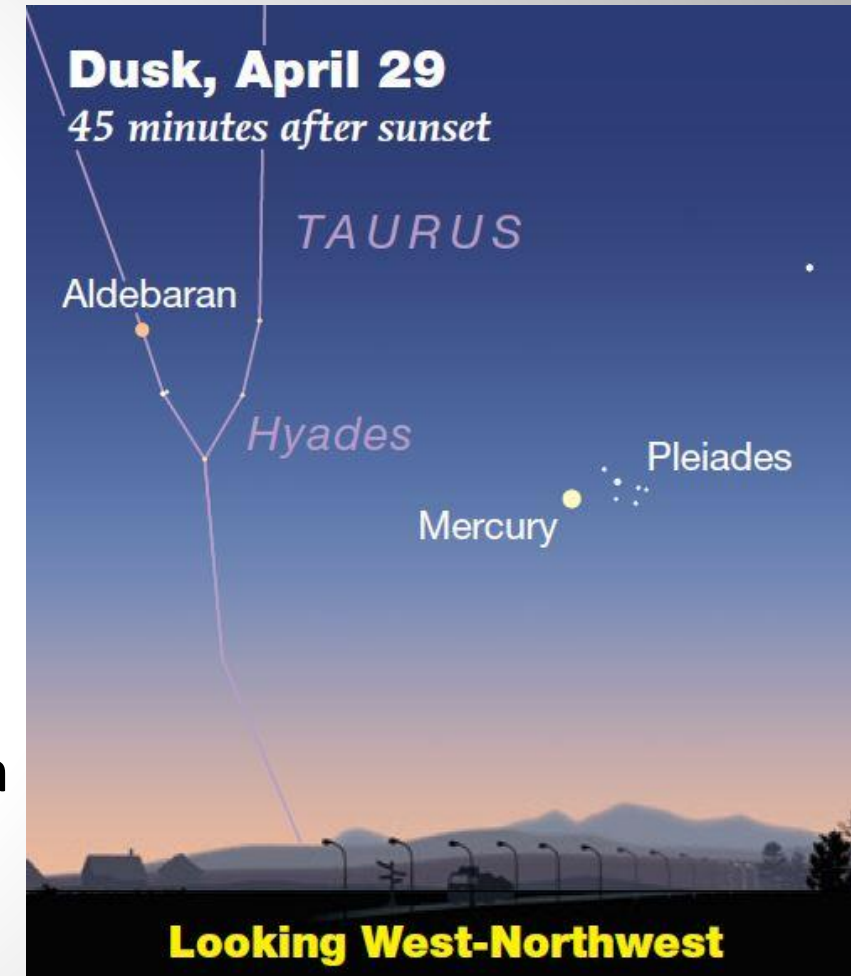


Illustration courtesy of [SKY & TELESCOPE](#)

Mercury shines at a magnitude of +0.3