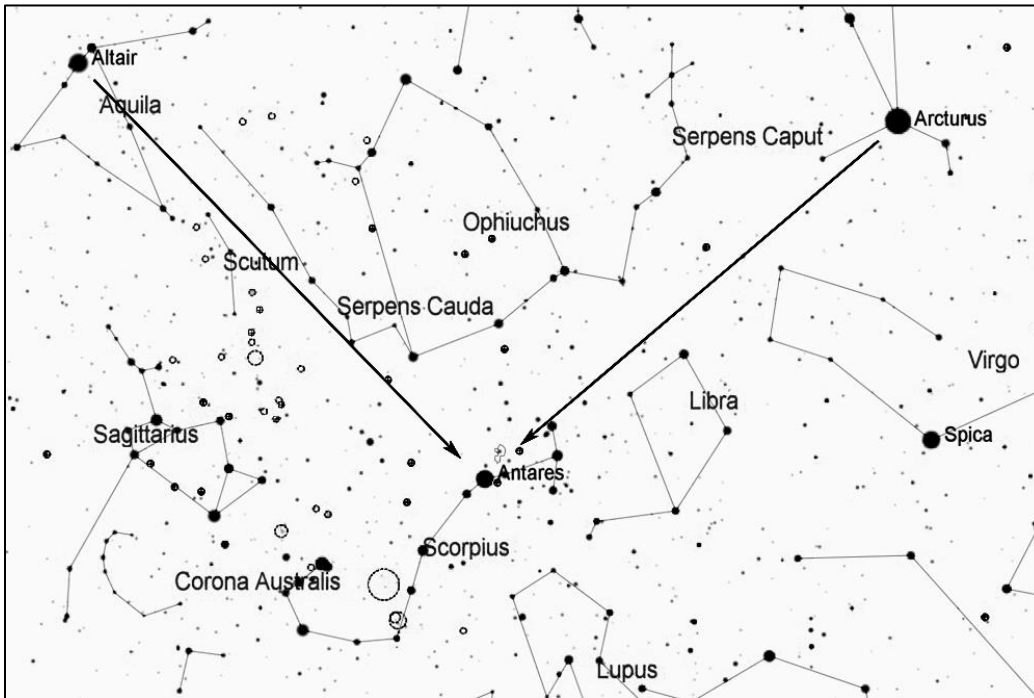


## Messier 4, Globular Cluster in Scorpius

At a distance of about 6800 light years, M4 is one of the closest globular clusters. It is easy to spot with binoculars. Through a telescope, one distinct feature is the row of bright stars running from north to south through the center of the cluster. Compared to other bright globular clusters, it is fairly small and contains fewer stars. Messier 4 may contain something like 10,000 stars, whereas some of the larger globular cluster contain 500,000 or more stars.



Start by finding first magnitude Antares, the brightest and reddest star low in the southern sky on summer evenings. To get oriented, note that Antares is about 60 degrees southwest of Altair (part of the Summer Triangle) and a similar distance southeast of Arcturus (part of the Spring Triangle). Antares represents the eye of Scorpius, and on a clear night you should be able to see the curving shape of the scorpion if you have a good view of the southern horizon.

Once you locate Antares, M4 is easy to find. Look about 2 degrees west for  $\sigma$  (sigma) Scorpii. M4 is midway between and below Antares and  $\sigma$ , slightly more than 1 degree away from each star.

