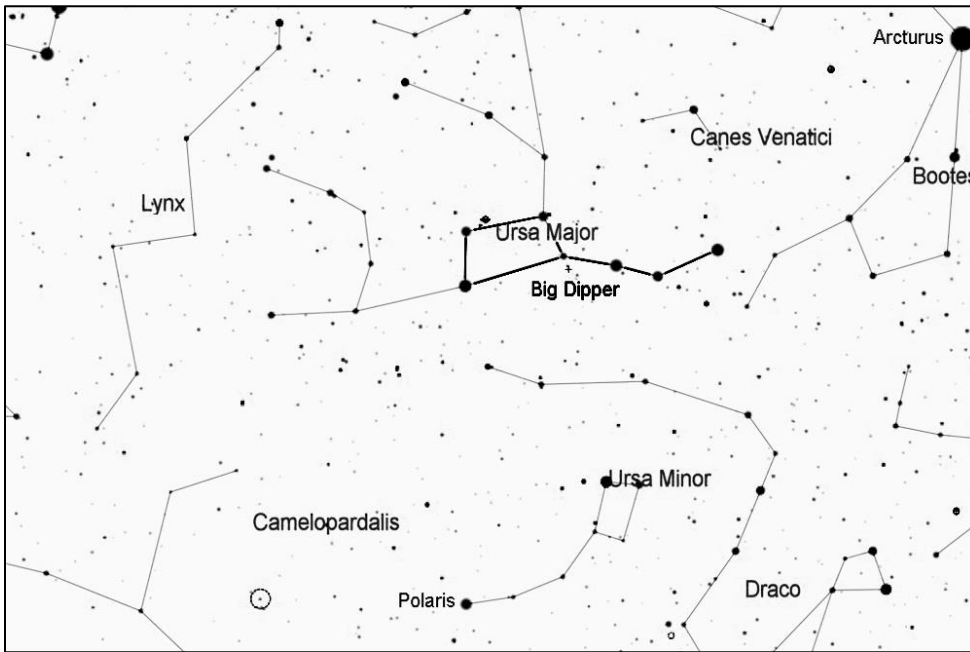


NGC 2403 (Caldwell 7), Galaxy in Camelopardalis

This is a large and bright spiral galaxy (magnitude 8.2) that is only about 8 million light years away. It can be spotted in a small telescope and even with binoculars if you can find it in a fairly empty region of the northern sky. In larger scopes, details can be seen in its spiral arms. This galaxy is thought to be part of a group that includes the better-known pair M81 and M82.



Start by finding the Big Dipper, one of the most recognizable star patterns in the sky. It is part of the constellation Ursa Major, the big bear. It is shown here upside down, high in the sky above Polaris, which is where it can be found during the evenings in spring and summer. For other seasons and times of night, rotate the chart as needed to match what you see in the northern sky.

Visualize a line across the rim of the Big Dipper's bowl, and extend this line a slightly longer distance outside the bowl, as shown below, to reach the 3rd magnitude star 23 Ursae Majoris. Then take a slight left turn and go about 6 degrees and you will come to a small triangle of 5th magnitude stars (circled). Continue in this same direction for another 6 degrees and you will reach NGC 2403. It is easy to get lost in this part of the sky because there are no bright stars in the area.

