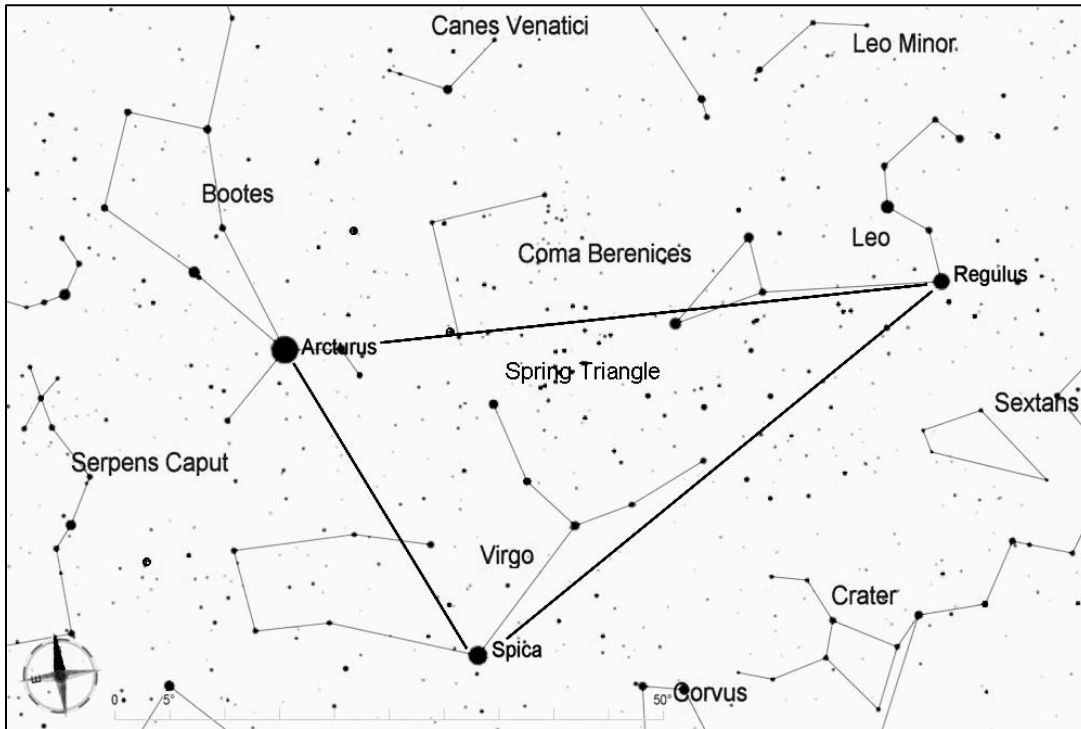


NGC 3185, 3187, 3190, and 3193, Galaxies in Leo

This tight group of four galaxies is about 80 million light years away. It is sometimes called the Gamma Leonis Galaxy Group because it is just 2 degrees north of second-magnitude Gamma Leonis (Algieba). These four can all fit within the field of view of a typical medium-power eyepiece. NGC 3193 is an elliptical galaxy, whereas the other three are spirals. NGC 3187 (magnitude 12.9) is the hardest to see because it is small and has a low surface brightness.



Start by finding the Spring Triangle, which consists of three widely-separated first magnitude stars--Arcturus, Spica, and Regulus. The Spring Triangle is high in the southeast sky in early spring, and in the southwest sky by mid-Summer. (To get oriented, you can use the handle of the Big Dipper and "follow the arc to Arcturus").

For this star hop, begin at Regulus in the constellation Leo, the lion.

The constellation Leo looks like a lion in profile, with its head to the west and its tail to the east. After finding Regulus, follow the bright stars that form the neck and head of the lion. The NGC 3190 group is located halfway between Algieba and Adhafera, the two stars that form the back of head. The four galaxies of this group all fit within a half-degree field of view.

