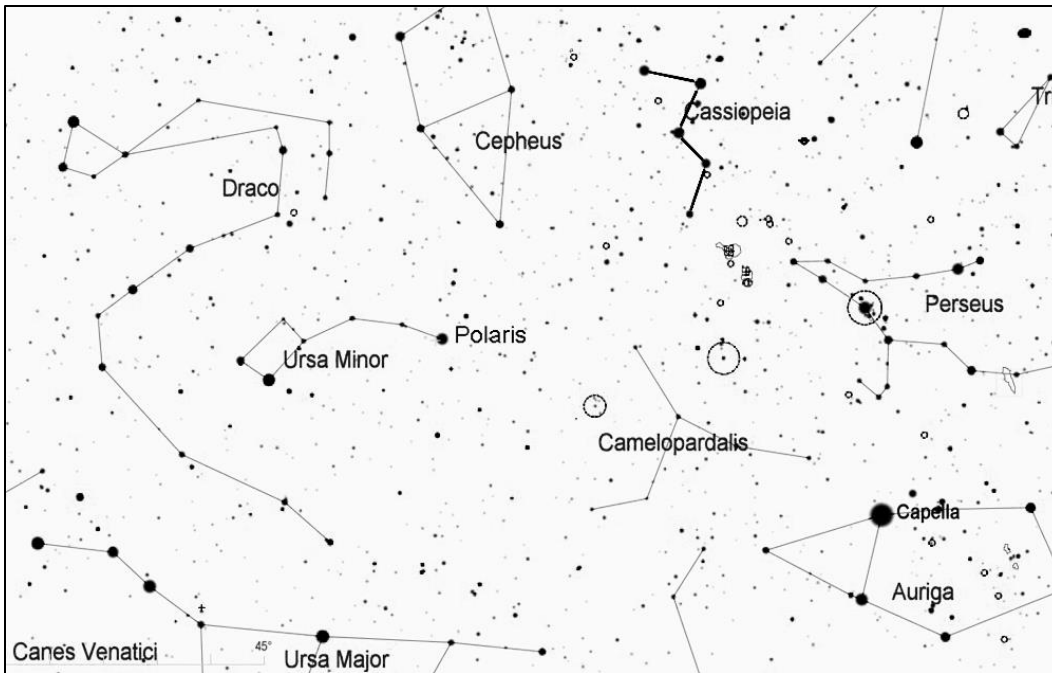


NGC 457 (Caldwell 13, the Owl Cluster) and NGC 436 in Cassiopeia

Through a telescope at low magnification, the Owl Cluster resembles an owl on a perch with outstretched wings. Two bright stars form the eyes of the owl, with its body ending with four stars that form the owl's feet. Two curving chains of stars form the owl's outstretched wings. It is also known as the ET Cluster after the character in the movie. NGC 436 is a much smaller cluster of about 30 stars covering an area of about 5 arcminutes.



Find the constellation Cassiopeia, which can be recognized by its distinctive "W" shape (although its orientation changes at different times of year as it circles the north celestial pole). On fall evenings, look for Cassiopeia in the northeast, where its tilt makes it look like a "3", and in the winter look high in the north above Polaris, where it is oriented like an "M".

Once you have located Cassiopeia, begin at Ruchbah, the star that forms the first angle of the W shape. Move just 2 degrees south (in the direction shown in the chart below, just below the W shape) and you should arrive at the Owl Cluster. To find the smaller and dimmer NGC 436, look 2/3 degree northwest of the Owl Cluster.

