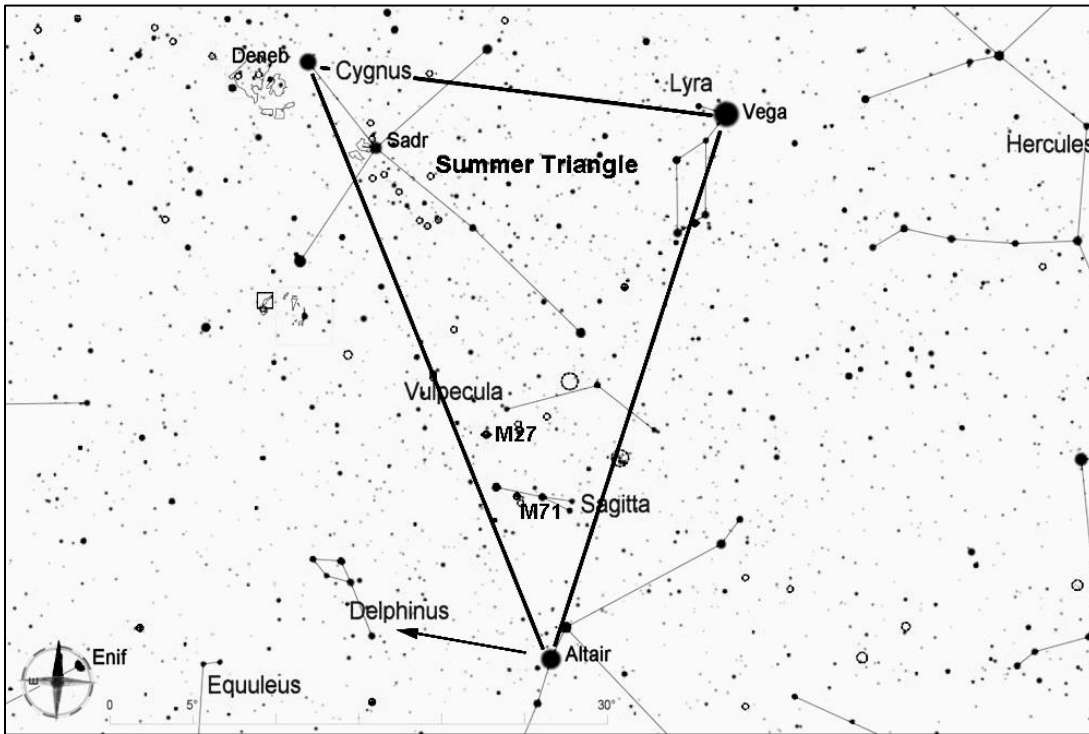


Gamma Delphini and NGC 7006 (Caldwell 42), Globular Cluster

Gamma Delphini is a fine double star for any telescope, with its components separated by 9". About 3.5 degrees to its east is NGC 7006, one of the most distant globular clusters in our galaxy, about 130,000 light years away. Not surprisingly, this globular is dim (magnitude 10.6), and its individual stars cannot be resolved without a very large telescope. It appears as a fuzzy ball with a brighter center.



Start by finding the Summer Triangle, which consists of the three of the brightest stars in the sky—Vega, Deneb, and Altair. The Summer Triangle is high overhead throughout the summer, and it sinks lower in the west as fall progresses.

Find Altair at the south point of the Summer Triangle. Look about 10 degrees to the east to find the distinctive shape of Delphinus, which does resemble a dolphin jumping out of the water.

Gamma Delphini (γ_2) is the star that marks the nose of the dolphin. Use medium to high power for a good view of its two component stars (magnitudes 4.3 and 5.0). Then form a line between γ_2 and alpha (α) Delphini, and extend this line to the east about twice their distance (about 3.5 degrees) to reach NGC 7006.

