

STGZ232
10/03 - 10/09
ORION AND THE PLEIADES

HEY STAR LOVERS – AS WE MOVE INTO WINTER ORION HAS RETURNED TO OUR SKIES, SO LET’S USE HIS SPARKLEY BELT TO FIND THE PLEIADES – AND HIS YOUNG LOVES.

HIT THE DARKNESS AFTER TWO AM AND LOOK EAST FOR ORION, AND USE THE THREE STARS OF HIS BELT TO DRAW A ROUGH LINE TOWARD ALDEBERAN IN THE CONSTELLATION TAURUS AND YOU’LL SEE WHAT LOOKS LIKE A TINY DIPPER. THAT IS THE PLEIADES!

THIS CLUSTER IS NAMED FOR SEVEN SISTERS. LEGEND SAYS ORION FELL FOR THEM. PINING AND CHASING THEIR AFFECTIONS BEFORE ZEUS TURNED THEM INTO THIS CLUSTER OF STARS. NOW, ORION AND THE PLEIADES MOVE ACROSS THE SKY — ORION CHASING THEM STILL.

THE PLEIADES ARE ACTUALLY AN OPEN STAR CLUSTER OF MORE THAN 800 STARS THAT FORMED TOGETHER FROM A CLOUD OF GAS AND DUST. THE BRIGHT BLUE ONES WILL BURN OUT IN A SHORT ONE-HUNDRED-MILLION YEAR LIFETIME – SHORT, FOR A STAR. BUT LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO ENJOY ‘EM! KEEP LOOKIN’ UP!