

Welcome to Hungry Mother State Park

Attention all stargazers the night sky is calling. Here at the park we have some prime viewing areas located at the spillway, the beach front and the ballfield behind Ferrell Hall. Year-round the sky is filled with stars, planets, and constellations with stories to tell. Here in the Northern Hemisphere we have circumpolar constellations that can be viewed all year long. What are we waiting for? Let's go stargazing.

August Constellations

Lyra
Sagittarius

September Constellations

Aquila
Capricornus
Cygnus
Delphinus

Star Gazing Smart Phone Apps

Star Walk 2
Night Sky
Star Tracker
Sky Map



Please watch for additional monthly Stargazing guides to learn more about stargazing in our park.

For more information about Virginia State Parks, please visit:
www.virginiastateparks.gov

Discovery Center Hours of Operation:

10 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. daily



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Virginia State Parks

Hungry Mother State Park

Stargazing in the Park



August & September



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www.virginiastateparks.gov

August Constellations

Lyra (The Lyre)

According to Greek mythology, the lyre was invented by Hermes as a child when he strung a tortoise shell. He traded the lyre to Apollo, who then gave it to his son, Orpheus, a great poet and musician.

Orpheus' wife, Eurydice, was set upon by a satyr. Eurydice fell into a nest of vipers and she suffered a fatal bite on her heel. Her body was discovered by Orpheus who, overcome with grief, played such sad and mournful songs that all the nymphs and gods wept. On their advice, Orpheus traveled to the underworld and by his music softened the hearts of Hades and Persephone, who agreed to allow Eurydice to return with him to earth on one condition, he should walk in front of her and not look back until they both had reached the upper world. He set off with Eurydice following and in his anxiety, as soon as he reached the upper world, he turned to look at her, forgetting that both needed to be in the upper world, and she vanished for the second time, but now forever.

Sagittarius (The Centaur)

The Mediterranean people viewed Sagittarius as Enkidu, the close friend of Gilgamesh, believed to be represented by Orion. Greek mythology associates Sagittarius with Crotus, the son of the goat-god Pan and Eupheme, the nurse of the Muses. He grew to be a skilled hunter, as well as a man with an artistic soul. The Muses, with whom Sagittarius was raised, begged Zeus to honor him with a constellation equal to his great talents.

September Constellations

Aquila (The Eagle)

To the ancient Greeks, Aquila was the servant of Zeus who held the god's thunderbolts and performed errands for him. He may also be the great eagle who devours Prometheus' liver as punishment for giving fire to humans. The line of three stars, which includes Altair, is revered by Indians as the footprints of the god Vishnu. Some Asian traditions see the bright star Vega as the Weaving-Princess star who marries a shepherd, the star Altair.

Capricornus (The Goat/Sea-Goat)

There are many different myths about this dim constellation. Some believed that Capricornus was the Gate of the Gods, a region in the sky where souls passed when humans died. In Greek myth, Capricornus was associated with Pan. During a picnic, a monster attacked the gods. The gods turned themselves into animals and fled, but Pan couldn't decide what to be. Finally, he jumped into the Nile River, at which point he transformed. His lower half was in water, so it became a fish. However, his upper-half was still dry, so it stayed a goat.



Cygnus (The Swan)

For the ancient Greeks, the constellation Cygnus was related to the myth of Zeus and the goddess Nemesis. In order to escape from Zeus, Nemesis changed herself into many different animals. When she changed into a goose, Zeus immediately transformed himself into a wonderful swan and won the love of Nemesis. The goddess became pregnant, delivered an egg and then abandoned it. Fortunately, a shepherd found the egg and gave it to Leda, the wife of Tyndareus, the king of Sparta. From that egg came Helen of Troy. Helen was so beautiful that Leda claimed her as her own child. The constellation Cygnus was formed to celebrate the lovely swan. According to another version of the myth, Zeus transformed himself into a swan to court Leda, the queen of Sparta and from that relationship, Leda had two children: Polydeuces and Helen.

Delphinus (The Dolphin)

When the sea god, Poseidon, courted the nymph Amphitrite, one of the Nereids, she resisted his advances and took refuge among her sisters. Poseidon sent messengers to find her and bring her to him, among them a dolphin. The dolphin found the nymph, soothed her and brought her back to the god. The two were later married. Poseidon decided to honor the dolphin and placed its image among the stars.

