This is what the night sky looks like in the spring at the latitude of 20° ‘Ākau (North). It's not easy to see the constellations, is it? And these aren't all of them! Powerful telescopes atop Hawaii's volcanic mountains show us even more stars than this in deep space. How many stars are there? MILLIONS!

However, this map shows a red dot in the sky near the top … this is where Hōkū-pa'a, the North Star is.

Once you know this star, you can try find other important constellations like these:

- A’a, Sirius (the brightest star in the sky, near the middle in the Milky Way just below the red line)
- Little Dipper (it has Hōkū-pa'a at the top of its handle)
- Nā Hiku, The Big Dipper (it points to Hōkū-pa'a)

Canis Major constellation with bright A’ā (Sirius/Alpha Canis Majoris) at the top.

Ursa Major (Big Bear) with Nā Hiku (Big Dipper) at center … its handle points left, & its 2 stars on the right point up to Hōkū-pa’a.

Ursa Minor constellation (Little Dipper) with Hōkū-pa'a (North Star/Polaris) at

1.3.a Nā Hōkū /Stars Unit
Hawaiian Constellation

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**Nā Hiku ("The Seven"):** This constellation of 7 stars arcs around Hōkū-pa’a. The stars of Na Hiku are given the names of Hawaiian numbers: Hiku-kahi [Dubhe], Hiku-’alua [Merak], Hiku-kolu [Phad], Hiku-aha [Megrez], Hiku-lima [Alioth], Hiku-ono [Mizar], and Hiku-pau, ‘Finished’ [Alkaid]. Hiku-kahi and Hiku-’alua point toward Hōkū-pa’a. *(Try to draw it in!)* These stars are called the Big Dipper in Western science, and they are technically an asterism – a part of a constellation, in this case called Ursa Major, or Big Bear.

**Four Major Hawaiian Star Groups**

In fact, long ago Hawaiian wayfinders named and memorized over 200 stars in the sky. Many of the names they gave star groups are now lost, but the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) uses those that are remembered, and they are now giving new Hawaiian names for all the forgotten major stars, constellations, and quadrants of the night sky. Three groups have been given these names:

- **Ke Ka O Makali’i ("The Canoe-Bailer of Makali’i")** … part of Taurus & Gemini, seen near Pleiades & Orion
- **Ka Iwikuamo’o ("The Backbone")** … includes the Big Dipper, seen near Leo & Virgo
- **Manaiakalani ("The Big Fishhook of Maui")** … is the same as Scorpio, seen near Libra & Sagittarius

A fourth group of stars, as yet unnamed, includes:

- **‘Iwa Keli’i** … same as the constellation Cassiopeia, near Aries & the Great Square of Pegasus.

Hawaiian navigators at PVS believe it is important to know the Hawaiian and the foreign names in astronomy.

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Here is a planisphere - a map of the constellations of western science. The names are all on the next page.

**Make Your Own Hapa-Haole Planisphere!**

1. Stick this paper onto a piece of cardboard.
2. Lay a transparency on top & tape it at one side
3. Use a highlighter to draw the Hawaiian names or stars & star groups on the transparency.
   
   OR

3. Push pins through all the major stars & use thread to show the Hawaiian constellations (write these in on the sides!)
4. You can also go to the Web sites on the bottom of this page to make your own SkyWheel, StarClock, or view PVS Star Maps!
The Major Constellations in Western Astronomy

- The Dragon
- The King (crown only)
- The Queen “Cassiopeia”
- Little Dipper & Polaris/North Star
- The Giraffe
- Perseus the Hero
- The Bear Driver
- The Great Bear
- The Charioteer & Taurus
- Gemini
- Orion the Great Hunter
- Virgo
- The Great Dog
- The Watersnake
- The Sail & the Keel

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