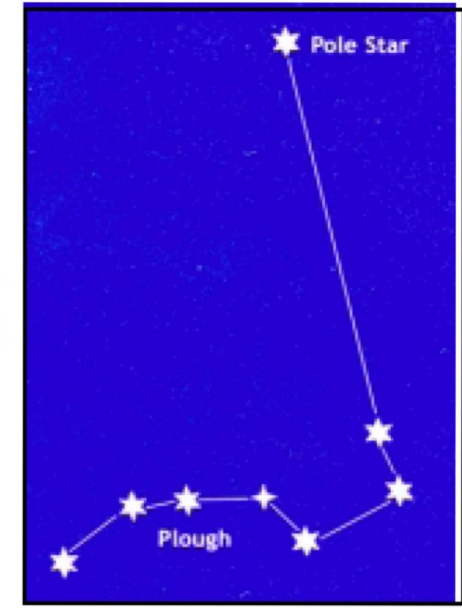
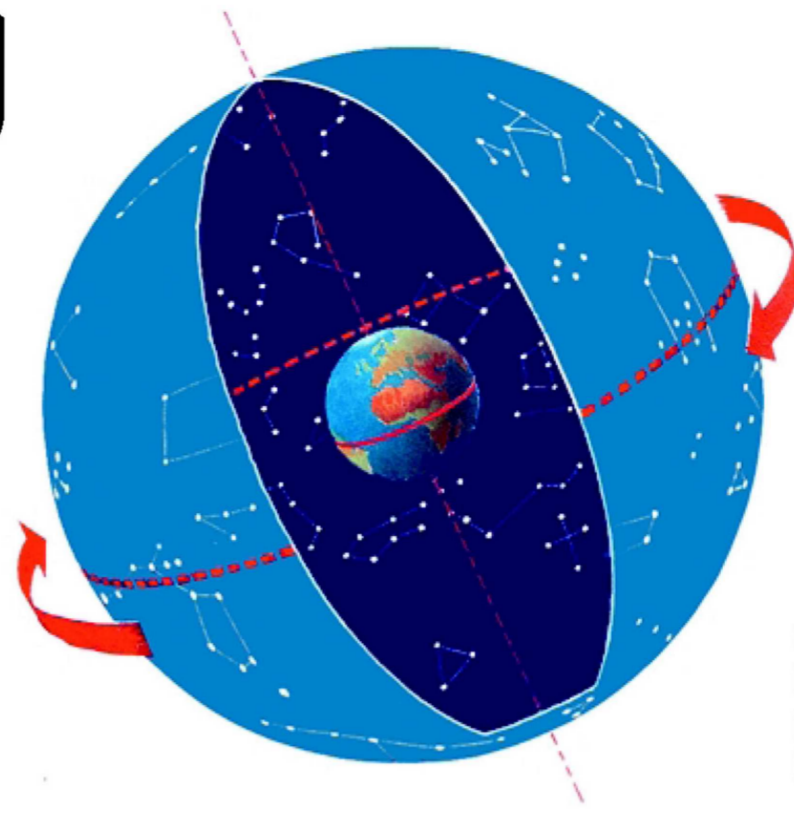


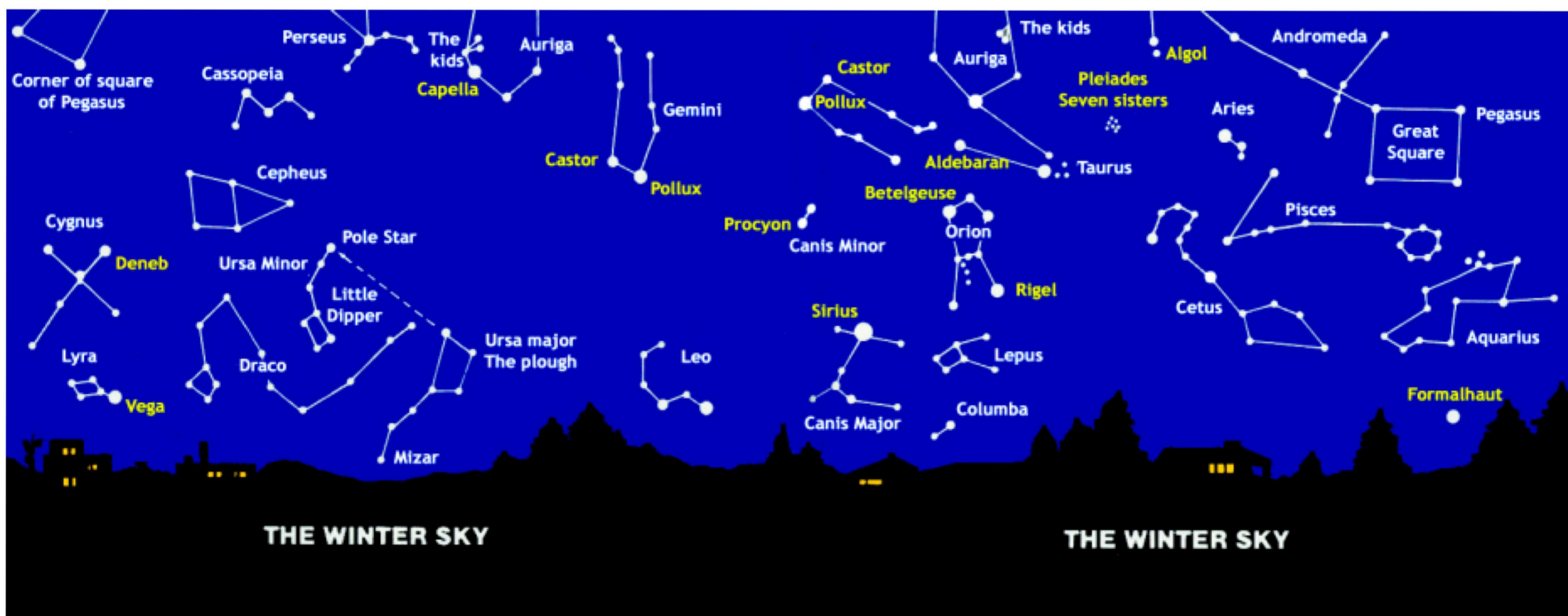
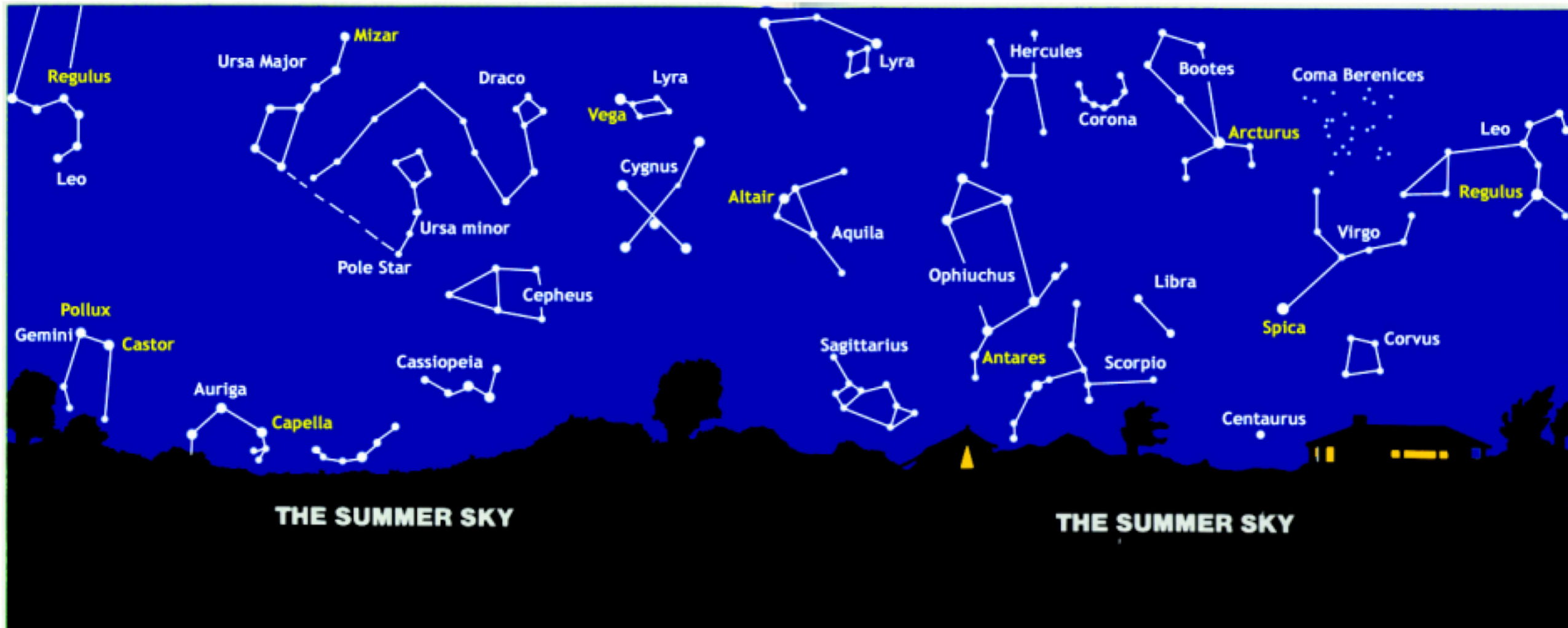
Sky Watching

For thousands of years mankind has been amazed and fascinated by the night sky. Some cultures and people based their whole existence on the movement of the night sky.

When you are out camping or bivouacking it is an idea time to spread out your groundsheet or bedroll under the skies and lie back and observe the heavens above. The earth is constantly moving so the stars visible in the sky is determined by the position of the earth in relation to the heavens, so some star constellations are only visible at certain times of the year. The planets are also visible and tend to appear lower on the skyline and will be brighter. Look out also for shooting stars and satellites as they move around the earth and our own galaxy the Milky Way. The charts below illustrate the many constellations visible in summer around July and December in winter. Use them as a general reference for a more precise map of the night sky you will need a rotating star map.



Use the stars to find directions. Find the Plough and from there plot an imaginary line to the pole star.



To get a clearer view of star constellations and you can use a telescope or a pair of binoculars. Binoculars are a good choice if you are a casual watcher as they allow a wide field of view. They are particularly good for looking at the moon. The power of binoculars are not important the standard 7 or 10 power will do the job. You will probably need a tripod or a cushion placed on a fence or wall to steady your binoculars as you watch.



The Moon

The Moon is the biggest object in the night sky and on a frosty night it can be seen at its best. Each of the areas of the moon have been mapped and you will find it easy to identify each area with the aid of a telescope or binoculars. This small moon map will give you a rough idea of what to look for.

