



# How We See the Sky: A Naked-Eye Tour of Day and Night

*Thomas Hockey*

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Gazing up at the heavens from our backyards or a nearby field, most of us see an undifferentiated mess of stars—if, that is, we can see anything at all through the glow of light pollution. Today's casual observer knows far less about the sky than did our ancestors, who depended on the sun and the moon to tell them the time and on the stars to guide them through the seas. Nowadays, we don't *need* the sky, which is good, because we've made it far less accessible, hiding it behind the skyscrapers and the excessive artificial light of our cities.

*How We See the Sky* gives us back our knowledge of the sky, offering a fascinating overview of what can be seen there without the aid of a telescope. Thomas Hockey begins by scanning the horizon, explaining how the visible universe rotates through this horizon as night turns to day and season to season. Subsequent chapters explore the sun's and moon's respective motions through the celestial globe, as well as the appearance of solstices, eclipses, and planets, and how these are accounted for in different kinds of calendars. In every chapter, Hockey introduces the common vocabulary of today's astronomers, uses examples past and present to explain them, and provides conceptual tools to help newcomers understand the topics he discusses.

Packed with illustrations and enlivened by historical anecdotes and literary references, *How We See the Sky* reacquaints us with the wonders to be found in our own backyards.

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