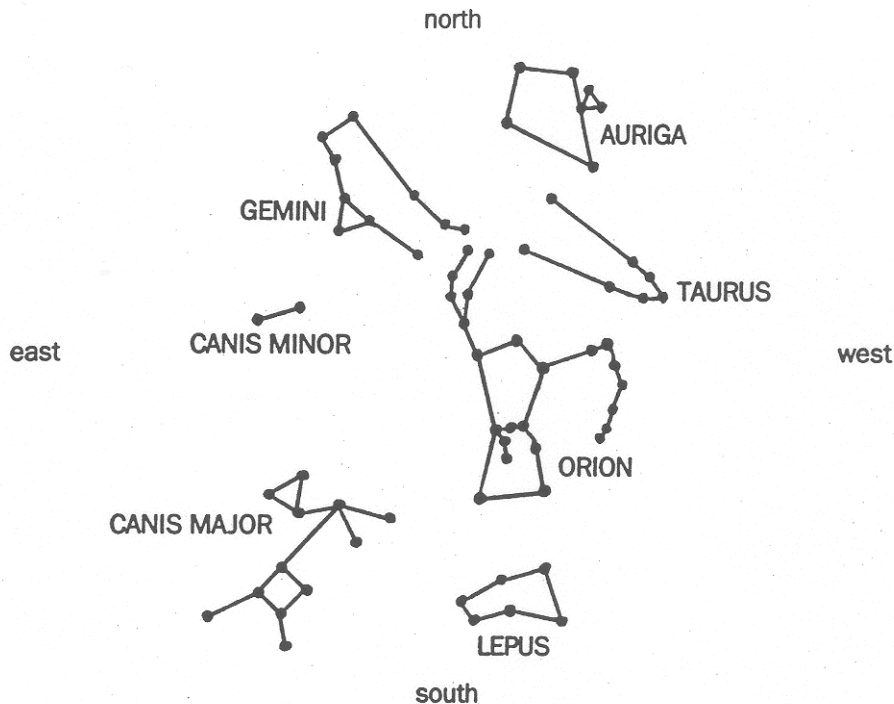


# Winter Constellations

(December – March)

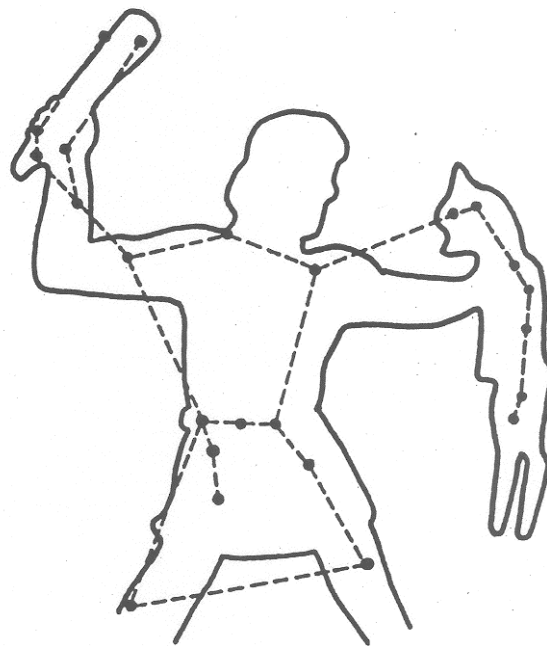
During the winter months, these are the constellations to look for:



## Orion (the Great Hunter)

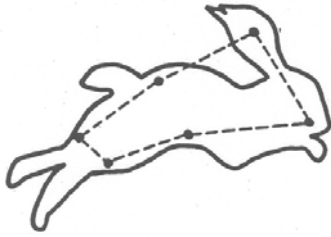
**Orion** (uh-rye-un) was a famous hunter who bragged that he could kill all of the animals in the world. The gods decided to teach the hunter a lesson by sending the giant scorpion, **Scorpius**, to sting **Orion** while he was hunting a hare. Then, as an example to all mortals, the gods placed **Orion**, **Lepus** (the hare), **Canis Major** and **Canis Minor** (Orion's hunting dogs), and **Scorpius** in the sky as constellations.

Orion is one of the easiest constellations to find in the winter sky. In fact, because it is directly over the earth's equator, it can be seen from any place on earth.



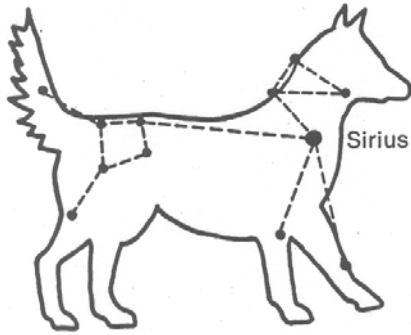
## Lepus (the Hare)

**Lepus** (leep-us) is a small constellation and is found directly beneath **Orion**.



## Canis Major (the Great Dog)

**Canis Major** (kay-ness mye-er) is easy to find because the dog's collar contains the very brightest star in the night sky. It is called **Sirius** (see-ree-us), or "the Dog Star."



## Canis Minor (the Little Dog)

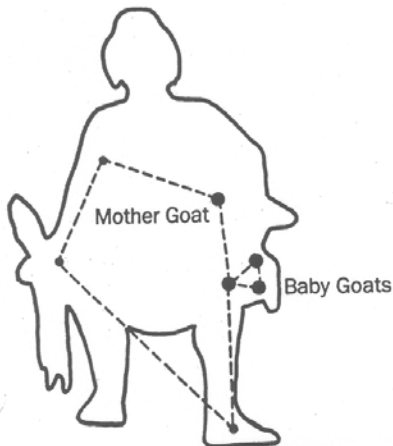
Just across the Milky Way from **Canis Major** is its little brother, **Canis Minor** (kay-ness mye-ner)



## Auriga (the Charioteer)

**Auriga** (aw-rye-guh) was the first man to harness four horses to a chariot. The gods rewarded him for this important invention with a place of honor in the sky.

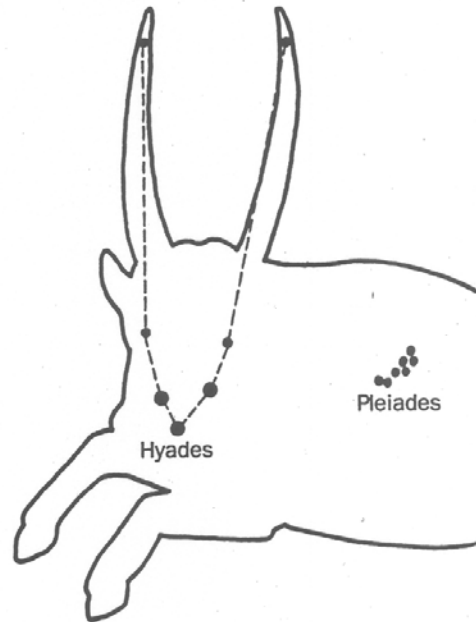
**Auriga** holds the reins to his chariot in his right hand. In his left arm he carries a small goat, marked by one bright star known as "the Mother Goat." Just below "the Mother Goat" is a triangle of three smaller stars called "the Baby Goats."



## Taurus (the Bull)

**Taurus** (tor-us) is the great white bull which the god Zeus changed himself into in order to meet a beautiful princess. The princess loved animals, and like the bull so much that she got on his back for a ride. As soon as she did, **Taurus** jumped into the river and swam away with her.

**Taurus** is pictured swimming with only his head and front feet visible above the water. A V-shaped group of stars called Hyades (hye-uh-deez) outlines his nose. A star cluster called the Pleiades (plee-uh-deez) marks his left shoulder.



## Gemini (the Twins)

**Gemini** (jem-uh-nye) represents the twins Castor (kas-ter) and Pollux (pall-ucks). The brothers were so close that when one died the other begged Zeus to let him die too, so he could be with his brother again. Zeus finally decided to place the brothers together in the sky to reward them for their faithfulness. Then he set a special bright star in each one's hand.

