CLEVELAND MUSEUM *of* NATURAL HISTORY

THE STARGAZER

SUMMER 2025

THE **OBSERVATORY**

A Stellar Snow Globe: Summer is one of the best times of year to catch globular clusters in our skies. This jaw-dropping image from the Sloan Digital Sky Survey showcases the Great Hercules Globular Cluster, or Messier 13. Discovered by Sir Edmund Halley, of comet fame, in 1716, M13 is widely considered the most beautiful globular cluster visible from the Northern Hemisphere. The cluster is reminiscent of a snow globe, containing roughly half a million stars densely packed together in a spherical distribution.

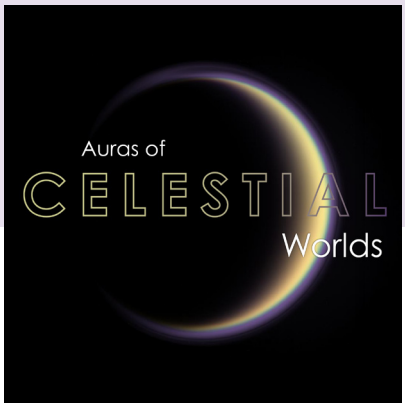
Globular clusters are both ancient and remote, comprising some of the oldest stars in the Milky Way and orbiting high above and below the plane of our galaxy. M13 lies approximately 25,000 light-years away within the "Keystone" of the constellation Hercules, between the bright stars Arcturus and Vega.

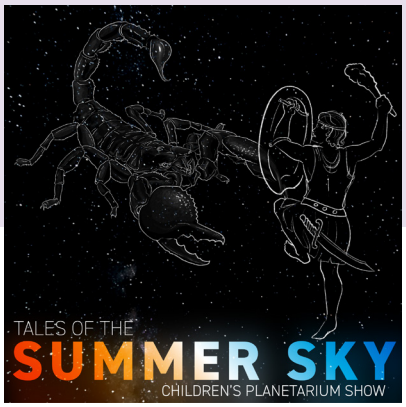
The Great Hercules Globular Cluster as seen by the Sloan Digital Sky Survey; released December 6, 2021

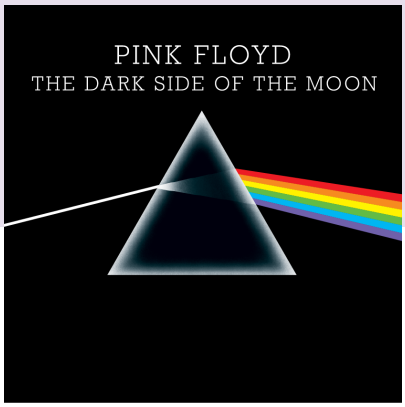
SHAFRAN **PLANETARIUM NEWS**

Two new planetarium shows debuted in the Nathan and Fannye Shafran Planetarium on June 3. These shows are a perfect fit for those interested in pondering celestial bodies and learning about oral traditions relating to seasonal constellations. Our new show for general audiences, *Auras of Celestial Worlds*, will reveal how different planetary atmospheres drive weather, sculpt landscapes, and even harbor the potential for life. Our other new show, geared toward children and called *Tales of the Summer Sky,* will take you on a trip through the summer night sky, uncovering constellation stories as we go. For showtimes or to purchase tickets, visit **CMNH**.org.

Dome Pro Tip: *The Dark Side of the Moon* is back for summer 2025! Don't miss this chance to experience Pink Floyd's legendary album in the Shafran Planetarium, immersed in stunning visuals. The band embraced the idea of pairing the 42-minute album, played in surround sound, with breathtaking views of the cosmos—enabled by the capabilities of modern technology. Visit **CMNH**.org for showtimes and tickets.







PERIOD **PANORAMA**

Summer is prime time for viewing the Milky Way! See what else the season has to offer:

June 20: The **summer solstice** arrives for the Northern Hemisphere. This is Cleveland's longest day of the year, with 15 hours of daylight, and the shortest night of the year, with only nine hours of stargazing!

June 30: International Asteroid Day is a global celebration that aims to bring awareness to asteroids and the potential danger they pose to Earth.

July 10: Full Moon, also known as the "buck Moon." Best viewing time: Dusk to dawn.

July 20: In the morning sky, the **crescent Moon will appear close to the Pleiades star cluster** in the constellation Taurus the Bull. Best viewing time: 3:30–5:30am.

July 20: Apollo 11 landing anniversary. On this day in 1969, a Saturn V rocket transported the astronauts of the Apollo 11 crew to the Moon, where they would take humanity's first steps beyond Earth. Visit the Apollo 12 Moon rock in our Visitor Hall to honor the Apollo program's triumphs in space exploration.

Image of Apollo 11 astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin's footprint in the lunar soil as part of an experiment; July 20, 1969

July 23: The **dog days of summer** are here! On this day, **Sirius and the Sun** will be in conjunction. African lore and Greek mythology claimed the Sun and "the scorcher" (the dog star Sirius) were working together to create the hottest days of the year. The true reason August tends to be the hottest time of year is that the Northern Hemisphere is tilted toward the Sun during the summer months. The dog days run July 3–August 11.

July 25: The **Delta Aquariid meteor shower** peaks on this night. This meteor shower runs July 18–August 12 annually. About 10–20 shooting stars per hour are expected to emerge from the constellation Aquarius the Water Bearer. Best viewing time: 2am.

August 9: Full Moon, also known as the "sturgeon Moon." Best viewing time: Dusk to dawn.

August 11: In the morning sky, **Venus and Jupiter** will be in conjunction in the constellation Gemini the Twins. Best viewing time: 4–6am.

August 12: The **Perseids**—one of the most popular annual stargazing events—will be active July 14–September 1 and peak around this night. Stargazers in rural areas can typically witness up to 50–75 meteors per hour, but a waning gibbous Moon will make viewing difficult. The shower's radiant point (where the meteors appear to originate) will be in the northeastern sky, in the constellation Perseus. Best viewing time: Midnight–5:30am.

September 7: Full Moon, also known as the "corn Moon." Best viewing time: Dusk to dawn.

September 19: The Moon, **Venus**, **and the star Regulus**, which marks the heart of Leo the Lion, will be in conjunction in the morning sky. Best viewing time: 5–6:30am.

September 21: Saturn reaches opposition. The ringed planet will be at its brightest at this time. Best viewing time: Dusk to dawn.

LOOK **AHEAD**

Pick up next season's issue of *The Stargazer* to prepare for International Observe the Moon Night and a trio of supermoons to follow.

International Observe the Moon Night flyer from NASA's official website for the event