

Week 1: THE BEARS (URSAS)

URSA MAJOR (GREAT BEAR) & URSA MINOR (SMALL BEAR)

Mythology of the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor

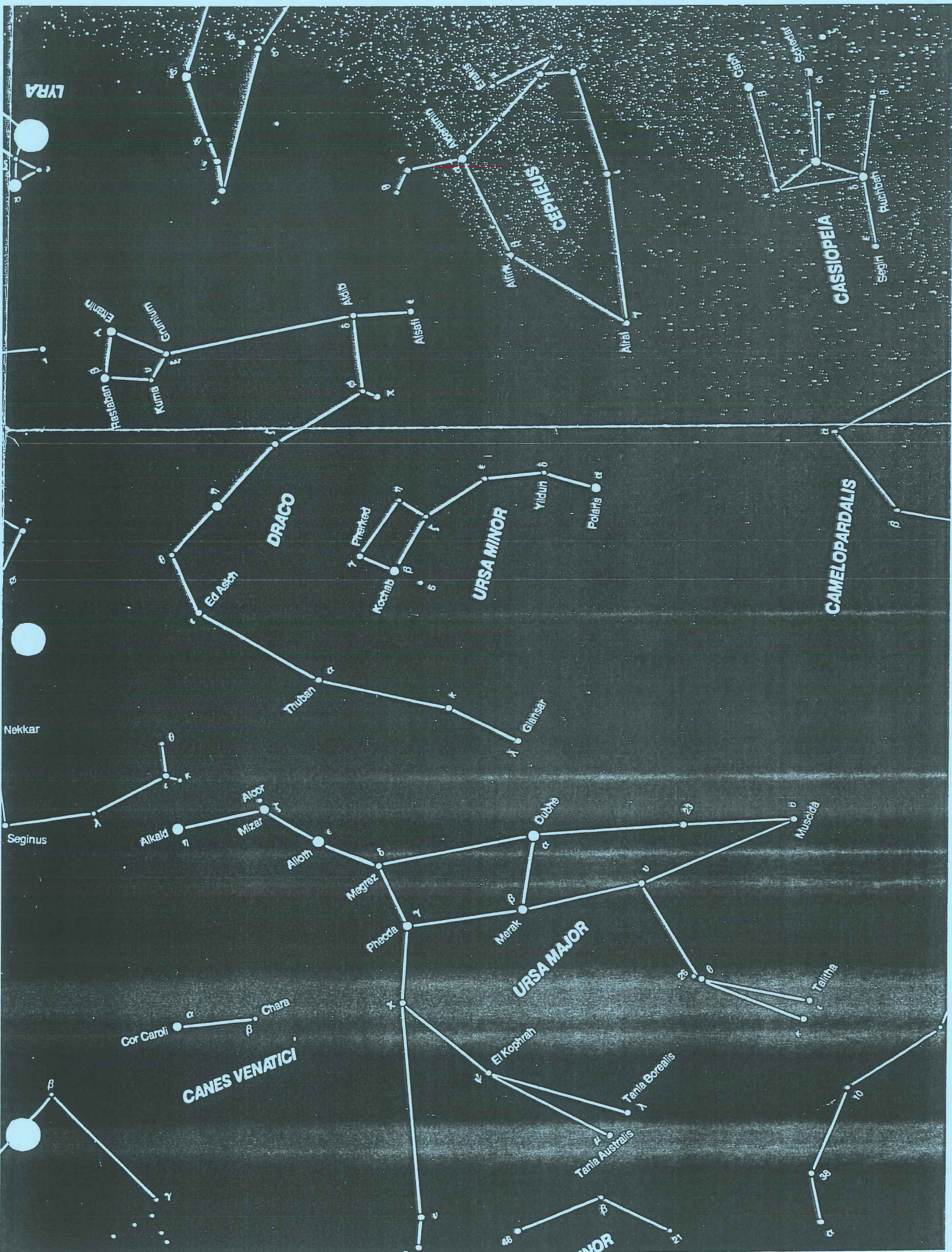
Artemis, the moon goddess, was followed by a band of beautiful nymphs, all sworn to a vow of chastity. One of the most lovely of these was Callisto. She was espied by Zeus, a god with a particular fondness for mortal women, on one of his many visits to earth. Disguising himself as Apollo, brother of Artemis, he overcame any scruples Callisto may have had and they became lovers. Eventually, Callisto was delivered of a son, and he was named Arcas (from the Greek arktos or "bear"). Knowing that Artemis would be furious with Callisto for breaking her vow, and more especially to shield her from the wrath of his wife, Zeus changed his unfortunate lover into a bear. She was forced into a lonely exile, roaming the forests and hiding from human hunters. At the same time, she was unable to form any close friendships with the animals because she still possessed human feelings. Many years later, her now fully-grown son Arcas was hunting in the woods when he saw a great bear which was, in fact, his own mother. As he lifted his bow and arrow to shoot her, Zeus quickly intervened, and changed Arcas into a little bear so that he immediately recognised his mother. The story has a happy ending as, lonely no more, Callisto and her son were transported to the heavens; thereafter to be known as the Ursa Major and Ursa Minor.

Ursa Major stars

- | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Dubhe (the Bear) | Magnitude 2.0 | yellow |
| 2. Merak (the Loin of the Bear) | Magnitude 2.5 | greenish white |
| 3. Phecda (the Thigh) | Magnitude 2.5 | topaz yellow |
| 4. Megrez (the Root of the Tail) | Magnitude 3.6 | pale yellow |
| 5. Alioth (Fat Tail) | Magnitude 2.1 | |
| 6. Mizar (a Girdle) | Magnitude 2.1 | brilliant white |
| 7. Alcor (Neglected One because noticeable only by a sharp eye. | Magnitude 4.8 | |
| 8. Alkaid (the Chief of Mourners) | Magnitude 1.9 | brilliant white |
| 9. Muscida (the muzzle of an animal) | Magnitude 3.5 | |
| 10. Talitha (the third leap of the Gazelle) | Magnitude 3.2 | topaz yellow |
| 11. Tania Borealis (the second leap of the Gazelle (north)) | Magnitude 3.7 | red |
| 12. Tania Australis (the second leap of the Gazelle (south)) | Magnitude 3.7 | red |
| 13. El Kophrah | | |

Ursa Minor stars

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Polaris (Pole-star) | Magnitude 2.2 | topaz yellow |
| 2. Kochab (the Bright One) | Magnitude 2.0 | reddish |
| 3. Pherkad (the Dim One) | Magnitude 3.3 | |



LYRA

CEPHEUS

CASSIOPEIA

DRACO

URSA MINOR

CAMELOPARDALIS

URSA MAJOR

CANES VENATICI

Nekkar

Seginus

Alkaid

Alcor

Mizar

Alioth

Megrez

Phocaa

Cor Caroli

Chara

Merak

Dubhe

El Kophrah

Tania Borealis

Tania Australis

Muscida

Talitha

39

alpha

10

gamma

delta

beta

21

48

nu

tau

zeta

xi

eta

theta

iota

kappa

lambda

mu

nu

xi

beta

gamma

delta

epsilon

zeta

eta

theta

iota

kappa

lambda

mu

nu

xi

o

p

q

r

s

t

u

v

w

x

y

z

aa

ab

ac

ad

ae

af

ag

ah

ai

aj

ak

al

am

an

ao

ap

aq

ar

as

at

au

av

aw

ax

ay

az

ba

bb

bc

bd

be

bf

bg

bh

bi

bj

bk

bl

bm

bn

bo

bp

bq

br

bs

bt

bu

bv

bw

bx

by

bz

ca

cb

cc

cd

ce

cf

cg

ch

ci

cj

ck

cl

cm

cn

co

cp

cq

cr

cs

ct

cu

cv

cw

cx

cy

cz

da

db

dc

dd

de

df

dg

dh

di

dj

dk

dl

dm

dn

do

dp

dq

dr

ds

dt

du

dv

dw

dx

dy

dz

ea

eb

ec

ed

ee

ef

eg

eh

ei

ej

ek

el

em

en

eo

ep

eq

er

es

et

eu

ev

ew

ex

ey

ez

fa

fb

fc

fd

fe

ff

fg

fh

fi

fj

fk

fl

fm

fn

fo

fp

fq

fr

fs

ft

fu

fv

fw

fx

fy

fz

ga

gb

gc

gd

ge

gf

gg

gh

gi

gj

gk

gl

gm

gn

go

gp

gq

gr

gs

gt

gu

gv

gw

gx

gy

gz

ha

hb

hc

hd

he

hf

hg

hh

hi

hj

hk

hl

hm

hn

ho

hp

hq

hr

hs

ht

hu

hv

hw

hx

hy

hz

ia

ib

ic

id

ie

if

ig

ih

ii

ij

ik

il

im

in

io

ip

iq

ir

is

it

iu

iv

iw

ix

iy

iz

ja

jb

jc

jd

je

jf

jj

jh

ji

jj

jk

jl

jm

jn

jo

jp

jq

jr

js

jt

ju

jv

jw

jx

ji

jz

ka

kb

kc

kd

ke

kf

kg

kh

ki

kj

kk

kl

km

kn

ko

kp

kq

kr

ks

kt

ku

kv

kw

kx

ky

kz

la

lb

lc

ld

le

lf

lg

lh

li

lj

lk

ll

lm

ln

lo

lp

lq

lr

ls

lt

lu

lv

lw

lx

ly

lz

ma

mb

mc

md

me

mf

mg

mh

mi

mj

mk

ml