Mythology of the constellation Pegasus

The white, winged horse Pegasus was the offspring of Poseidon and the Gorgon , Medusa, springing from the latter's neck when she was killed by Perseus. He immediately flew to Mount Helicon and struck the ground with his hoof. The resulting stream which flowed from the spot he had pawed became sacred to the Muses. Some time later Pegasus was to help Perseus to rescue Andromeda from the dreadful sea monster Cetus. Bellerophon, the grandson of Sisyphus (a selfish man punished by the Gods for his arrogance by being forced to continually push an enormous boulder to the top of a hill, only for it to roll back down just as the goal seemed within reach) was also greatly aided by Pegasus when undertaking several dangerous missions, including his fight against the Chimaera, the three-headed monstrous female. However, the success of this and other missions turned Bellerophon's head and he, too, became arrogant. So much so, that although a mere mortal, he forced Pegasus to fly him to Mount Olympus, the home of the Gods. Zeus , greatly annoyed at Bellerophon's presumption that he was worthy to be in such august company, sent an insect to bite Pegasus on his flank, causing him to rear up and throw Bellerophon to the ground. He was then dispatched back to earth, and ended his days a sad and lonely figure, blind and lame. For Pegasus, however, there was the reward of a place in the stables on Mount Olympus, and the opportunity to carry around Zeus's thunderbolts

1. Markab (alpha) is the Arab's word for a Saddle, Ship, or Vehicle – anything ridden upon. Magnitude 2.5   white
2. Scheat (beta) means the upper part of the Arm   Magnitude 2.2 to 2.7   deep yellow
3. Algenib (gamma) the wing   Magnitude 3.0   white   Note: with beta Cassiopeiae (Caph) and alpha Andromeda (Alpheratz) almost exactly the prime meridian
4. Enif (epsilon) means the nose   Magnitude 2.5   yellow

Mythology of the constellation Perseus

King Acrisius of Argos was warned by an oracle that one day he would be killed by his own grandson. To prevent any likelihood of this ever happening, he locked away his beautiful daughter, Danae, so that no man could ever reach her. But this did not stop the god Zeus, with his fondness for mortal women. He entered her prison and Perseus (per Zeus, sired by Zeus) was the result. Dismayed, Acrisius put his daughter and her child into a wooden chest and set them adrift on the high seas. But luck smiled upon them and they eventually reached the island of Seriphos, which was under the rule of King Polydectes. This king fell in love with the lovely Danae, but saw that the depth of her feelings for Perseus would be a barrier to his own chances of winning her undivided loyalty. He therefore sent the adventurous youth on many missions, the most dangerous being to bring back the head of Medusa. Medusa was one of three Gorgon sisters, all so unbelievably ugly that anyone who ever looked at them would immediately be turned to stone. Before setting off on his mission, the goddess Athena presented him with a highly polished shield, and this was to prove invaluable. After finding the three Gorgons sleeping, by using the shield as a mirror he was able to approach Medusa without actually looking directly at her. He swiftly cut off her head with his sword, and the winged horse Pegasus sprang from her body. Placing the head in a bag, Perseus climbed upon Pegasus and started on his homeward journey. Nearing Ethiopia, he heard a woman's screams and was just in time to rescue Andromeda, who was to become his wife. Many years later, the oracle's prediction came true when Perseus accidently struck his grandfather Acrisius with a discus during a sporting event and killed him.

1. Mirfak (alpha) means the Elbow   Magnitude 2.1   brillant lilac and ashy
2. Algol (beta) means the Demon (like the Head of Medusa)   Magnitude 2.3 to 3.5   white

Mythology of the constellation Andromeda

The story of Andromeda, daughter of King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia, of Ethiopia, brings together many notable names of legend. Her mother's boastfulness and pride greatly angered the sea gods and this resulted in Andromeda being sacrificed in order to appease them. Knowing full well that she would be at the mercy of the sea monster, Cetus, the King and Queen allowed their young daughter to be chained to a rock on a cliff overlooking the sea. However fate, in the person of Perseus, intervened. Riding home on the winged horse Pegasus, he heard Andromeda's screams as Cetus approached her. Holding high the head of Medusa (see legend of Perseus) he charged towards the monster who was instantly turned to stone as he looked upon the severed head. Taking great care to prevent Andromeda from looking at the head, he then released her from her chains. The young couple immediately fell in love and, as Perseus had just saved their daughter's life, Cepheus and Cassiopeia readily consented to their marriage.

1. Alpheratz (alpha) (used to be the Horse's navel but now is considered the woman's hair. Magnitude 2.2   white (P.M. with Caph.)
2. Mirach (beta) a form of Mizar or waistcloth   Magnitude 2.3   yellow
3. Alamac (gamma) a small predatory animal of Arabia, similar to a badger here. (marks the left foot of Andromeda.) 2.3 orange

Mythology of the constellation Delphinus

In India, the constellation DELPHINUS, The Dolphin, was regarded as being made up of fortunate or lucky stars, and was always associated with a porpoise. In Greek legend DELPHINUS is thought to represent the creature which saved the life of the poet Arion. When he was sailing home to Corinth, the ship's crew mutinied, stole his fortune, and appeared about to murder him. Arion pleaded for his life, begging to be thrown overboard since he knew that the beauty and sweetness of his songs would charm the creatures of the sea. And so it transpired as, when the seamen threw him into the water, a dolphin immediately appeared and carried him safely to land. It was rewarded for this act by being placed in the heavens.

1. Sualocin (alpha) means swift (as the flow of water)   Magnitude 4.0   pale yellow

Mythology of the constellation Auriga

AURIGA, The Charioteer, has long been shown as a shepherd, cradling either a goat or goat and kids, as he rides through the heavens in his chariot. One variation suggests that the goat in question is Amaltheia, famous for suckling the infant Zeus. (In fact, Capella, one of the brightest stars in this constellation, was previously called Amaltheia.) Another suggestion is that the constellation represents Erichthoneus, the lame son of Hephaestus and Mother Earth. Erichthoneus invented the four horse chariot so that he could get around more easily. This was noted and admired by Zeus, who placed man and chariot in the heavens.   Another interpretation is that Auriga represents Myrtilus, the unfortunate charioteer of King Oenomaus. This king was jealous of anyone who came to seek his daughter's hand in marriage. Being noted for his love of horses (his daughter was named Hippodameia "horse tamer"), the king announced that all suitors would have to take part in a chariot race against him and, should they lose, pay with their lives. Since his horses came from the god Ares, none could beat them, and all the suitors were killed. The gods decided to intervene when Pelops, son of Hermes entered the fray. He was given a gold chariot, with winged golden horses to pull it, by Poseidon. As a further precaution , and with the consent of Hippodameia who had fallen in love with this latest suitor, Pelops arranged that Myrtilus should tamper with the wheels of King Oenomaus' chariot. This he did, the king was dragged to his death, and Pelops was left to claim his prize. However, Myrtilus had only agreed to weaken the king's chariot on the condition that he was granted certain privileges, and when he demanded to spend the bridal night with Hippodameia, both she and Pelops strongly resisted and Myrtilus was killed.

1. Cappella (alpha) the little she goat   Magnitude 0.3   white
2. Menkalinan (beta) shoulder of the Rein-holder   Magnitude 2.1   lucid yellow

SAGITTA DELPHINUS CYGNUS PEGASUS

Albireo Sulafat Gienah Sador Deneb

Enif Homam

Markab Sad al Bari Matar Scheat

LACERTA

Gruntium Aldib Alsafi Alfirk Alderamin Errai

CEPHEUS

Algenib Alpheratz

ANDROMEDA

M 31 Mirach 51

Almach Mothallah

TRIANGULUM

Metallah Hamal Sheratan Mesarthim

ARIES

41

Schedar Caph Navi Ruchbah Segin

CASSIOPEIA

URSA MINOR

Pherkad Kochab 5 Yildun Polaris

Giansar γ

CAMELOPARDALIS

Muscida 26 θ Talitha

Miram Misam Algol 16 β PERSEUS Menkib Atik

Mirfak PLEIADES

Capella Hoedus I Hoedus II Hassaleh

Menkalinan β

AURIGA