To orient yourself with the stars, face north and rotate the chart until the current season shows at the bottom. The constellations at the bottom of the chart will be in the northern sky while the stars at the top will be to the south.

*This map depicts the night at midnight. As the night progresses, the stars will appear to rotate counterclockwise due to the earth's rotation.*

**Light pollution** - Mainly a problem near or around cities, light pollution usually occurs in large urban areas and is known to reduce the visibility of stars.

- It can even harm our sleep and general health. It also consumes valuable natural resources.
- The easiest way to reduce light pollution is to enjoy the darkness. Switch off whenever possible and especially reduce outdoor lighting.

**How to find Polaris (The North Star)**: Locate the Big Dipper in the sky. Draw a line between the two stars in the bowl of the Big Dipper and extend it up about five times over. This will lead you to Polaris and the Little Dipper.

The best places to Star Gaze are located far from any particular city. In Missouri we suggest somewhere between Ironton and Fredrickton, in South Eastern Missouri (Far enough from St. Louis, Nashville, Columbia, and Springfield).

Yonatan David, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri's Natural Heritage 2014