

# The British Astronomical Association's Campaign for Dark Skies

*A campaign to restore our natural, starry skies, by reducing inefficient lighting*

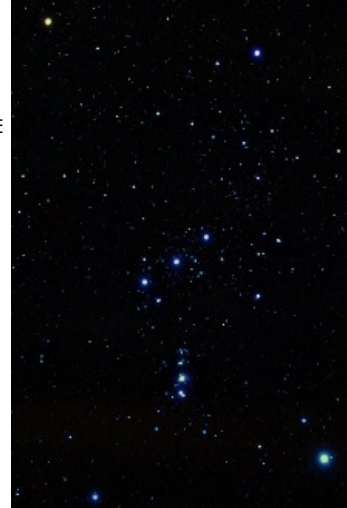
## CfDS/CPRE Orion Star Count Week, 2012

Friday 20 January – Friday 27 January.

### Introduction

The **Campaign to Protect Rural England** and the **Campaign for Dark Skies** are asking people to count the number of stars they can see in the constellation of Orion. We held the first Star Count in the winter of 2006/7, and almost 2,000 people responded. These allowed the CPRE and CfDS to create a Star Count Map to illustrate the stars counted across the country, which revealed that only 2% of people who responded to our online survey said they could see more than 30 stars, compared to 54% who saw fewer than 10 stars in Orion – a level which indicates severe light pollution.

CPRE and the CfDS are once again asking people across the United Kingdom to take part in our Star Count week. We want to find out which part of the country has the darkest skies – where the most stars can be seen. By taking part in our Star Count, you will also be helping us to highlight the problem of light pollution which is spoiling the natural beauty of the night sky.



### How to take part in the star count

- **Go outside and enjoy looking at the stars!**
- You can find the constellation of Orion by looking south in the evening (see the star-map below; click on it for a larger version). Orion is easily identified thanks to the red star Betelgeuse to the top left, the bluish-white star Rigel to the bottom right, and the three stars in a line in the middle, known as Orion's belt.



- You can choose any day during the week, one where there is no haze or cloud so you have the best chance of seeing stars.
- Please make your observations at any time between 6pm and midnight. The Sun is setting at around 5pm, so we will have to wait at least an hour (preferably 90 minutes) for it to get really nice and dark!
- We are asking people to **count stars within the constellation of Orion**. The main area of the constellation is bounded by four bright stars – see the graphic below and to the right.
- **Your star count should not include the four corner stars** – only those within this rectangular boundary. But do include the stars in the middle known as Orion's three-star belt.
- Make a count of the number of stars you can see with the naked eye (not with either a telescope or binoculars).

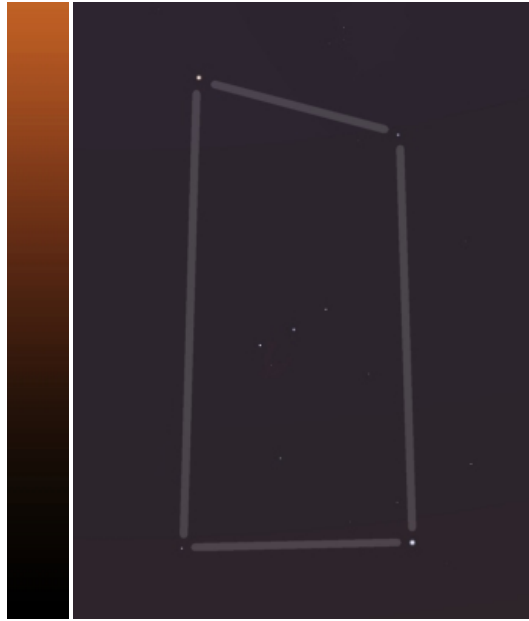


### How to submit your star-count

Simply visit <http://www.britastro.org/dark-skies/starcount> to submit your count! Once we have all the completed survey forms, we will plot the results on our star count map which we will publish on our website.

## What should you expect to see?

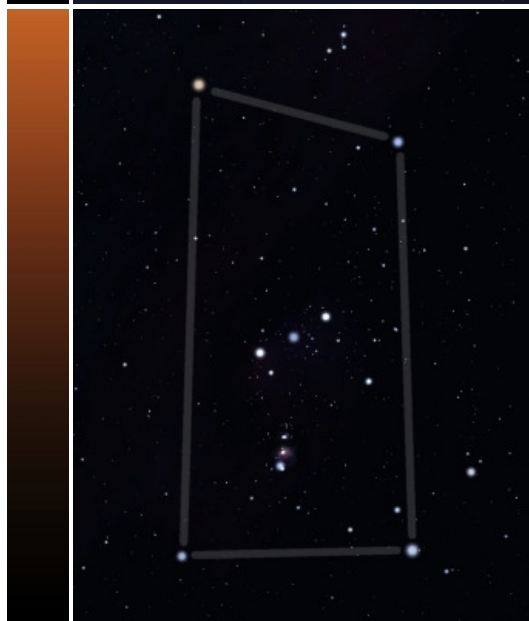
Please hover the mouse cursor over the light pollution scale bar, to see how the constellation of Orion looks under different levels of light pollution



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## **What you can do to help reduce light pollution**

If you are as concerned about us with the amount of light wasted into the night sky, please consider doing one (or all!) of the following.

1. Ensure all your lights are pointing downwards, and that they are not spilling into the night sky.
  2. Contact your local council via [WriteToThem.com](https://www.writetothem.com), and ask them what they are doing about the energy and money wasted by inefficient street-lighting in your area.
  3. Contact you local MP via [WriteToThem.com](https://www.writetothem.com), to see what they are doing to reduce light pollution in your area and around the UK.
  4. Contact any local businesses that have bad lighting, and recommend that they use efficient lighting instead. The cost of replacement can be saved in electricity bills in just a few years.
  5. Contact the local press, to encourage more people to use efficient lighting in your neighbourhood.
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