

# Eridanus Optics CC

May 2007

## Deep Sky Sailing

Vela, the sails of the legendary ship 'Argo' lies to the west of Crux (Southern Cross) (See Map 1). Two stars of the 'False Cross' actually belong to Vela. The milky way runs through Vela, with several deep sky objects to be found. This month I selected a Globular cluster and a Planetary nebula from the Astronomical Society of Southern Africa top 100 list for Deep Sky Objects.

## Naked eye targets:

The False Cross is an ideal naked eye object to view. Using the two stars of Vela as start point, identify Vela. Look out particularly for Mu Velorum and q Velorum as these stars will serve as start points for the deep sky objects.

The objects mentioned above should be visible even from light polluted sites.

## Binocular Targets:

Lambda Velorum forms part of a grouping of six stars which resembles the head of an 'alien' (See map 2). For other binocular targets, refer to the 'Crosses in the Southern Sky' newsletter.

## Telescope Targets:

NGC 3201 (ASSA 38) is a globular cluster of magnitude 6.8. It is about 18' wide and has a low surface brightness. I could find it in a 6" Newtonian from Pretoria. Follow the following instructions to find this object:

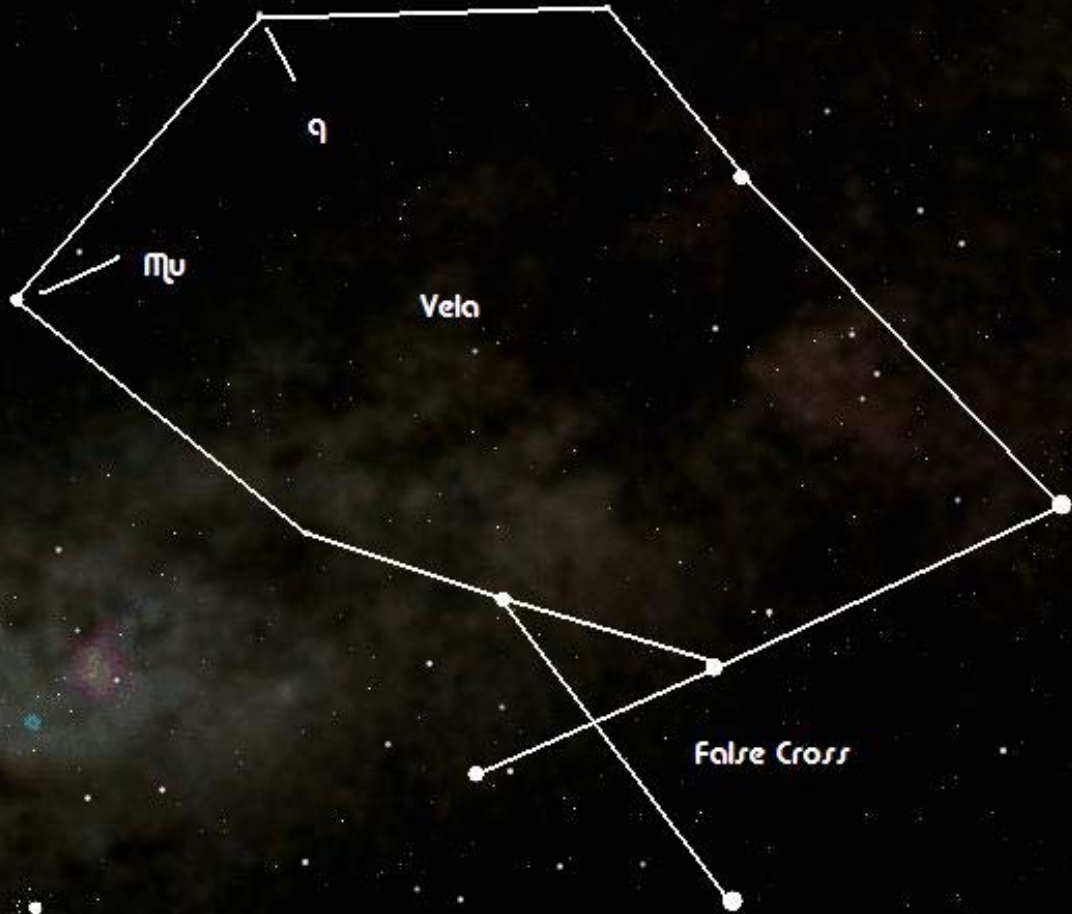
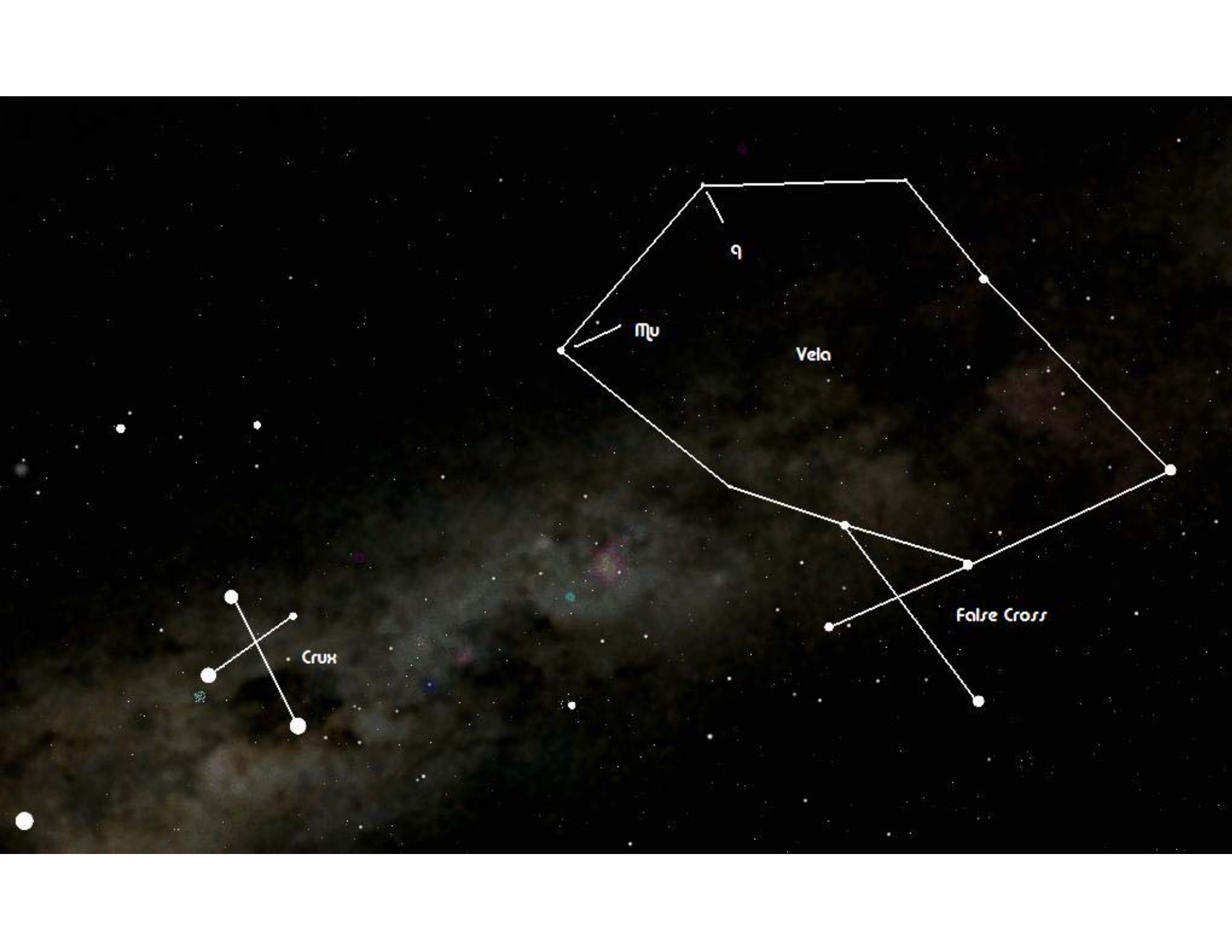
- Start at Mu Velorum and identify the group of four stars making an arc.
- Perpendicular on the line connecting the second and third star is a fifth star.
- NGC 3201 is again perpendicular on this line. Note the two stars close to NGC 3201.

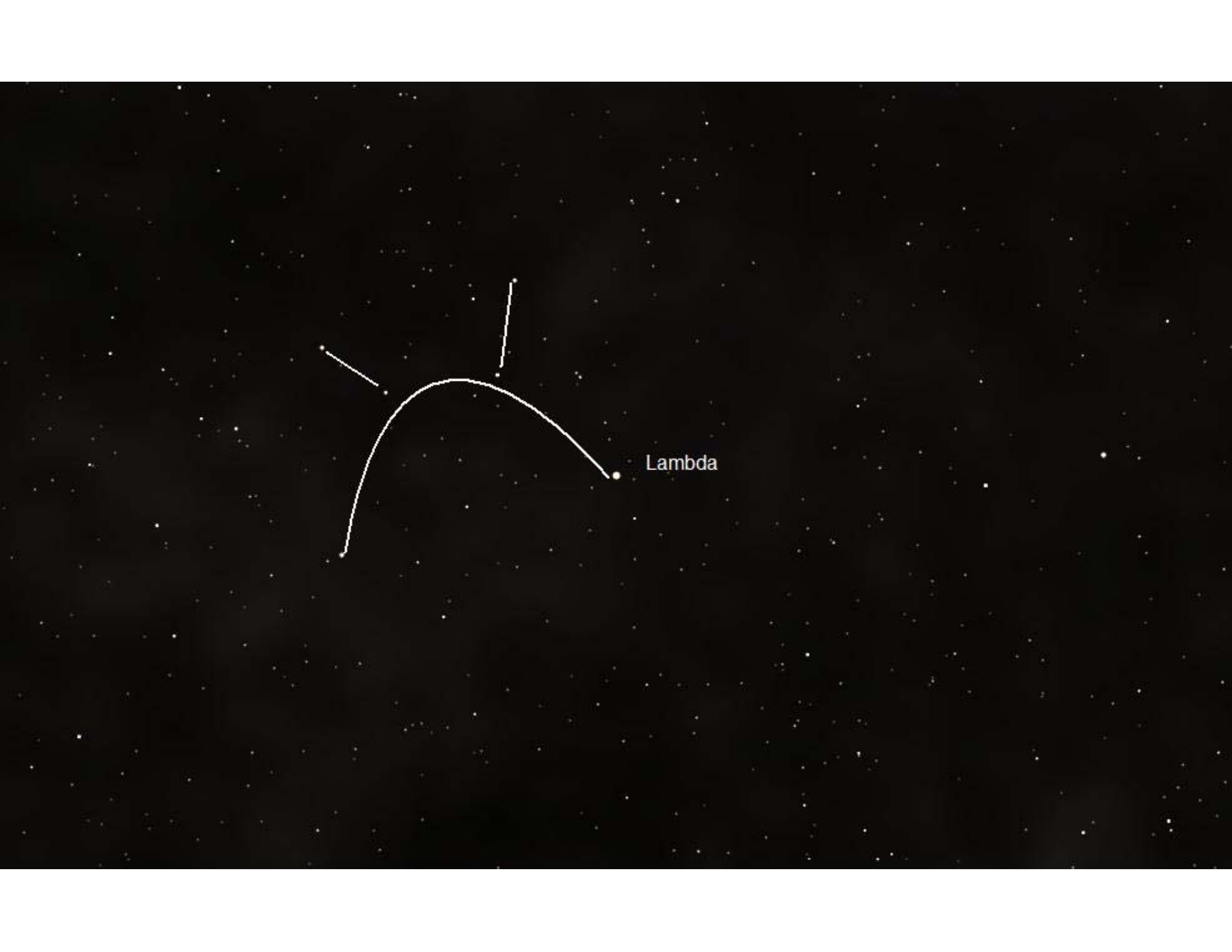
NGC 3132 (ASSA 37) is also known as the 'Eight Burst Nebula'. It is magnitude 8.2 and is about 1' wide. To locate this object, start at q Velorum and follow these instructions:

- Identify the straight lines indicated on map 4.
- From q Velorum, draw a line to the bright star in Antlia (Hip 49343 – mag 6.4)
- NGC 3132 is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  away from q Velorum on this line. Note that it is about in the centre of an arc of stars.

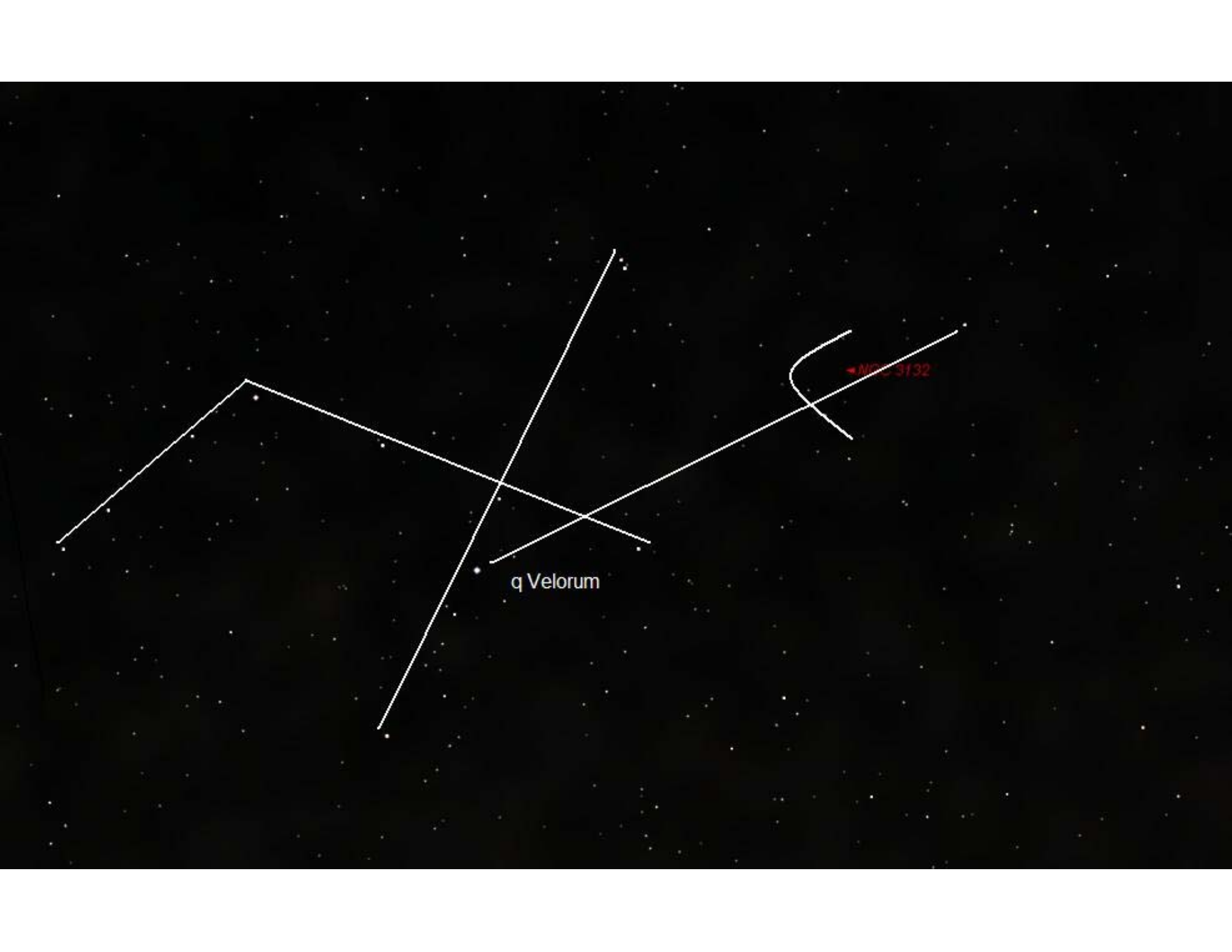
Happy hunting!

Andrie









q Velorum

→ NGC 3132