

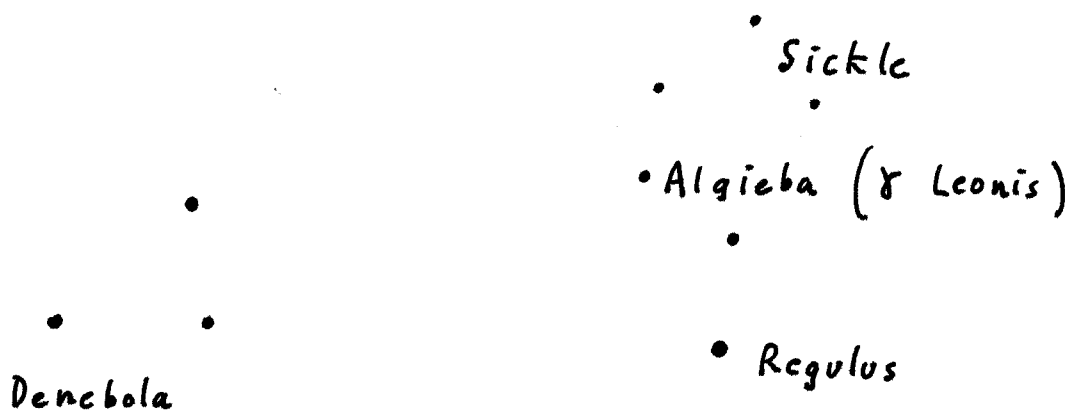
## Leo

Latin name: Leo; English name: The Lion; Abbreviation: Leo;  
Latin possessive: Leonis

Stars:  $\alpha$  = Regulus, magnitude 1.35, star colour white

Leo is one of the ancient designs in Greek and Roman legend, representing the lion happily wandering around in the Nemean forest. Along comes Hercules, on his twelve-labour quest, and strangles our feline friend — the Classical tales are like that. On a visual note, unlike many constellations, Leo can be said to resemble what it is supposed to be: the Lion's head is a large, backward question mark, with its body off to the left.

Regulus, at the base of the head, is very close to the ecliptic (the plane of the solar system) and, as a result, is one of only four bright stars that can be occulted by the Moon\* and (much more rarely) the planets.



Algieba, in the sickle, is a splendid binary, as a small telescope will show. The revolution period is four hundred and seven years. The magnitudes of the two components are 2.4 and 3.8

\*

2007, March 30

04:00

B.S.T.

Regulus occulted by  
the Moon.

D.F.

2007, March 12