

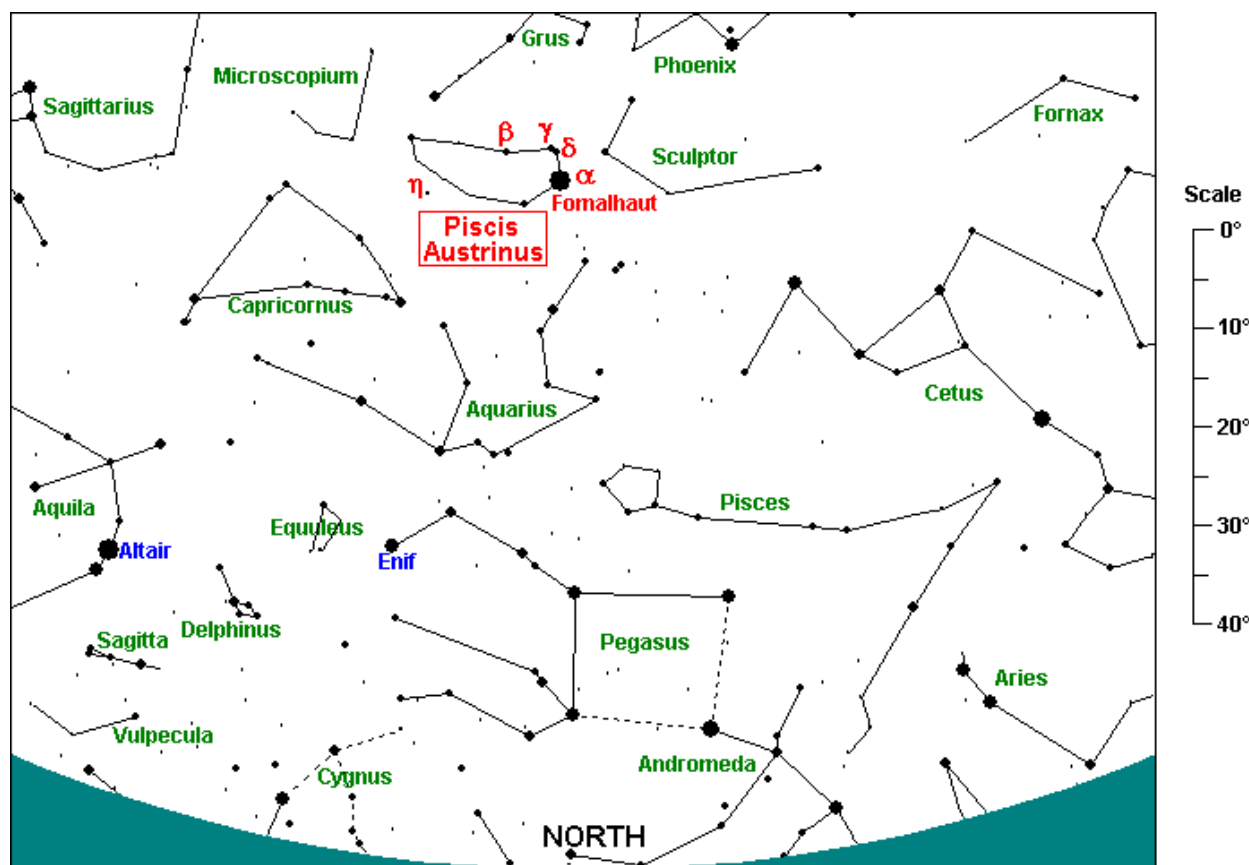
PISCIS AUSTRINUS (The Southern Fish) Pronounced PIE-siss ass-TRI-nuss.

Chart showing the constellation. (<http://rasnz.org.nz/Stars/PiscisAus.shtml#chart>)

Piscis Austrinus is an ancient constellation to which Ptolemy assigned twelve stars. It is often represented as a fish drinking water from the urn of the neighbouring constellation Aquarius. The bright star Fomalhaut is the mouth of that fish. The fish has been identified with the Babylonian fish god Oannes, and is said to be the parent of the zodiacal fish, Pisces.

To find this constellation look north in the evening and find the bright star high above the square of Pegasus.

Chart showing Piscis Austrinus - as seen about 10.30 pm (NZDT) mid October
The horizon for Invercargill is shown.



Some stars in the Constellation

α Piscis Austrini (Fomalhaut, fish's mouth), is a magnitude 1.2 blue-white star 25.1 light years away.

β PsA is an optical double star, consisting of a magnitude 4.3 white primary star 148 light years away with an unrelated companion star of magnitude 7.8, visible in small telescopes.

γ PsA is a beautiful double star of magnitudes 4.5 and 8.1, the magnitude contrast making it difficult to split in small telescopes. The system lies 222 light years away.

δ PsA is a bright, deep yellow star with a faint companion star close south-west. They lie 170 light years away.

η PsA is close pair of blue-white stars of magnitude 5.8 and 6.8 divisible with a smallish telescope with high power under good conditions. The system lies 1013 light years away.

Visibility Piscis Austrinus is a southern constellation, and is highest in New Zealand skies at about 10:30 pm (NZDT) in mid October. It remains visible in the evening sky until about the end of January, by which date the constellation will be low in a direction to the south of west.

By the beginning of March, Piscis Austrinus will be appearing in the pre-dawn sky low between east and south-east.