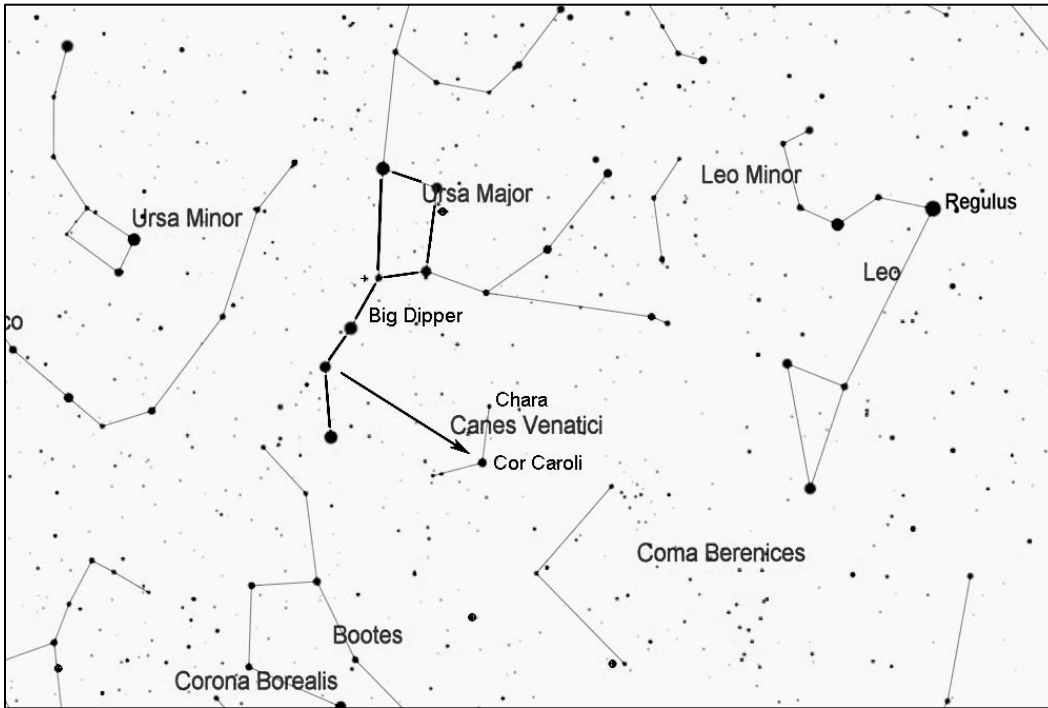


## Y Canum Venaticorum (La Superba)

Y Canum Venaticorum is a carbon star, a red giant star that has abundant carbon in its atmosphere, which produces its red color. Carbon stars appear redder than any other stars. Y CVn was named La Superba by the Jesuit astronomer Angelo Secchi, and that name is now officially recognized by the International Astronomical Union. It varies in brightness between about magnitude 4.8 to 6.4 over a period of about 5 months.



Start by finding the Big Dipper, one of the most recognizable star patterns in the sky. It is part of the constellation Ursa Major, the big bear. It is shown here on its side as it appears on early spring evenings. For other seasons and times of night rotate the chart as needed to match what you see in the northern sky. Then look "underneath" the curved handle of the Big Dipper for Cor Caroli, the brightest star in the small constellation Canes Venatici at magnitude 2.8.

Visualize a line from Cor Caroli to Chara (magnitude 4), and another line of equal length at nearly a right angle to the left. This will take you to the vicinity of Y CVn (La Superba), which can be identified by its red color in binoculars or a telescope.

