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HIP 68940

HIP 68940

A light for our story



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A story among the stars

Celestial Library edition



*Every light holds a story. These pages
follow its journey, from the heart of the
star to the sky we share.*

The sky, page by page

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One light among many

Some nights begin when we stop hurrying. The day withdraws, our eyes learn the darkness and, little by little, the stars appear. Among them is HIP 68940, 95 Virginis. To look for it is to begin learning a particular place in the vastness.

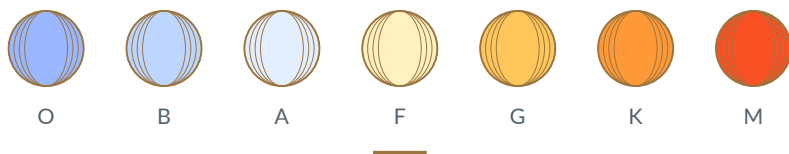
A star may keep more than one rhythm. A patient watch can let a quick tremor and a slower turning appear together, each giving a different shape to the light. The night becomes a measure of both change and return.

The colour of its fire

The light of HIP 68940 has a character of its own. The F family occupies a delicate place between white and gold. Its brightness suggests a lamp still keeping the freshness of dawn. A temperature is hidden within that tint: nature writes information even into what we experience as beauty.

To the unaided eye, a stellar colour can be little more than a whisper. The atmosphere makes it tremble and our eyes receive it in their own way. Beyond that point we can imagine a living surface of hot matter: the visible beauty of processes working on a scale far greater than ours.

SEVEN FAMILIES OF LIGHT



Light keeps the colours of its origin.

The journey ending here

The light of HIP 68940 crosses approximately 179.0 light-years to reach us. The brightness we receive has therefore spent about 179.0 years on its way. Distance becomes time: looking at this star means meeting light that began travelling before this moment. When it set out, the Sun and its planets already shared a history billions of years old. On their scale, this journey is barely a breath.

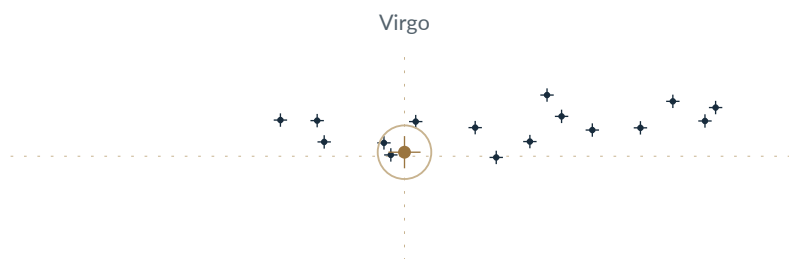
Its light has crossed the time of several generations. We can imagine hands writing letters, lit windows and voices that now live only in other voices. Through all that passing on, the brightness kept travelling; tonight it reaches us.



A landscape for imagination

HIP 68940 lies in the region of Virgo. Virgo lets us imagine hands keeping a harvest. We can read in that figure the care of what grows slowly, of things whose value is revealed only by passing seasons.

Figures in the sky are a human way of approaching immensity. In our gaze they join lights that may lie at very different distances. Imagination stretches the thread; the stars provide the brightness. A single landscape can therefore keep old images while receiving a story that begins tonight.



Its light, among other lights of the constellation.

Two rhythms in the light

During Kepler's K2 Campaign 6, 95 Virginis was watched from 13 July to 30 September 2015. Across about 78.9 days, nearly 3,400 long-cadence measurements let a subtle pattern emerge from the star's light. Paunzen and colleagues found two principal rhythms. The quicker one, 9.53728 cycles per day, they attributed to δ Scuti pulsation: a bright, almost sinusoidal variation. The slower signal, 1.07129 cycles per day, folded into an uneven, double-humped curve. They weighed several explanations, including a companion, another kind of pulsation and rotation. Their evidence favoured cool starspots carried across the view as the star turned, in keeping with its known chromospheric activity. Yet they left the question open, calling for phase-resolved spectroscopy. For HIP 68940, the K2 record holds both a clear oscillation and a quieter mystery.

A name can travel almost as quietly as light: carried by a page, a voice, a memory that another person chooses to keep. Here, the old words and the modern record meet beneath the same sky. We may give that meeting a place in our own story, letting a familiar syllable become the small doorway through which an immense night feels close enough to share.

The threshold of another chapter

A subgiant stands within a transition in its stellar history. The balance that supported a long stage begins to change, and the star responds within both its interior and envelope. We can imagine it on a threshold: still keeping something of what it was, already learning another way to shine.

To approach HIP 68940, we can let that scale widen our imagination. A stellar age is unlike a birthday: it speaks of changing matter, of energy finding a way out, of a balance sustained and transformed. Tonight's light is one page of that time, and we happen to be here to receive it.

Measuring with two glances

To begin measuring a stellar distance, Earth offers us a movement. We observe from one side of its orbit and look again about six months later from the other. A nearby star seems to shift slightly against more distant ones. That small change of perspective is called parallax.

We can feel the principle by looking at a finger with one eye and then the other. What fits between two glances at home requires our planet's journey in the sky. There is something beautiful in that patience: to learn how far a light is from us, we first learned to look from somewhere else.



Nothing stands still

Although it seems still, HIP 68940 belongs to a moving sky. Stars travel through the galaxy and our own home moves with the Sun. The distances are so great that many of these changes need years of observation to become visible. The serenity we see is really keeping a journey.

We can imagine every night as a meeting between travellers. We arrive with one more day of memories; the star arrives with its light and its path. The meeting seems to repeat, yet it is never quite the same. Perhaps that is why looking again can be such a simple way to celebrate shared time.

The night of finding it

We can begin simply: look into a starry sky and let our eyes grow used to darkness. Virgo rises in the evening sky; a clear horizon helps. A wide field is a gentle start if a telescope joins the night. A 114 mm Newtonian with a 500 mm focal length gives 20× with a 25 mm eyepiece. 95 Vir remains a point of light. Finding it can be its own quiet reward.

If a telescope joins the evening, a wide field is a gentle beginning. As a reference, a 114 mm Newtonian with a 500 mm focal length gives 20× with a 25 mm eyepiece. The star remains a point of light; the instrument gathers more of its brightness. The best memory may be the moment we leave the eyepiece and say: there it is.

Somewhere to return

We can close this booklet and let the star become a small light in an enormous night again. Something has changed: we have followed two rhythms in its light and learned that one of their explanations remains open. A careful question can be part of a star's story.

There will be clear nights and others when clouds keep the sky. Not every night will allow observing, but the pattern can wait. When Virgo returns above the horizon, 95 Virginis will be there among its lights, ready to be found again.

The traces of this story

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https://vizier.cds.unistra.fr/viz-bin/VizieR-5?-source=I/239/hip_main&HIP=68940

NASA · Our Sun

<https://science.nasa.gov/sun/facts/>

IAU · Constellations and their names

<https://iauarchive.eso.org/public/themes/constellations/>

Celestron · Choosing eyepieces

<https://www.celestron.com/blogs/knowledgebase/how-to-determine-which-eyepieces-to-use-with-your-telescope>

SIMBAD / CDS · HIP 68940 = HD 123255 = HR 5290 = 95 Vir
cross-identifications

<https://simbad.cds.unistra.fr/simbad/sim-id?Ident=HD+123255>

Original ISDORA prose and illustrations. Images are artistic evocations or diagrams, not to scale. Distances are approximate. Constellation figures include contemporary literary readings.

To keep discovering

NASA · The lives of stars

<https://science.nasa.gov/universe/stars/>

NASA · What is a light-year?

<https://science.nasa.gov/exoplanets/what-is-a-light-year/>

ESA · Measuring stellar distances by parallax

https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2013/06/Measuring_stellar_distances_by_parallax

Paunzen et al. (2017) · MNRAS 468, 2017–2023 · K2 Campaign 6; §§3–5 and Tables 1–2

<https://arxiv.org/pdf/1703.02711>

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https://vizier.cds.unistra.fr/viz-bin/asu-tsv?-source=I/239/hip_main&HIP=68940



May there always be a night
to look again.



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A STORY OF LIGHT