Leo Triplet

Quick Facts:

Distance: 35 Million Light-years **Size: 500,000 Light-years**

Constellation: Leo

A bright trio of the spiral galaxies Messier 65(top), M66(right), and NGC 3628(left). All fit within a 2/3-degree field of view. All show signs of deformation from gravitational interactions about a billion years ago. The most unusual of the 3 is NGC 3628, edge-on with huge dust lanes bifurcating it (the Hamburger Galaxy). The other 2 are usually classified as barred spirals. Find it: The west side of the tail triangle of Leo points 2 degrees south and a bit east to the triad. GOTO: M (Messier).

Image by ESO. Quick reference card by Derek Wallentinsen.