Messier 87 Galaxy

Quick Facts:

Distance: 54 Million Light-years.

Size: 120,000 Light-years.

Constellation: Virgo.

A supergiant elliptical in the Virgo Cluster of Galaxies. Famous for its jet emanating from a central supermassive black hole (not visible in small scopes). Also called Virgo A by radio astronomers.

Find it: Find Denebola at the tip of Leo's tail and look 20 degrees east for moderately bright Vindemiatrix. Just over halfway between these naked-eye stars is the galaxy. GOTO: M (Messier).

Image by Chris Mihos (Case Western Reserve U.)/ESO. Quick reference card by Derek Wallentinsen.