0742

Messier 46

Quick Facts:

Distance: 5000 Light-years.
Size: Approx 80 Light-years.
Constellation: Canis Major.
This galactic cluster has about 500 stars in a ball about the apparent size of the moon. Inside it are also a planetary nebula NGC 2438 and a much fainter Calabash Nebula. The planetary is only half as far away as the cluster. Just west is M47.
Find it: Go 10 degrees due east of Sirius and 2 up. It's nestled just east of the brighter Messier 47. GOTO: M (Messier).

Image by Jose Luis Martinez. Quick reference card by Derek Wallentinsen.