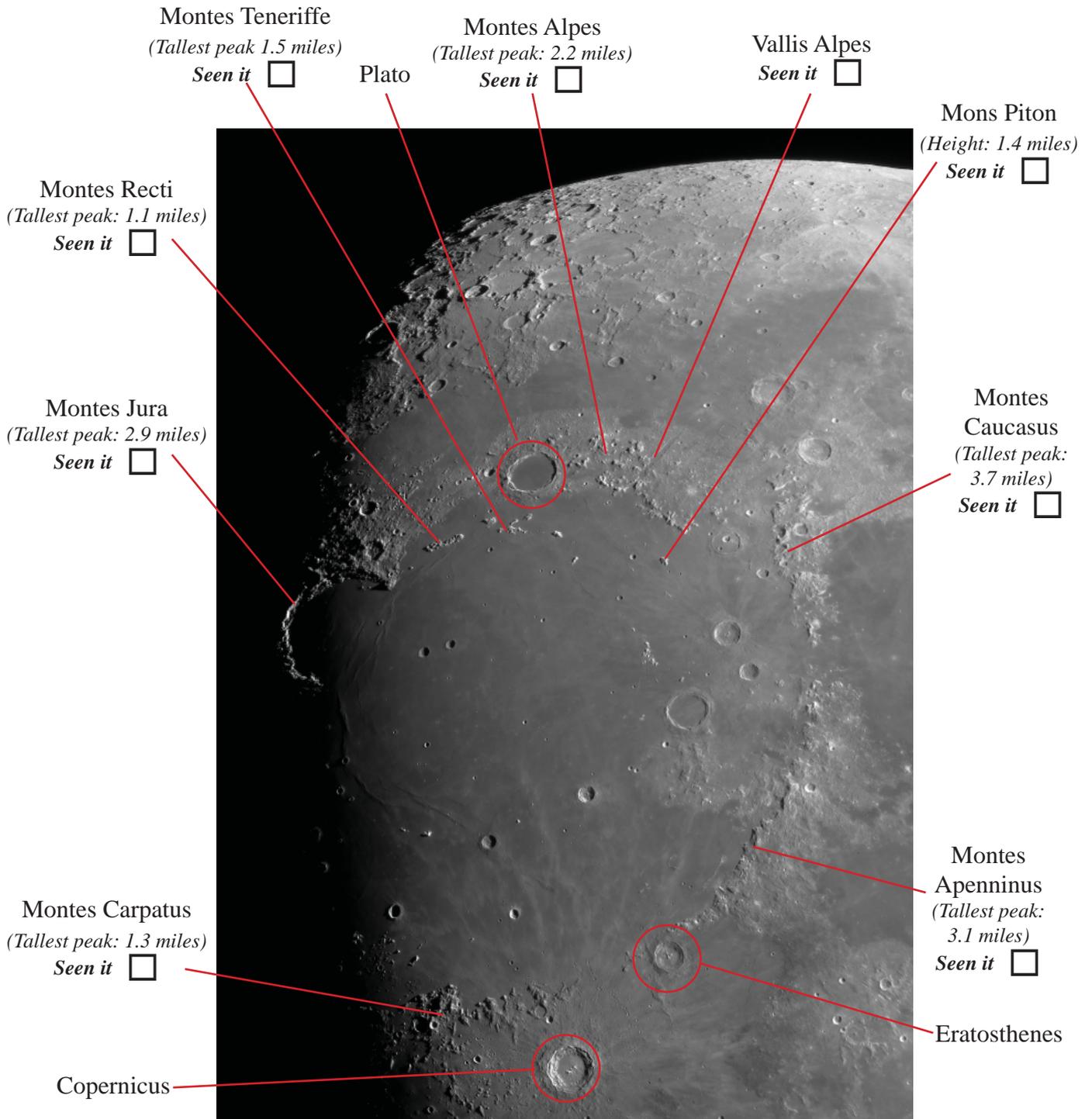




## Section 4: Majestic Mountains



## Section 4: Majestic Mountains

**Visibility:** A pair of binoculars will pick out some of these mountains but a telescope is required to see them all.

**When:** They appear most dramatic when the terminator is nearby.



There are a whole range of geological features visible on the Moon, from the seas and craters already discussed, through to valleys, faults and mountains. The latter can be particularly impressive, especially when the lighting on them is oblique - that is, from the mountain's perspective, the Sun is close to rising or setting.

To make things a bit simpler to locate, all the mountains and ranges that you need to identify are located around the edge of the Mare Imbrium - the second largest lunar sea that was mentioned in Section 1. A couple of what should now be familiar craters have also been marked on the finder sheet to help you orientate yourself.

Look to the north of Copernicus and you'll find a wide mountain range called **Montes Carpatius**. This naturally marks the southern edge of Mare Imbrium and follows the sea's curve. Follow this curve around to the east, past Eratosthenes and you'll arrive at the magnificent **Appennine Mountains** which mark the southeast border of Mare Imbrium.

To their north and still following the edge of Imbrium, is the **Montes Caucasus** which appears to go slightly off track, heading north rather than following the edge of the sea. There are some excellent craters to the west of this region including the 50 mile diameter Archimedes, 24 mile Autolycus, 33 mile Aristillus and 35 mile Cassini, the rim of which surrounds two smaller craters, Cassini A and B.

To the northwest of Cassini lie the impressive **Montes Alpes**. These are the lunar Alps and include the Moon's own version of Mont Blanc, called Mons Blanc. Montes Alpes are cut in two by a channel known as the **Vallis Alpes** or Alpine Valley, a wonderful feature to view with a telescope.

The dark-floored crater Plato lies to the west of Montes Alpes. This feature was mentioned in Section 2. In Section 1 we described the lovely, semi-circular Sinus Iridum or Bay of Rainbows. The edge of the Bay is defined by the **Montes Jura** mountain range. When the terminator lies across the Bay as the phase is approaching full, the Jura mountains appear to hang off the sunlit side of the Moon passing into the unlit portion.

The northern inner part of the Mare Imbrium also has some impressive mountains to offer including the **Montes Recti**, **Montes Teneriffe** immediately south of Plato and a lone peak called **Piton**. Catch this feature when the terminator's close by and it casts an impressive triangular shadow across the floor of Mare Imbrium.