

Astronomical vexillology

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Astronomy (/ə'strɒnəmi/)

is a branch of science which deals with celestial objects, space, and the physical universe as a whole.

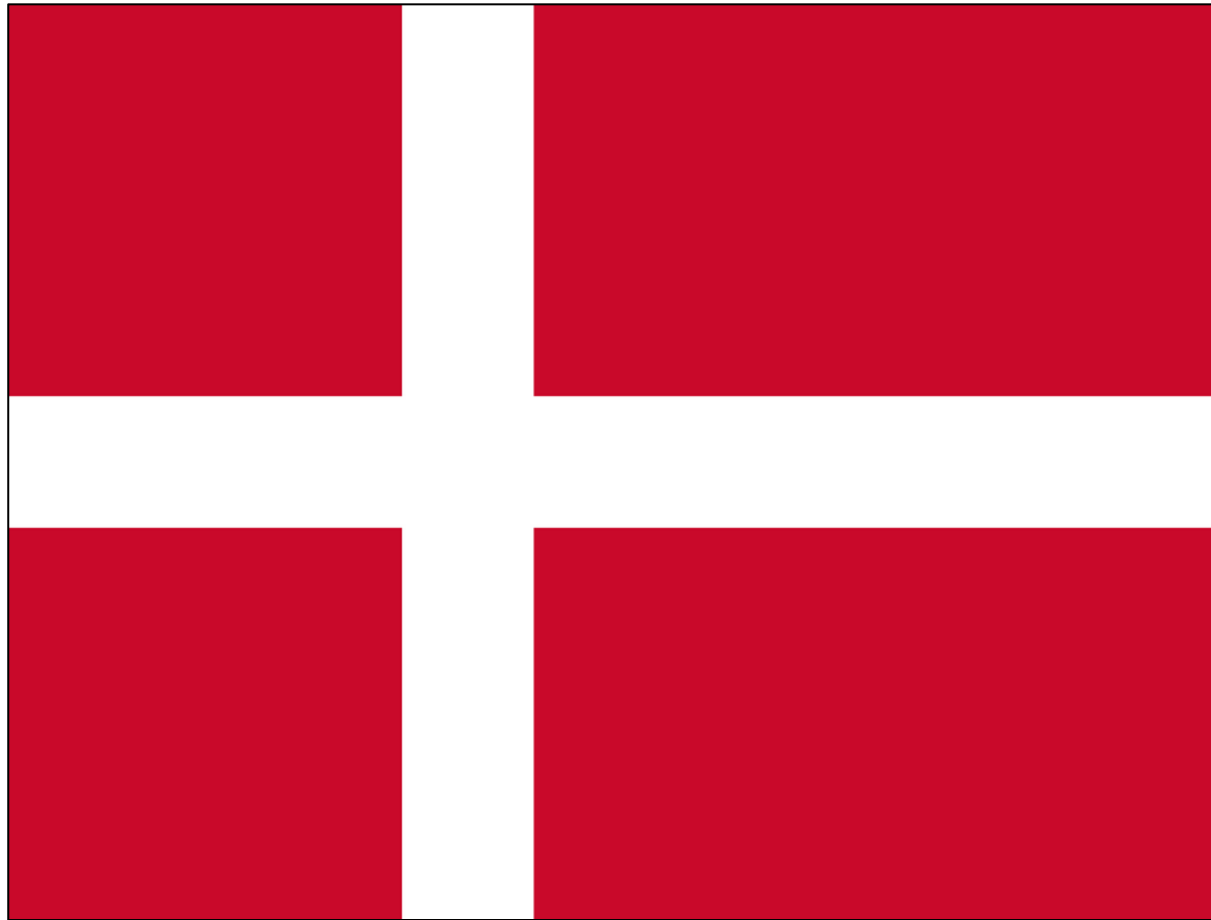
Vexillology (/ˌvɛksɪ'lɒlədʒi/)

is the study of the history, symbolism and usage of flags or, by extension, any interest in flags in general.

Flags

- Every country has one...
 - The UN recognises 193 countries and two non-member observer states
- ... and every state, territory, region ...
- They're rectangular
- They have multiple colours
- They can be hung upside down to indicate distress
- Countries change their flags from time to time
- A surprising number include an astronomical element

Denmark

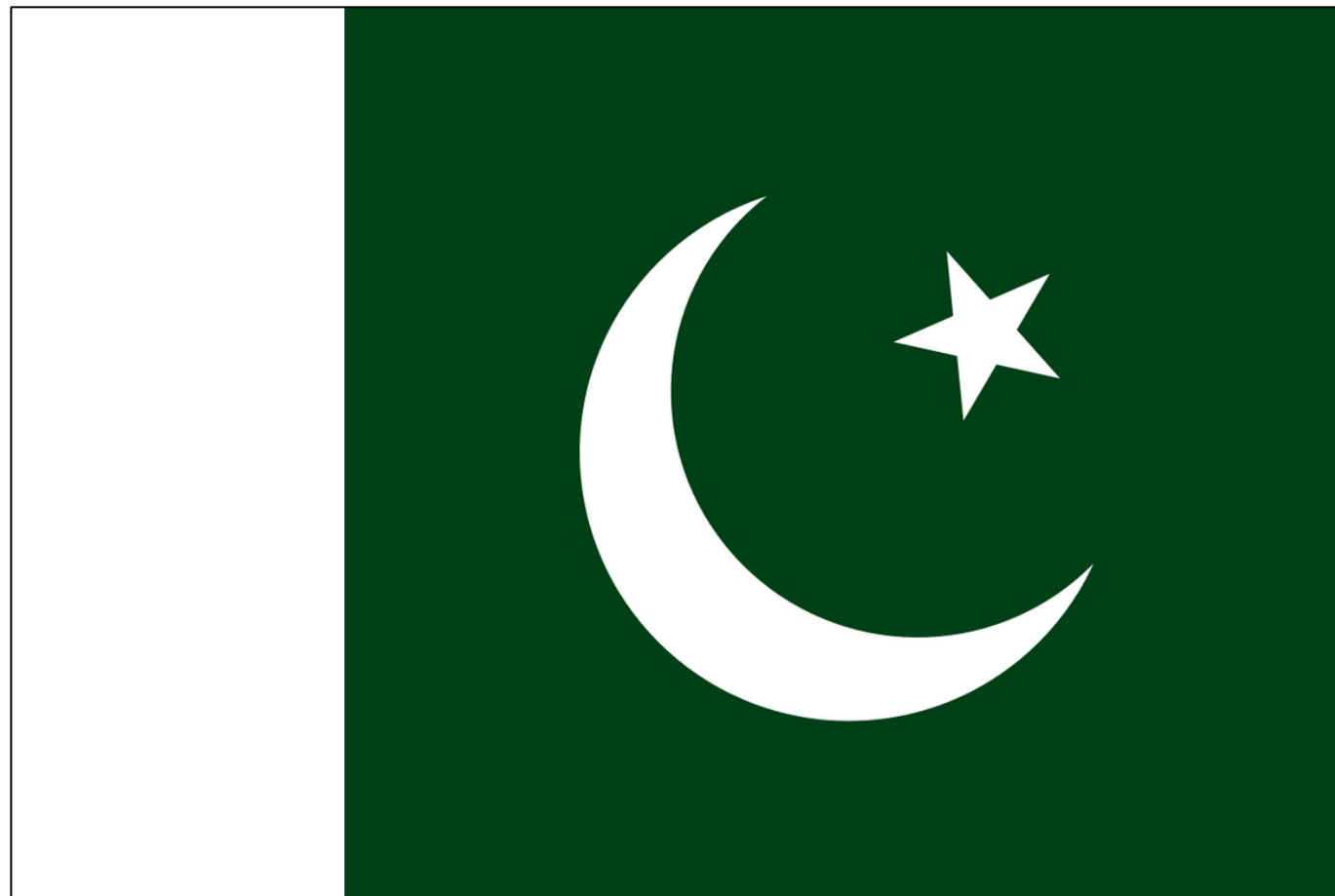


The oldest, continuously used national flag

Turkey



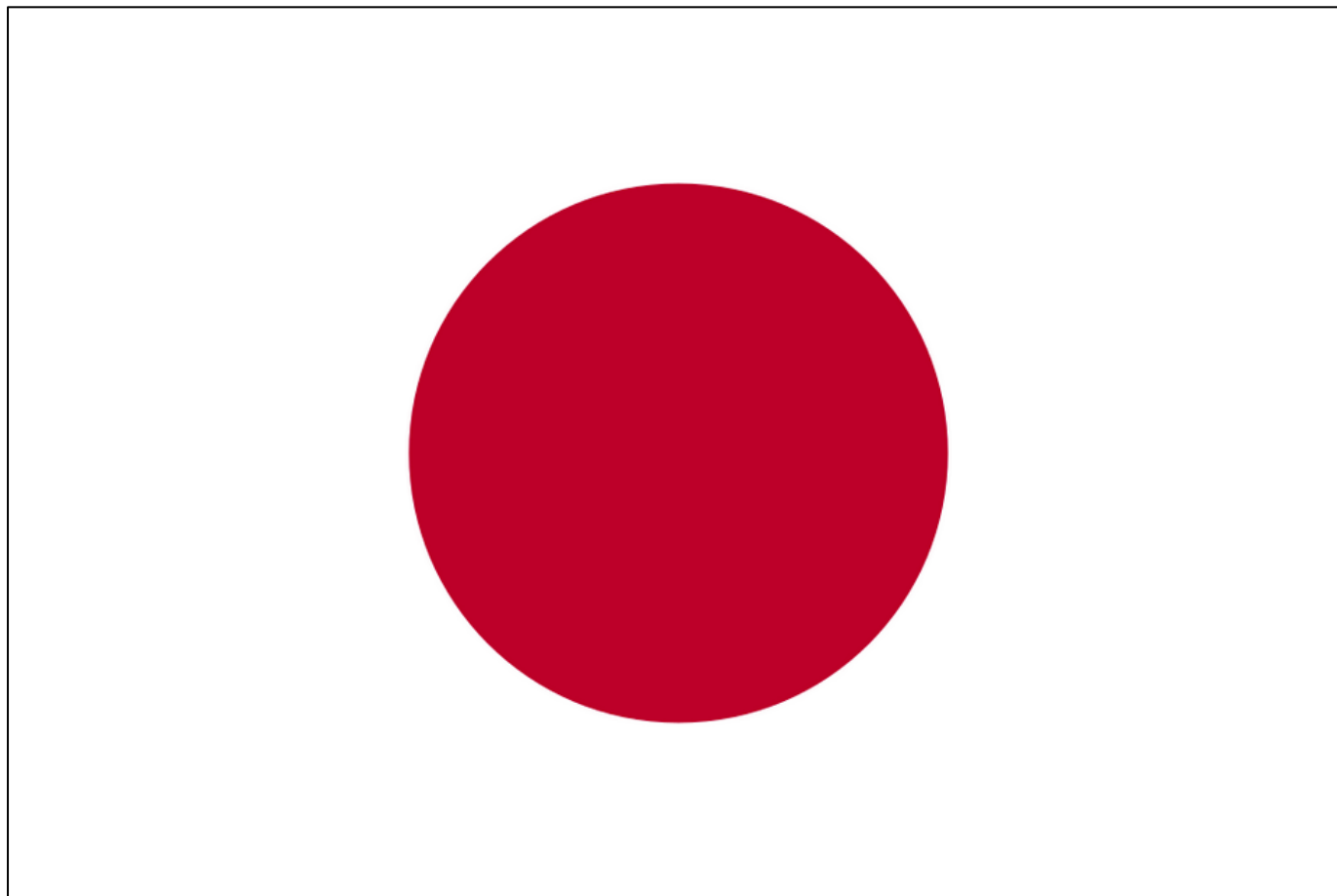
Pakistan



Mauritania



Japan



Bangladesh



Argentina

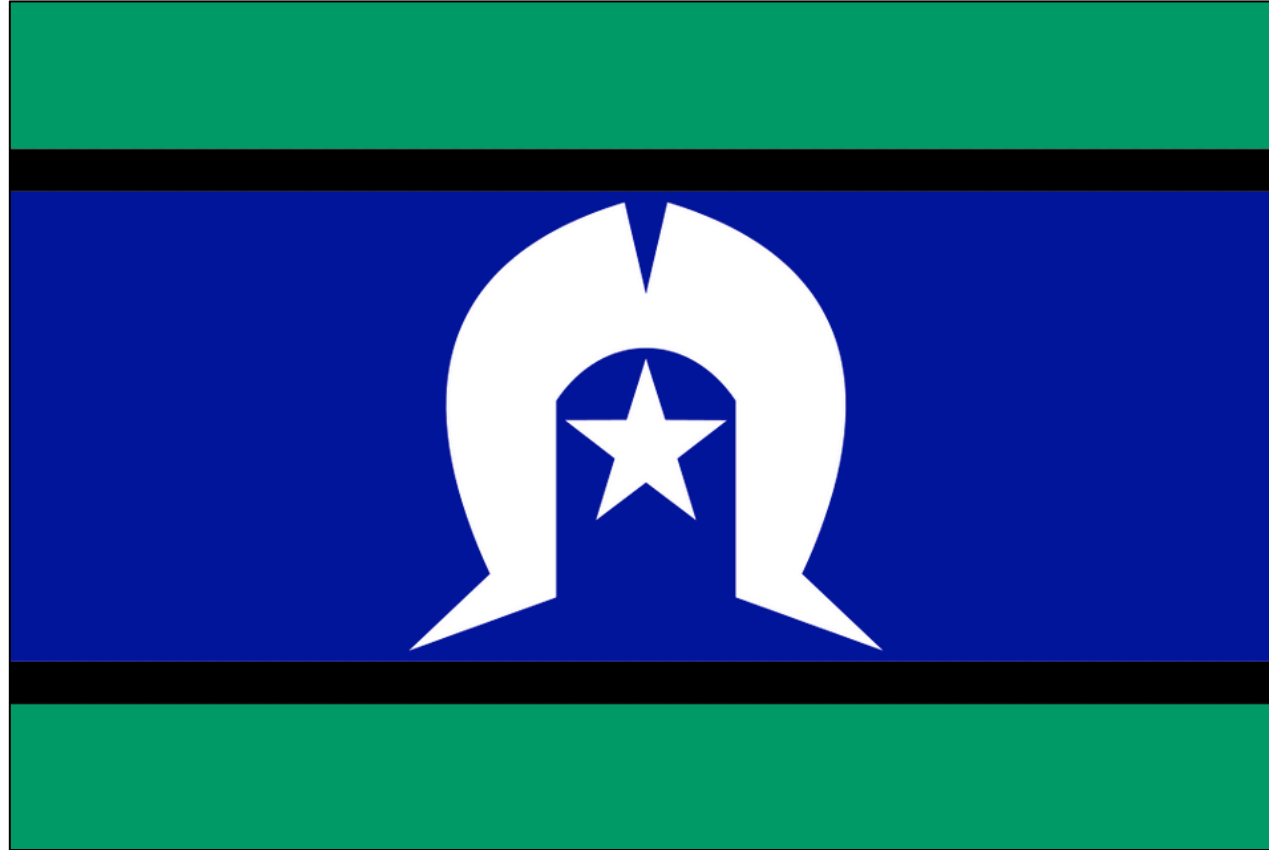


Australian Aboriginal Flag



- The **Australian Aboriginal Flag** is one of the officially proclaimed flags of Australia. The flag was designed in 1971 by Harold Thomas, an Aboriginal artist from the Luritja people of Central Australia. The flag was originally designed for the land rights movement.
 - Black – represents the Aboriginal people of Australia
 - Yellow circle – represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector
 - Red – the red can have two meanings: representing the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and Aboriginal peoples' spiritual relation to the land; and the blood of the Aboriginal people

Torres Strait Islands



Designed in 1992 by Bernard Namok. The five-pointed star at the centre of the flag represents the five major island groups—the Western, Eastern, Central, Port Kennedy and the Mainland. White symbolises peace, and the star is a symbol for navigation.

Israel

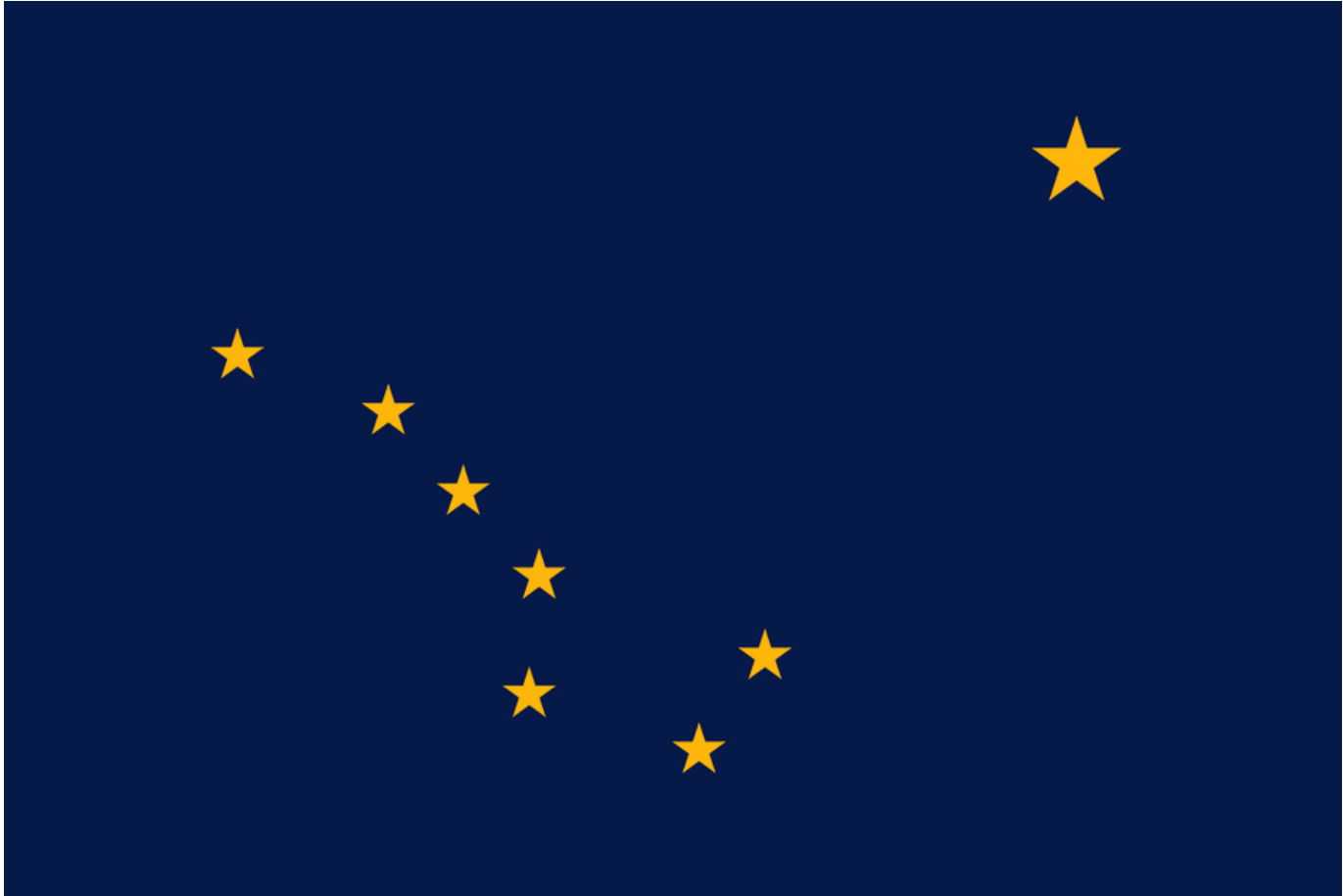


China



The large star represents the CCP, small stars the four classes of people: Scholars, Peasants, Workers, Merchants

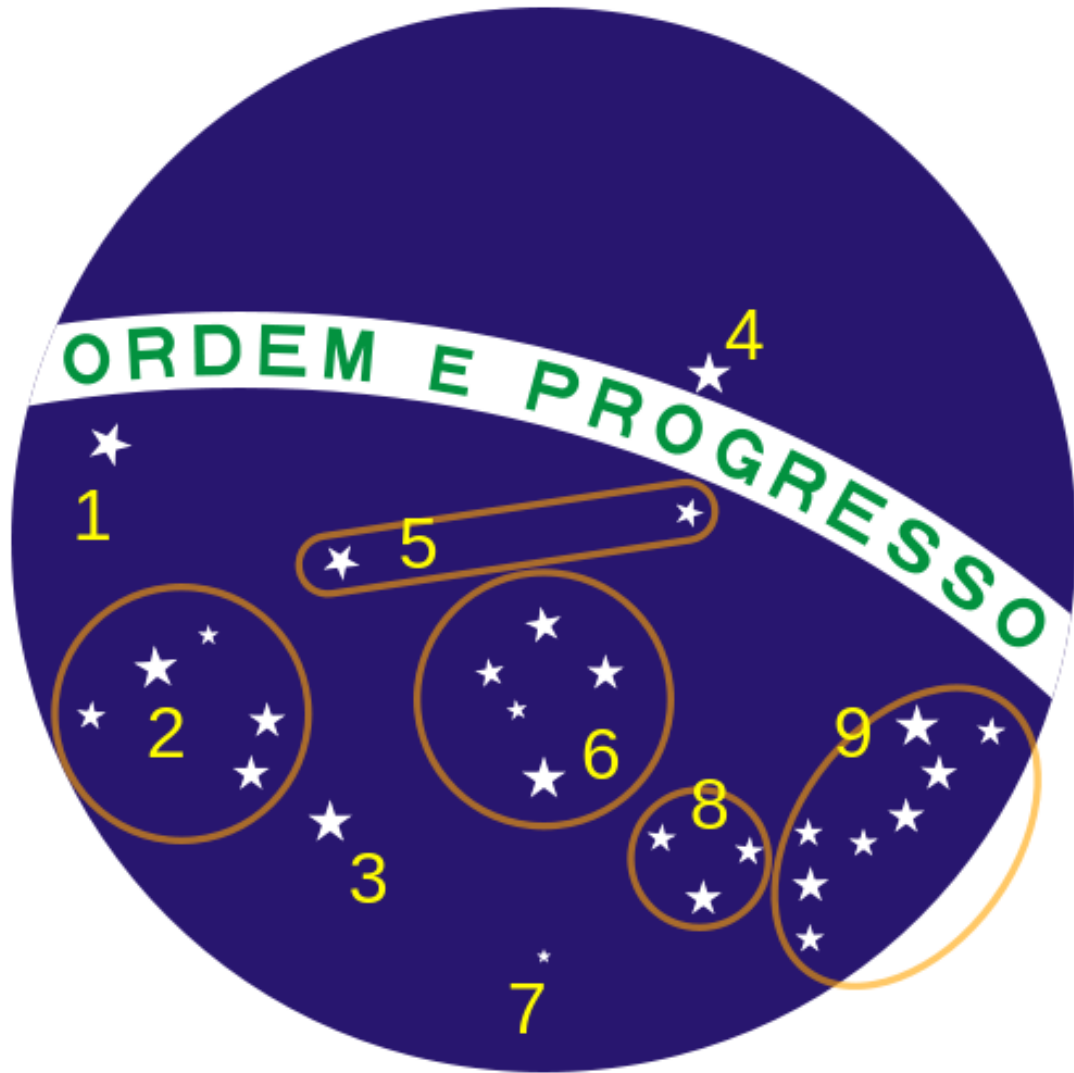
Alaska



Brazil



- The motto *Ordem e Progresso* is derived from Auguste Comte's motto of positivism: "L'amour pour principe et l'ordre pour base; le progrès pour but" ("Love as a principle and order as the basis; progress as the goal")
- The stars are of five different sizes: first, second, third, fourth and fifth magnitudes.
- In 1889 it had 21 stars, one for each of the states. It then received one more star in 1960, then another in 1968, and finally four more stars in 1992, totalling 27 stars in the current version.
- Sigma Octantis (the south pole star) is small, but all the other stars turn around it – it represents the Federal District in the Brazilian union.



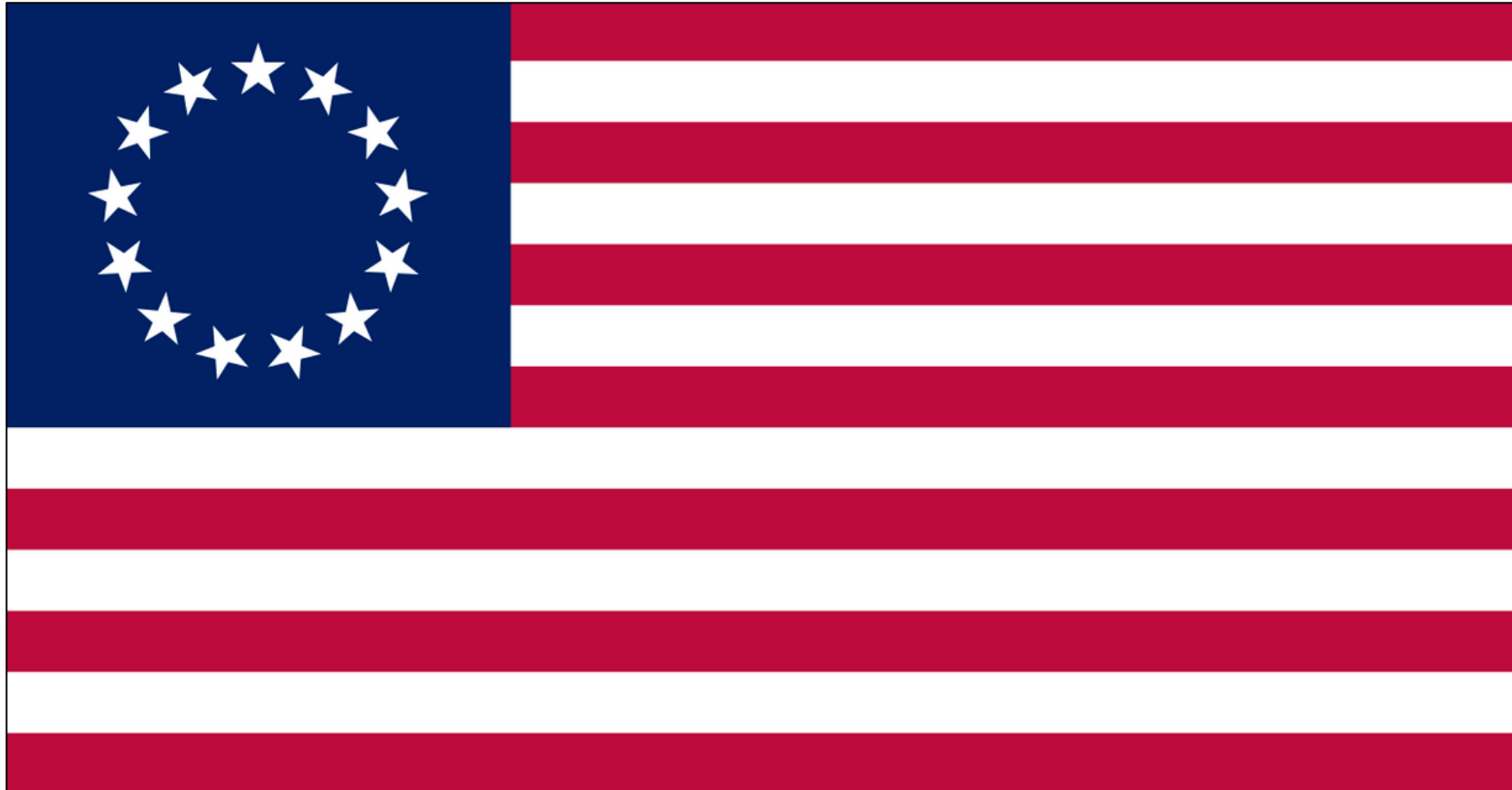
A list of the constellations and stars:

1. Procyon (α Canis Minoris)
2. Canis Major: five stars, the largest depicting Sirius
3. Canopus (α Carinae)
4. Spica (α Virginis)
5. Hydra: two stars, the larger being Alphard
6. Crux Australis: five stars, the largest depicting Alpha Crucis
7. Sigma Octantis (σ Octantis, south pole star)
8. Triangulum Australe: three stars of similar size
9. Scorpius: eight stars, the largest depicting Antares

USA, 1959—1960



USA, 1777—1795



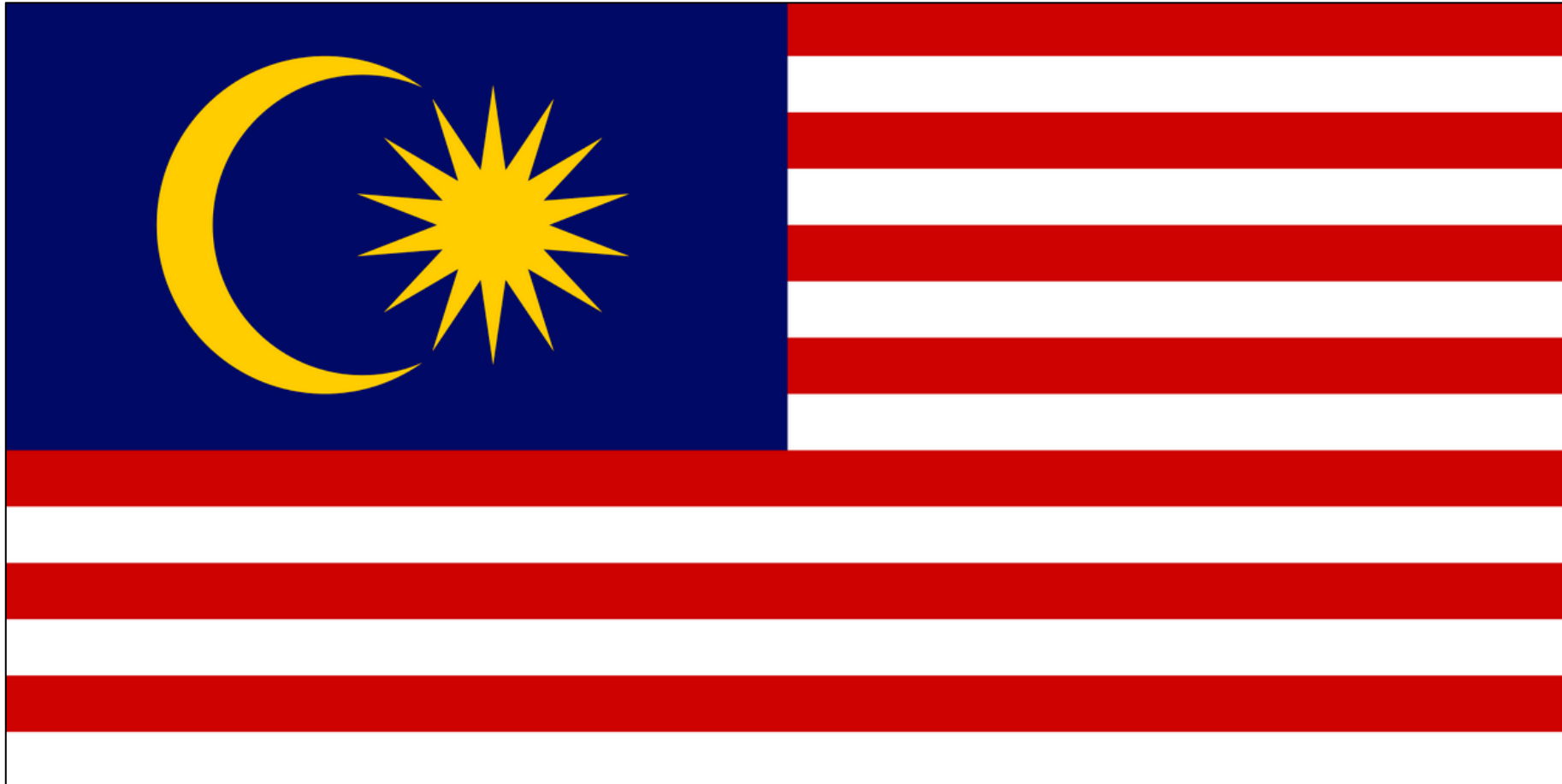
USA, 1818—1819



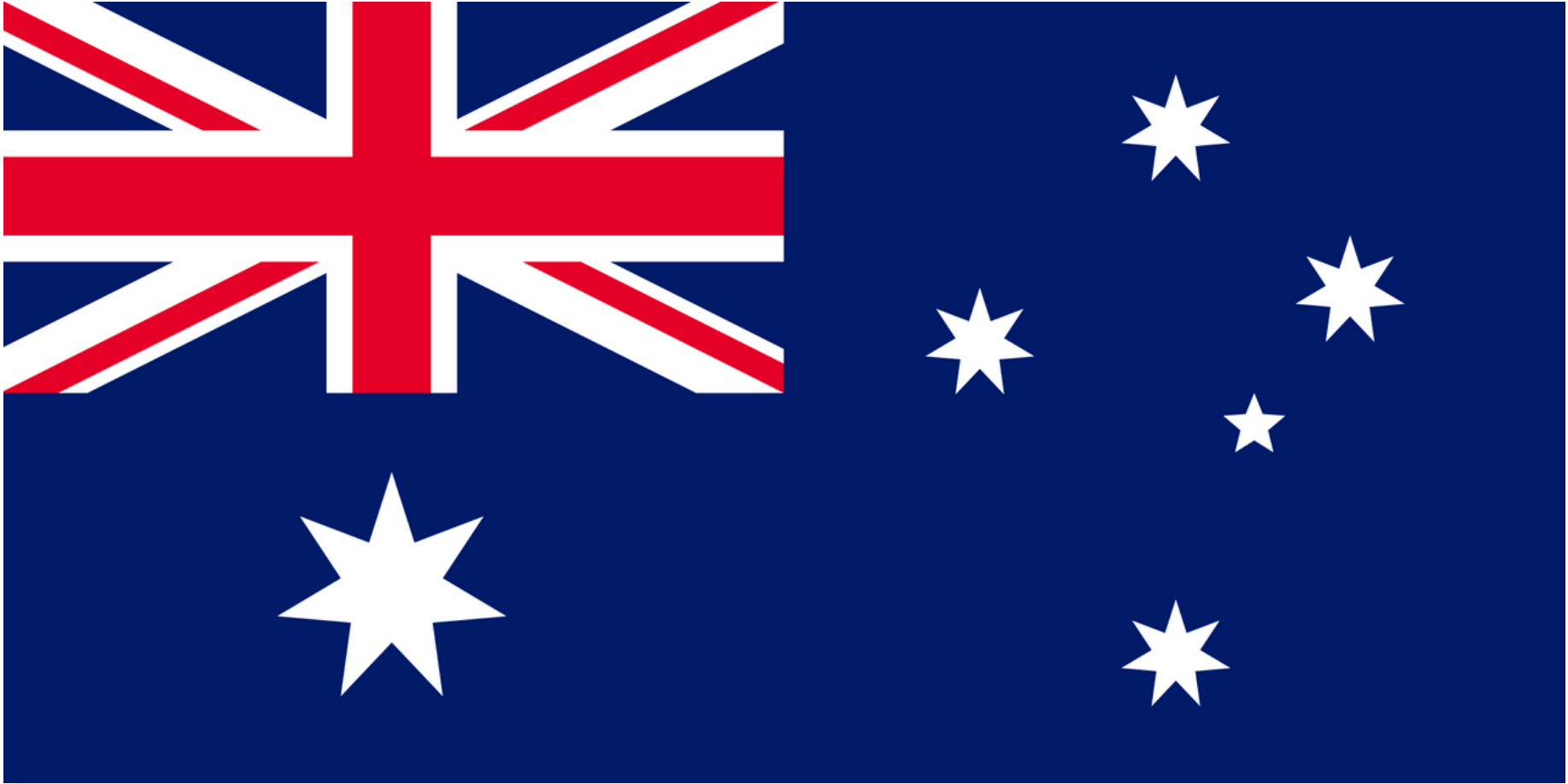
USA, 1960—



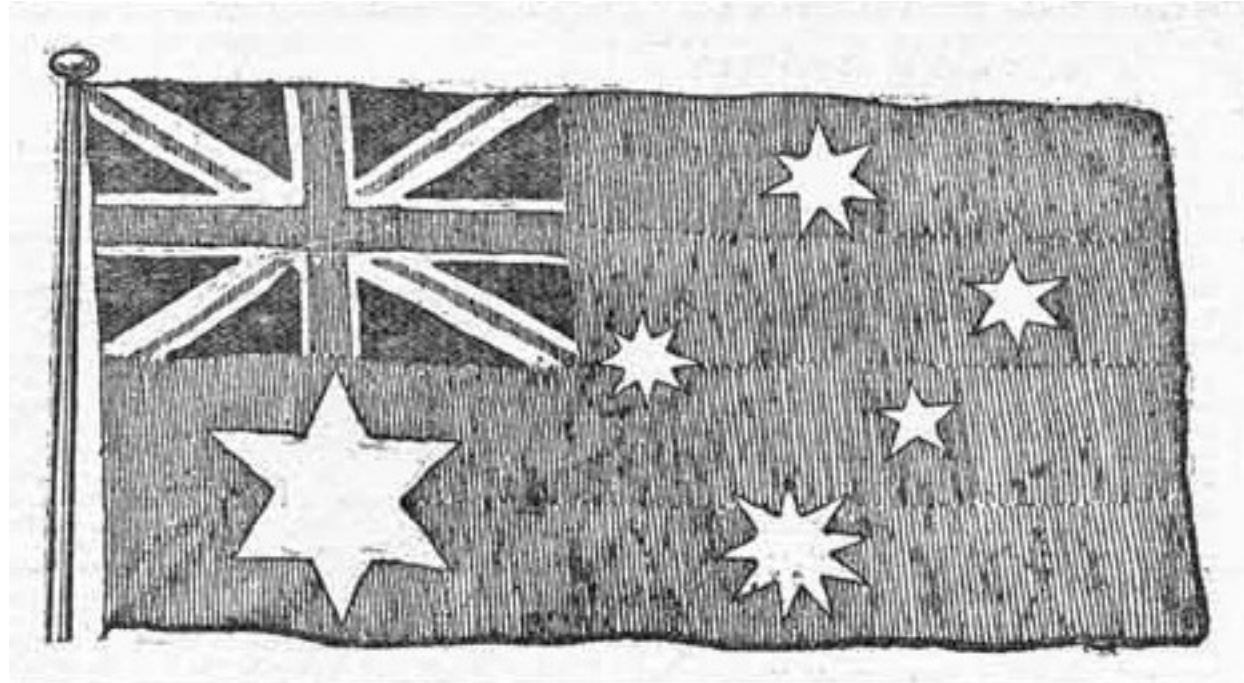
Malaysia



Australia

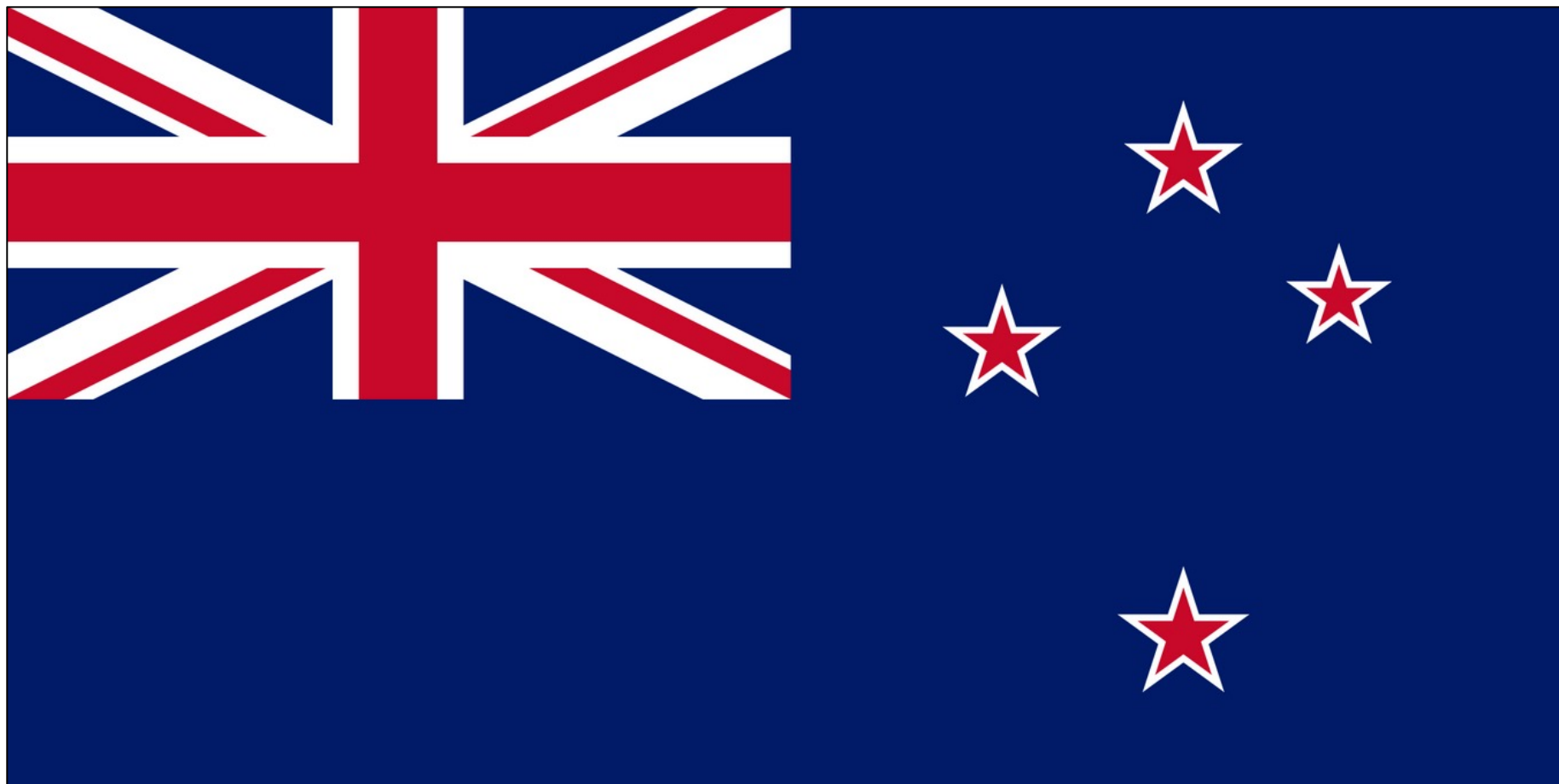


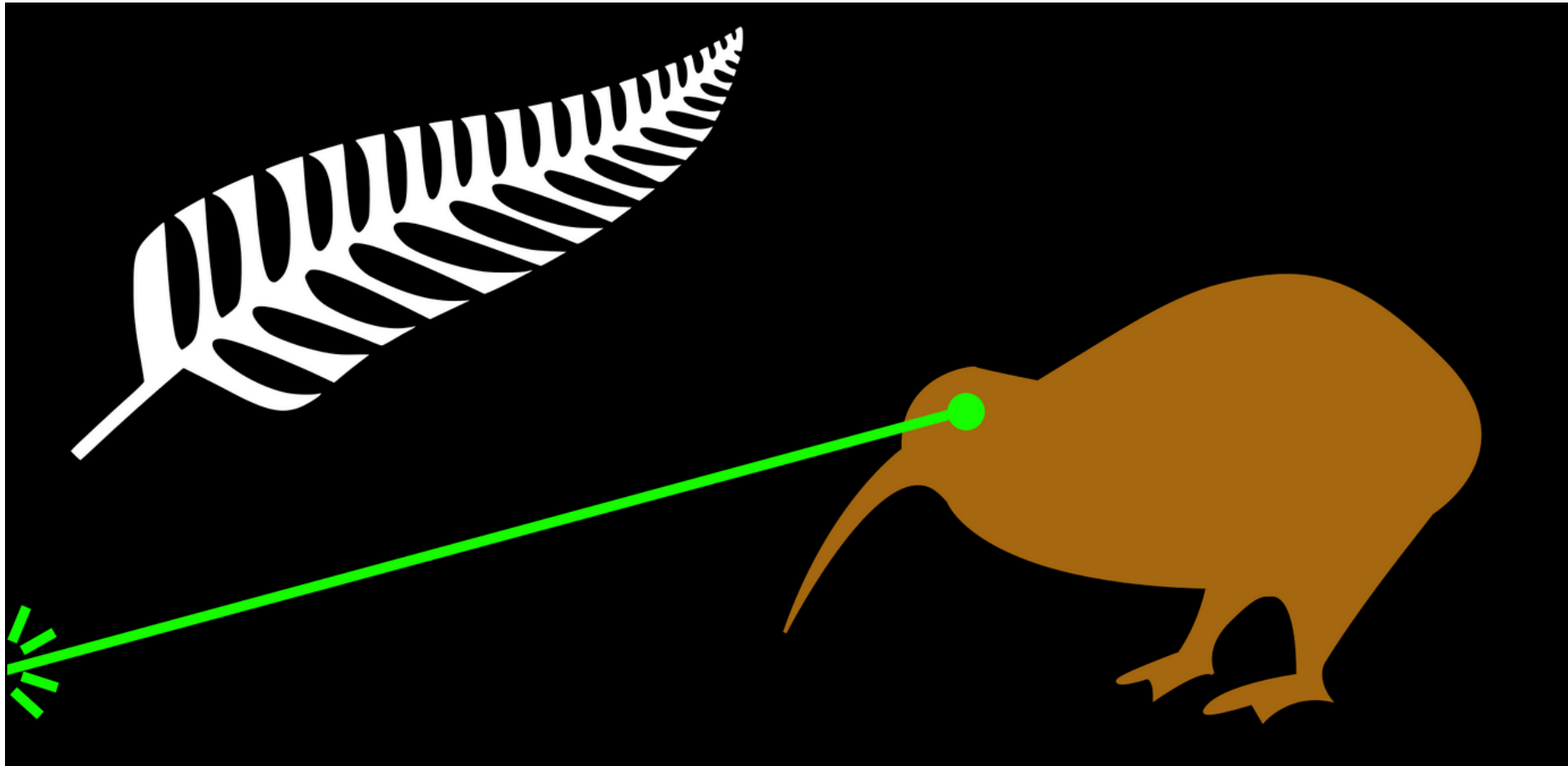
Australia, 1901—1903



The joint winners were: Annie Dorrington, a Perth artist; Ivor Evans, a 14 year old Melbourne school boy; Lesley Hawkins an 18 year old from Sydney; Eggbert Nutall an architect from Melbourne; and William Stevens, a first officer with the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand. The flag was flown for the first time on 3 September 1901 at the Exhibition Building in Melbourne, which was then the seat of the federal government.

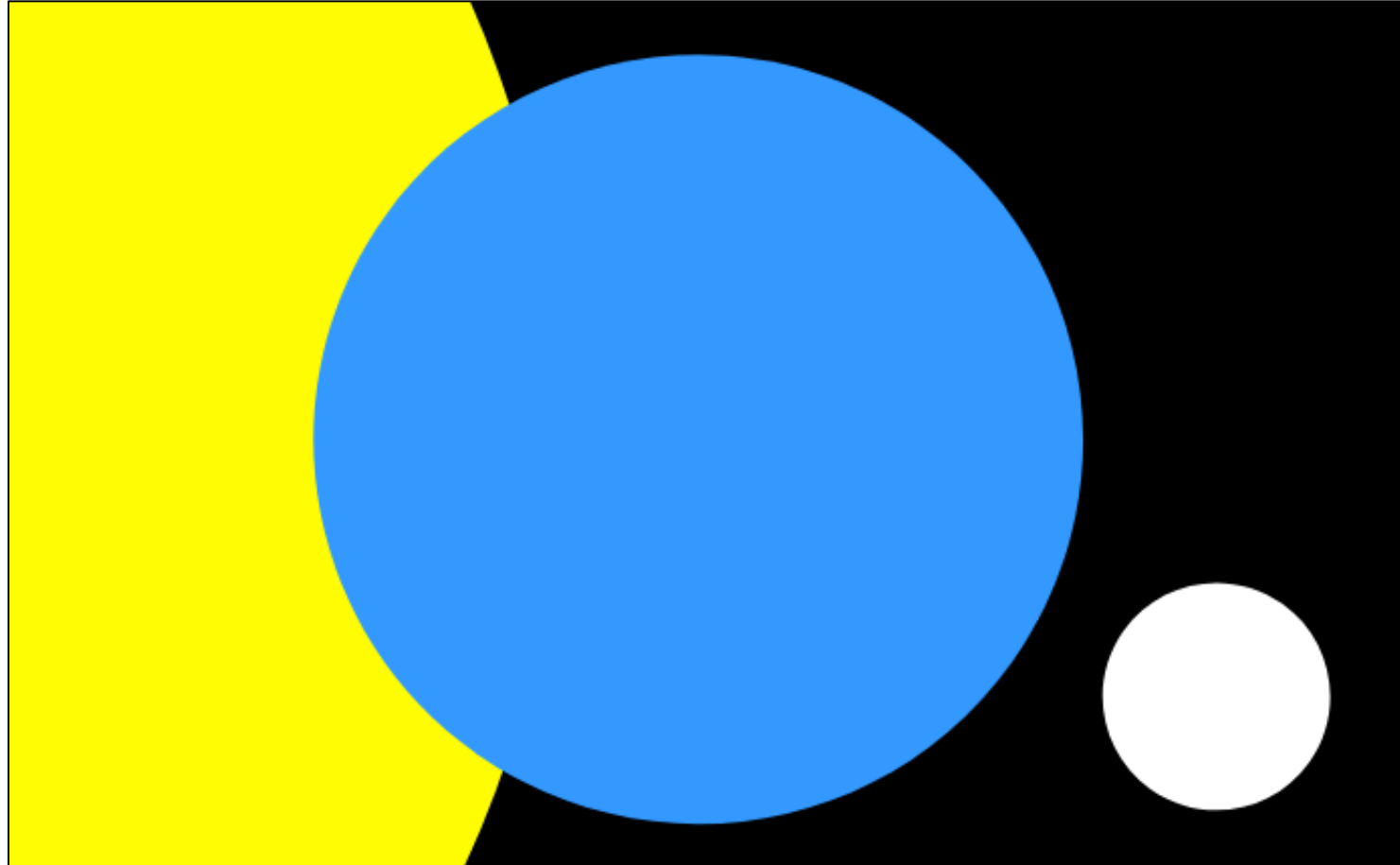
New Zealand





The Laser Kiwi flag was designed in 2015 by Lucy Gray as a proposed flag for the 2015–2016 New Zealand flag referendum, and became a social media phenomenon.

Flag of Earth



Designed in 1970 by James Cadle

United Nations



A map of the world shown as an azimuthal equidistant projection centred on the North Pole

Project Phoenix at Parkes



Flag of planet Earth



Designed in 2015 by Oskar Pernefeldt. Centered in the flag, seven rings form a flower – a symbol of the life on Earth. The rings are linked to each other, which represents how everything on our planet, directly or indirectly, are linked. The blue field represents water which is essential for life.

References

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