Nā Hiku is the Hawaiian name for the northern celestial asterism Big Dipper. In ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, hiku or ʻehiku refers to the number seven, an easy connection as to the seven stars that make up Nā Hiku. Nā Hiku is essential in celestial navigation as a pointer to Hōkūpā‘a, also known as the North Star, to the North Celestial Equator, and to the zenith star of Hawai‘i, Hōkūleʻa, also called Arcturus. The next time you look up into the night sky, try to find Hōkūpā‘a or Hōkūleʻa using Nā Hiku.

Hawaiian Lunar Month:

“There were 360 days in a year. Ka po’e kahiko counted 360 days in each month of the 12 months of the year. There were 17 nights that were counted in groups and 12 counted separately, according to the phases of the moon.”

Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau Kamakai, 1870