

'Demon Star' visible on Halloween night

Algol is a celestial object which is not spoken of much in astronomical circles but is very much present in the sky.

Known as the "Demon Star", it was first unambiguously recorded in 1667 by Italian astronomer Geminiano Montanari.

Due to the fluctuating nature of its variations in brightness in its trinary star system known as Algol A, B and C, it's been hard to spot. The name seems to come from both Arabia (where it's called Ghoul) and Greece (where it's called Gorgon). Demons are defined as "fallen angels" from the Book of Genesis, according to the Old Testament (called shed in Hebrew) and later known as referred as "daimon" in the original Greek New Testament.

The Demon Star will actually be visible on



Neel Roberts
The Sky's the Limit

Halloween night starting after supper in the northeast in the constellation of Perseus and will stay up all night, reaching the top of the sky at about midnight. At a distance of about 93 light years, it is visible to the naked eye. But if you can access a powerful enough, try and spot all three in the triple star system it's reputed for!

Skywatch

On Thursday Oct. 8, starting before dawn from

4 a.m. you can catch Venus, Mars and Jupiter rising in the east. This will also be available at the same time the next day.

On Thursday, Oct. 15 starting at dawn before 7:30 a.m., Mercury will be right angled to the rising sun and greatest distance on the rise.

The Orionids meteor shower peaks on Tuesday, Oct. 22 for one to two hours before dawn, just to the north of constellation Orion's bright star Betelgeuse. With the second-fastest entry velocity of the annual showers at 10-20 per hour, meteors from the Orionids produce yellow and green colors and have been known to produce an odd fireball. With the waxing gibbous moon already set, it will produce bright meteors.

Did you catch the Zodiacal Light last

month? It's a faint, roughly triangular, whitish glow seen in the night sky extended up from the vicinity of the sun along the ecliptic or zodiac. The best time to see it is from Sunday, Oct. 11 for 2 weeks in the east before dawn.

Public events

At this Friday's stargazing session, we'll talk about Zodiacal Lights, the Demon Star and more on Friday. The session starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Vulcan Tourism and Trek Station.

A short indoor presentation will be followed by stargazing, weather permitting. Treats and refreshments provided free of charge and all welcome.

For further information, contact Vulcan Tourism at 403-485-2994 or visit www.vulcantourism.com.