

Summer meteor shower campout weekend

This year the annual Perseids meteor shower peak happens to fall on the weekend of Aug. 12-14 and is a great excuse to head to a camp site.

With the moon setting after midnight, it'll be an overnight treat until dawn. Flaunted as the most beloved, regular astronomical event of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, this celestial event has been around seen since the time of Christ.

Fireballs start after dark, and the best bet is to look in the northeast part of the sky and the zenith, the point in sky directly above you.

The shower event is the result of comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle trailing debris that has been seen since before Christ and last observed in 1992, but unfortunately it's not scheduled to return until



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The Sky's the Limit

2126.

Seeing the Perseids requires no equipment like telescopes unless you want to start your astrophotography hobby.

If you're looking for a private, dark sky for the weekend, check out Maycroft just off Highway 22, the cowboy trail for a real western experience like our ancestors did centuries ago.

Sky watch

On Tuesday, Aug. 23 after sunset in the south Saturn, Mars and Antares will be vertical until they set

at about midnight.

On Thursday, Aug. 25 before dawn until sunrise, the moon is in the Hyades star cluster.

This is an excellent month to view the Milky Way without freezing. Best time is after 11:00 pm until dawn.

The peak of the annual Perseids Meteor Shower starts Friday, Aug. 12 and lasts until Sunday, Aug. 14 with an estimated rate of 60-100 meteors per hour.

The best time of day to view them starts at 11 p.m. facing the northeast in the constellation of Perseus until dawn. (The website www.skymaps.com has free star charts which will help you find it.)

For further information, check out <http://www.chiff.com/science/perseids.htm>, which has a complete video guide.

Public events

Mark down Friday, Aug.

12 at 7:30 p.m. on your calendar and join us at the Vulcan Tourism and Trek Station for our monthly star gazing session.

We will try and show you the rings of Saturn during daylight (yes, this is possible with the telescope we have!) followed by a short indoor presentation on the Perseids meteor shower weather pending.

Experts are on hand the second Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. to explain the heavens, teach telescoping skills and help you develop your knowledge of our sky.

For further information, contact Vulcan Tourism at 403-485-2994 and the website www.vulcantourism.com.

Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-485-2683 and Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.