

Fall meteor showers a pre-Christmas treat

Are you looking for something amazing in the sky this month?

The upcoming Leonid's Meteor shower is a heavenly show which Christmas shoppers take in during autumn nights.

With less daylight saving time over this month, the dark sky is available for all shifts.

Peaking Thursday, Nov. 17 in the constellation of Leo, look for the backwards question mark star pattern rising after midnight raising in the northeast until dawn.

While the peak is Nov. 17, you'll still catch some of the streaks a few days before and after.

Unfortunately, the moon will block out some fireballs no matter which day you see it.

The most famous Leonid's Meteor shower was in 1833 when an estimated "storm" dumped an incomprehensible 26,000-plus fireballs per hour.

While such occurrences are a once-in-a-lifetime event, don't miss the many that happen year-round by getting free apps such as "Meteor Shower Calendar." Available for most smartphones, it actually alerts you when one comes into peak plus details for all future ones.

With programs such as this, you'll catch at least one almost all year around. Believe it or not, it even has notifications for daytime meteor showers that will astound your friends.

Sky watch for the next month:

- Daylight's Savings Time ends Sunday, Nov. 6 at 2 a.m. You'll get that



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extra hour of sleep.

- Northern Taurids Meteor Shower Peaks — Saturday, Nov. 12 after dark forecast is seven meteors per hour, but | the waxing gibbous moon will hinder it until after midnight.

- Leonid Meteor Shower Peaks — Thursday, Nov. 17 after night fall, but will be hindered by the bright waning gibbous moon till dawn looking towards the constellation of Leo. Originating from

the comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle, it should produce meteors at the rate of 10 to 15 per hour.

- New moon after sunset — Tuesday, Nov. 29 you can see the new moon after sunset in the southwest before it sets for the evening.

Public events for the next month:

Monthly Public Stargazing at the Trek Center takes place Friday, Nov. 18 starting at 7:30 p.m.

Short indoor presentation on the peaking Leonids Meteor Shower followed by stargazing through the 11-inch Celestron Telescope. Treats and refreshments provided free of charge and all welcome.

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

For further information, contact the Trek Center at 403-485-2994.

The website www.vulcan-tourism.com will be updated regularly.

Happy cooler days and meteor watching.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada — the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1849 with more than 5,000 members and 29 centres across Canada.

Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 or email: Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.

The members meet the second Friday monthly at the Trek Center in Vulcan. You can check them out at: <http://calgary.rasc.ca/vulcan2016.htm>.



Photos by Neel Roberts

A woman with her family from Singapore attend. People from as far away as Australia have taken part in the Friday stargazing events at the Trek centre.



Above, a mother shows her daughter how to take smartphones pictures through the binos. This has become a popular event at the meetings. At left, looking through the binos, attendees can catch impressive views of the moon including details of craters, mountains and plains.

