

Super rare-all planets shine Christmas night

By NEEL ROBERTS

Remember the story of the Christmas Star? Speculation has been buzzing for centuries as to what it really was from conjunctions, comets and even supernovas. However, after looking at all angles for years, I've come to the conclusion it was a "one time" supernatural event which cannot be reproduced. This Christmas, we have an event which maybe just as unique. All 8 planets will be visible Christmas night starting from twilight around 4:30 pm, look SSW as Mercury and Venus will be up until around 5:45 pm, further South is Saturn up until 8:39 pm and the other two naked eye planets Jupiter and Mars are all nighters. The thin, waxing, crescent Moon will be between Saturn and Venus until 7:20 pm.

Pluto is between Saturn and Venus up until 6:17 pm but with a magnitude of 14.47, you'd need a killer scope to see it. Neptune's up until 11:34 pm and with a magnitude of 7.9 you have a better chance of seeing with a scope. Uranus is the best bet of these 3 distant planets with a magnitude of 5.68. Being an all nighter, even a good binos should be able to catch it. It's distinct blue-green color is a treat worth looking for while Neptune is a darker cobalt. The color of Uranus and Neptune is similar, but not identical. Uranus appears greener and Neptune bluer, so it's a great night to do comparisons.

Lastly, we'll have a few bonus objects. Dwarf planet Eris will be up most of the night but with a magnitude of 18.63, same looking rules as Pluto. M45, the Pleiades (Seven Sisters) is spectacular with or without binos up all night and lastly the winter constellation of Orion will be hunting Taurus the bull while followed by his dog Sirius, the brightest star in the sky besides our own Sun. The Christ-

mas star was indeed special and Christmas night 2022 will give a comparable show. King David said in Psalm 19:1 (KJV) 3,000 years ago as he looked up into Israel's night sky "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands," which is embroidered on NASA's first chief Werner Von Braun's tombstone. As a God hating ex-Nazi, what was the message of his epitaph? Draw your own conclusion but his witness says it all!-----THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

Sky watch for the next month: Download this month's sky free chart at <http://whatsouttonight.com/Resources/2022DecWOTSkyChart.pdf>, <https://in-the-sky.org/news/cal.php?month=12&year=2022&maxdiff=7#dateSel>, <https://in-the-sky.org/skymap2.php>, <https://www.heavens-above.com/SkyChart.aspx>

- 1 Moon & Pollux Duo- Sunday, December 11th after dusk follow these 2 into all night and into the morning.
- 2 Venus and Mercury close- Thursday, December 29th at dusk look SSW as they set into the horizon before 18:00 https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20221229_20_100.
- 3 Geminid & Ursid Meteor Shower- We have two mild meteor showers this month, the Geminid peaks Wednesday, December 13-14th just after midnight on 60% Waning Gibbous Moon night in the constellation of Gemini. https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20221214_10_100. The Ursid shower peaks Thursday, December 21-22nd morning before sunrise when earth moves through the center of the dust trail left behind by comet 8P/Tuttle on a 0% Waxing Crescent Moon. https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20221222_10_100.
- 4 Winter Solstice Arrives- Wednesday, De-



ember 21st is officially the shortest day of the year at 14:43 with 8 hours, 07 minutes, and 16 seconds of daylight. This occurs when the sun reaches its most southerly declination of -23.5 degrees and likewise the North Pole is tilted 23.5 degrees away from the sun. Depending on the Gregorian calendar, the December solstice occurs annually on a day between December 20 and December 23. On this date, all places above a latitude of 66.5 degrees north are now in

darkness, while locations below a latitude of 66.5 degrees south receive 24 hours of daylight https://in-the-sky.org/news.php?id=20221221_07_100.

Merry Christmas and Thanks for Tuning in all Year-Lots of Great Stories in cue for 2023!

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