

THE SKY THIS MONTH

TOTAL LUNAR ECLIPSE – AUGUST 28

A total lunar eclipse occurs when the Earth blocks the sunlight to the Moon. The Moon's brightness is significantly reduced, but not completely so. Ironically, the Earth's atmosphere focuses the orange-red portion of the sun's light onto the Moon, giving the Moon an orange-red glow.

The eclipse begins at 4:51 a.m. on August 28. One hour later, the Moon will finally enter total eclipse a mere four degrees above Almonte's western horizon. The Sun will be only six degrees below the eastern (opposite) horizon. Dawn's light might blot out the Moon as totality begins, however you might be able to see it through binoculars.

Residents of Almonte will not see the Moon re-emerge from eclipse. The Moon will set, totally eclipsed, at 6:22 a.m.

If you miss the eclipse, not to worry! A more conveniently placed total lunar eclipse for Almonte residents will occur on the evening of February 20, 2008.

Back on March 3rd of this year, the Moon rose in total eclipse. This time around, the Moon will set totally eclipsed!



The totally eclipsed Moon. Michael A. Earl; March 3, 2007; Hazleton, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

PERSEID METEOR SHOWER – AUGUST 13

Every August, the Earth encounters debris from a comet named “Swift-Tuttle”. Grain-sized particles enter our atmosphere, heat up and are seen as meteors. A number of meteors occurring in a short span of time are called a “shower”. If you trace the apparent paths of a specific shower’s meteors, they will all intersect at a point called the “radiant”. Meteor showers are named after the constellation in which their radiant resides. For the one occurring in August, the radiant is in the constellation Perseus, hence the “Perseids”.

Be sure to wake up before dawn on August 13 and you should see a number of meteors streaking across the sky; about 90 per hour. You don’t need any special equipment; just your eyes and a clear dark sky. The Moon will be new that night; a bonus! Try to trace the paths of the meteors back to their radiant and you should find Perseus!

Meteor showers are best viewed under a dark sky. Make sure to turn off your outdoor lights to reduce light pollution.



A single bright meteor. Michael A. Earl; November 18, 2001; Kanata.

AUGUST PLANETS

Jupiter will be the brightest planet in the sky in the early evening. After sunset, look for this mightiest of planets in the southwest. The bright red star just below Jupiter is Antares; the brightest star in the constellation Scorpius (the scorpion).

SPECIAL EVENTS

The first of two public summer star parties will be held at the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area gatehouse at 8 p.m. Friday, August 17. Free admission for all. For more information, see www.castor2.ca/parties.

THE SKY LAST MONTH – JULY 2007



Venus and Saturn a degree apart. Michael A. Earl; July 1, 2007; Brockville.

THE SKY NEXT MONTH – SEPTEMBER 2007

What is the "Autumnal Equinox"?
Venus the Morning Phoenix

Questions, comments, observations and images can be sent to
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