

Rare Remembrance Day Mercury transit



NEEL ROBERTS
Sky's the Limit

As Canadians pay tribute to our fallen soldiers, Nov. 11 will be a rare Mercury transit, with the planet crossing our sun starting at sunup.

Technically it starts at 5:42 a.m., but we in the west can't catch it until sunrise at 7:42 a.m. It will go until 11:04 a.m., so you'll have just over a three-hour window to catch it.

You'll need a good pair of binoculars or a telescope with solar filters and clear east horizon to view the event.

You can check out all the details at eclipsewise.com/oh/tm2019.html.

While many Remembrance Day services take place in the

late morning, you can still watch some of it before they start.

Ideally, if you have an elevated view like a mountain, that would be perfect for observing the sunrise. If you'd like tips on how to photograph the event, check out Alan Dyer's website, www.amazingsky.com/index.html.

The next Mercury transit isn't until 13 years from now, in 2032, so don't miss it!

SKY WATCH

The Northern Taurids meteor shower peaks on Monday, Nov. 11 after dark. The forecast is for seven meteors per hour until the wee morning hours of Nov. 11, but the moon will be out, making it more difficult to see.

The Leonid meteor shower peaks on Sunday, Nov. 17 after nightfall into the next morning. Look towards the constellation of Leo. Originating from the comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle, it should produce meteors at the rate of 10-15 per hour, but a waning gibbous moon will light

up the morning sky this year to obtrude the meteor shower.

On Thursday, Nov. 28 look south-southwest at dusk as a crescent moon sets with Venus at around 6:20 p.m.

PUBLIC EVENT

Mark down Saturday, Nov. 23 from 8-11 p.m. on your calendars for the monthly open house at the University of Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis. There will be an array of telescopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, there's an indoor presentation, and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions. Count the animals in the sky as a bull, camel, lynx, and a couple of bears can be observed that night under a moonless dark sky. The entrance fee is \$30 per car. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca or 403-931-2366, or visit www.ucalgary.ca/rao.

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 and Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.