

Two mild meteor showers in December



NEEL ROBERTS
Sky's the Limit

On Monday, Dec. 6 after sunset, look south-southwest and watch Venus and the moon set into the horizon.

On Wednesday, Dec. 8 at dusk, look south at sunset and watch the moon, Jupiter and Saturn set into the night sky.

We have two mild meteor showers this month. The Gem-

inid meteor shower peaks Dec. 14 just after midnight in the constellation of Gemini. The Ursid meteor shower peaks the morning of Wednesday, Dec. 22 before sunrise when Earth moves through the centre of the dust trail left behind by comet 8P/Tuttle.

For more on all meteor showers next year, check out the International Meteor Organization at imo.net/calendar/2022.

The winter solstice arrives on Tuesday, Dec. 21, which is officially the shortest day of the year with eight hours, seven 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 Dec. 20 and Dec. 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.

Download this month's sky free chart at whatsouttonight.com/Resources/2021DecSkyWOT.pdf. Neel Roberts is a local astronomer in southern Alberta and welcomes your comments at Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com and 403-560-6574. Check out his work at www.ptccanada.com.