

Fall meteor shower signals longer night skies

One of the surest signs long days are behind us and Christmas shopping is in high swing is the arrival of the annual Leonids Meteor Shower.

The heavens will light up the evening sky between store visits in mid-November as there are actually usually two meteor showers within the span of a week, with the peak taking place during the middle of the month.

The Leonids meteor shower, which peaks the night of Sunday, Nov. 16 until the dawn of Nov. 17, has produced some of the greatest meteor storms in history.

The waning crescent moon shouldn't too greatly interfere, resulting in some spectacular fireballs.

The Northern Taurids peaks Tuesday, Nov. 11 to Nov. 12. While less dramatic, this will be a



Neel Roberts
The Sky's the Limit

better bet with the moon down all night.

The Southern Taurids peaks Tuesday, Nov. 4-5 with expectations of seven meteors per hour, but will be blinded by the bright full moon.

All meteor showers can be seen with the naked eye. If you have a fast shutter (and finger), they can be photographed.

Sky watch for the next month

Northern Taurids Meteor Shower Peaks-Tuesday, Nov. 11 after dark forecast is seven meteors per hour and

noticeable since the Moon is down.

Leonid Meteor Shower peaks Monday, Nov. 17 after night fall until dawn looking towards the constellation of Leo. Originating from the comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle, it should produce meteors at the rate of 10-15 per hour.

A Saturn and sun rise conjunction occurs Tuesday, Nov. 18. Look for the morning sunrise at about 8 a.m. with sun filters on your binoculars to catch Saturn going across the sun.

Public events for the next month

Monthly public stargazing at the Trek Center takes place on Friday, Nov. 14 starting at 7:30 p.m.

A short indoor presentation on the upcoming Leonids

Meteor Shower is followed by stargazing through the 11-inch Celestron Telescope. Treats and refreshments are 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 telescoping skills and help people develop their knowledge of the sky.

For further information, contact the Trek Station at 403-485-2994 and visit the website www.vulcantourism.com.

Happy meteor watching!

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