

Western Canada gets privileged view of dawn lunar eclipse

Set your alarm clock for a 3 a.m.-wake-up to get a jump on the eclipsing moon which will turn blood red by 6 a.m. April 4 and set over the Rocky Mountains with the rising sun.

Albertans are privileged over the rest of the east to see the whole event even though the peak will only be a few minutes. While it'll all be over by 7 a.m. and those on the West coast will get the best view, you'll have to wait six more months until Sept. 28 to see the next one.

As your calendar shows, this happens to be the Easter long weekend. Most New Testament scholars agree Friday, April 3, 33 AD was the original Good Friday and even NASA has confirmed there was a Total Lunar Eclipse that day.

Thanks to astronomy software, you can now recreate the occurrence and there are some very telling phenomena. While the scripture doesn't mention a lunar eclipse, it does list 3 p.m. as the approximate time Christ died on the cross. Believe it or not, that's close to the time the moon was going into eclipse below the horizon and when it raised in the late afternoon it was actually in full blood red mode. That would have frightened the daylighters of all present in Jerusalem that day.

Christians peg their entire faith on the Sunday morning resurrection and historical records outside the Bible confirm this actually happened April 5,



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33 AD.

This eclipse is remarkably similar with the exception of the sun rising. Jesus claimed several times he created the world and while most understand the statements, objectors can never really explain why they reject it outside of their own authority.

The Romans back in the day were generally Pagans and while some became believers that day, they always assumed a benevolent creator and the human race was the pinnacle of that creation.

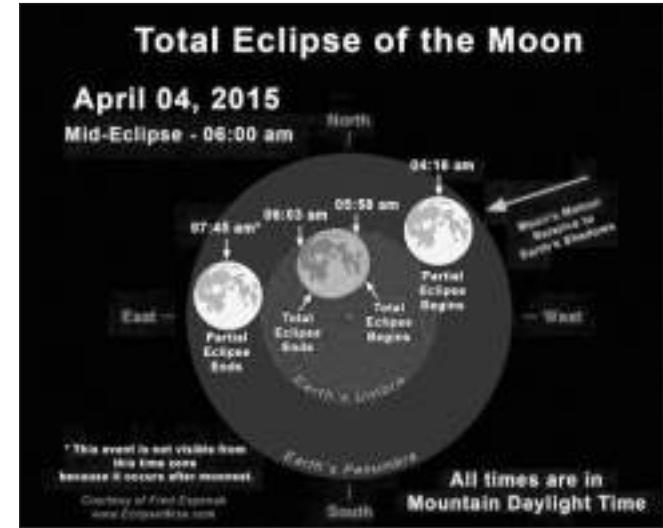
Sky watch for the next month:

- Total Lunar Eclipse — Starting around 3 a.m. on the morning of Saturday, April 4 until about 6 a.m. sunrise. No visual aids needed as it's very obvious to see in the SWW sky.
- Mercury, Mars and Moon after sunset — On Friday, April 19, look NWW after sundown and these three will be lined up while you can catch Venus a bit higher up.
- Aldebaran and Venus hang out with moon — On Tuesday, April 21 just after sundown you can catch these three and if you go lower to the horizon, that's Mars and Mercury.

• Lyrids Meteor Shower — also known as April shooting stars produced by dust particles left behind by comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher discovered in 1861 will peak before dawn Thursday morning April 23. Look east into the constellation of Lyra near Vega and you should be able to catch 10 to 20 meteors per hour on average with rare surges of up to 100.

Public Events for the next month:

Monthly Public Stargazing at the Trek Center. Check out our stargazing event courtesy of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Calgary) starting at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 10. Brief indoor presentation on "Easter and Astronomy" followed by observing



through our resident 11-inch Celestron telescope. All welcome, no charge and refreshments provided. Come early as space fills up by show time. Experts are on hand the second Friday monthly to explain the heavens, teach scoping skills and help you develop your knowledge of our sky. For further information, contact the Trek Center at 403-485-2994 or at: www.vulcantourism.com.

Happy Easter and warmer days!

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1849 with over 4,000 members and 29 centers across Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 or e-mail: Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com. The members meet the second Friday monthly at the Trek Center at 7:30 p.m. and you find out about membership at www.calgary.rasc.ca.