

Tuktoyuktuk Highway opens in time for annual Leonids Meteor Shower

It's official, Canadians can now drive all year round right to the Arctic Ocean via the new Inuvik-Tuk (<http://ith.dot.gov.nt.ca/>) set to open Wednesday, November 15.

Tuktoyuktuk, the Hamlet at the new end of the all-weather road which boasts a population of under 1,000 is expected to take off with new oil & gas activities. Also, it is one of the new best places in Canada accessible by highway for stargazing. Whether it's Northern Lights, general astronomy or meteor showers, it's an attraction the community is naturally endowed with and the world will show interest. With light pollution killing most skies in developed countries, Tuktoyuktuk is a unique find. With infrastructure expected to grow with other developments, night sky fanatics may want to get in early on the action before they have their own light pollution issues. On the seasonal flip side, they feature 24-hour sunlight in the summer. When I visited Inuvik in June 1997, it was amazing to see kids playing at 2:00 am, golfing after midnight and even lakes get warm with the constant heat on it.

With a driving distance of just under 4,000 kms from Vulcan, it's like driving to Quebec City on much rougher, less travelled thoroughfares but undoubtedly the trip you'll remember a lifetime.

Sky watch for the next month:

1. Daylight's Savings Time Ends- Thursday November 02nd at 02:00 am you'll get that hour of sleep.

2. Northern Taurids Meteor Shower Peaks- Saturday, November 11th after dark forecast is 7 meteors per hour but waning crescent moon marginally disturbs this shower in the wee morning



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hours on November 12th.

3. Leonid Meteor Shower Peaks- Friday, November 17th for the weekend after nightfall, there's no moon, so 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.

4. Saturn/Mercury sunset-Thursday, November 28th look SW before 18:30 you can see these two naked eye planets close from dusk to sunset.

Public Events for the next month:
Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis-Mark down Saturday, November 25th from 20:00 to 23:00. There will be an array of scopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the RASC Calgary. You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, indoor presentation and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions. Check out the vain and boastful queen of the northern sky Cassiopeia under a sliver of a moon. The entrance fee \$30 per car. Further information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca, (403) 931-2366. Their website <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/> updated regularly.

Happy Cooler days and Meteor Watching!

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada-the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1868 with over 5,000 members and 29 centers across Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at (403)560-6574, Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com. The members meet once a month on weekends at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis and you can check out times at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/calendar>. Like them



Photo by Neel Roberts

A dobsonian telescope is one of the many types at the monthly meetings.

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