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# Can we solve the growing problem of light pollution?

Written by Neel Roberts

**A June 2018 [www.naturalnews.com](http://www.naturalnews.com) article called “Light pollution is a growing problem: What you can do” discusses a century old phenomenon plaguing the developed worlds.**

For thousands of years, we managed with candles, fires and lanterns.

However, since the early 1900's light pollution has grown exponentially to affect 66% of the population as maps show Europe practically has no dark skies left, much like Japan and Eastern North America. We in Western Canada are comparatively lucky and the fact is most of the geographic world is still dark at night like the ancients experienced.

According to [www.space.com](http://www.space.com) columnist Joe Rao's the harmful effects of light pollution is not just on casual stargazing but “22,000 Gigawatt hours (\$2.2 Billion)” of electricity annually are wasted due to poorly designed streetlamps. Negative effects on wildlife according to a report from [CityLab.com](http://CityLab.com) includes “Lights on skyscrapers, airports, and stadiums attracting birds into urban areas, where they smack into walls, windows, each other, or flap around eventually perishing from exhaustion-related complications.”

On human life it's worse as it upsets our internal clock leading up to and including cancer. Rao points to solutions of proper shielding that direct all light downwards where it's necessary.

He also suggests switching to “warm white LEDs”, with minimal blue emissions and avoid using extra lights altogether. The less LED lights there are around, the better. I've had my farm lights off for 20 years and I love it! An excellent free documentary I've recommended for years is PBS's “The City Dark”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGyFsMCsQNE>.

Sky watch for the next month:

1. Bright Venus at Sunset- Friday, September 21st at sunset look SW at around 19:30 to catch this before it sets at 20:00. If you have a good binos, you can actually see it cresting like the Moon!
2. Harvest Moon Rise- Monday September 24th, look East at 19:40 for a spectacular upsurge which will seem huge.
3. Fall Equinox- On Saturday, September 22nd at 07:54 pm the summer's officially over.
4. Zodiacal Light- is a faint, roughly triangular, whitish glow seen in the night sky extended up from the vicinity of the sun along the ecliptic or zodiac. Discovered by the astronomer Giovanni Domenico Cassini in 1683 and later explained by Nicolas Fatio de Duillier in 1684, it's trying to find and the best time is from September 5th for 2 weeks in the east morning twilight.

Public Events for the next month:

Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis- Mark down Friday, September 15th from 19:30 to 22:30 for “Universe in the Waves”. There will be an array of scopes operated by members of the RASC Calgary with speakers Jeroen Stil, Wesley Ernst, Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Calgary. Astronomers will be on hand to answer questions. The entrance fee \$30 per car. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at [jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca](mailto:jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca), (403) 931-2366. Their website <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/> is updated regularly.

### Happy Fall and shorter 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 1868 with over 5,000 members and 29 centers across Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at (403)560-6574, [www.ptccanada.com](http://www.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 at Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/272037680377/>, Twitter <https://twitter.com/CalgaryRASC> & YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/RASCCalgary>.

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