

# THE PERSEID'S METEOR SHOWER

## ★ WHAT IS IT? ★

While the shower peaks on August 11th - 13th, you can see meteors from July 15th - August 24th

The Perseid's shower happens every summer when the earth's orbit takes it through the debris left over from the comet Swift-Tuttle. When the dust and rocks hit the earth's atmosphere they burn up and become meteors.

## ★ HOW CAN I WATCH IT? ★

Find a dark, open sky to enjoy the show. Try to avoid streetlights and trees that may obstruct your view.

Give yourself at least an hour of observing time. The meteors in the shower tend to come in stops and starts.

The best viewing times are between 1AM and 5AM so plan for a late night!

No telescope is needed for this shower, just look up and wait!

## ★ MORE FUN FACTS ★

The shower was first recorded in AD 36

If you trace the Perseid meteors backward, they all seem to come from the constellation Perseus. That's where the shower gets its name.

It takes the comet Swift-Tuttle, the source of the Perseid meteors, 133 years to orbit around the sun!

MORE  
RESOURCES

ALL THESE BOOKS AND MORE ARE AVAILABLE  
AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY!

Astronomy : a Visual Guide by Garlick, Mark A

The Stargazing Year by Calia, Charles Laird

Greek myths: gods, heroes and monsters by Switzer, Ellen Eichenwald

Secrets of Stargazing : Skywatching Tips and Tricks by Ramotowski, Becky

The new astronomy guide : stargazing in the digital age by Moore, Patrick

Once Upon A Starry Night ; a Book of Constellations by Mitton, Jacqueline

National Audubon Society's Field Guide To the Night Sky by Chartrand, Mark R

☀️ Snap a great pic of the skies? Share it with us!

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# CONSTELLATION QUEST

The Perseids are set to peak at the beginning of August. While waiting for meteors to fly by, can you find these constellations in the night sky?

Constellation photos taken from <https://starregistration.net/constellations.html>



**The Big Dipper** also called **Ursa Major** is one of the most well know constellations. In the summer months, you'll find the dipper tilted as if it's spilling its cup. It will be your guide to find other stars.

Find the **Little Dipper**, or **Ursa Minor**, by tracing the spout of the **Big Dipper** to **Polaris**, the **North Star**. **Polaris** is the star at the tip of the handle of the **Little Dipper**.



Draw a line from the middle of the **Big Dipper** through **Polaris** and you'll find the distinctive "W" shape of **Cassiopeia**. Cassiopeia was a queen who was so vain Poseidon chained her to a chair in the sky.

**Perseus** is a famous Greek hero known for killing the Gorgon Medusa. Look below and to the left of **Cassiopeia** to find his stars in late summer.



While not a constellation, the **Summer Triangle** is made up of 3 bright stars, **Vega**, **Deneb**, and **Altair**. Find it in the middle of **Pegasus**, **Hercules**, and **Draco**.



Look between **Cassiopeia** and **Perseus** to find the **Double Cluster**. Each cluster contains a few hundred stars. The **Double Cluster** is thought to represent the jeweled handle of **Perseus'** sword.



**Draco** represents Ladon, the dragon **Heracles** slayed to take from Hera's Golden Apple tree. Find the eyes of **Draco** near **Vega**, or look up from the **Big Dipper's** handle. You might also notice **Hercules** appearing to step on **Draco's** head.

**Hercules** is the Roman version of the Greek **Heracles**. Look high in the Eastern Sky to find the bluish-white star **Vega**. To the upper right, you'll see the distinctive keystone shape of Hercules torso.



**Pegasus** was immortalized in the sky for his loyal service. Draw a line from **Polaris** across the end of **Cassiopeia** and you'll land in the body of **Pegasus**.

King **Cephus** was the husband of **Cassiopeia**. You'll find him near her in the sky, or at nightfall, to the upper right of **Polaris**.



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The Big Dipper (Ursa Major)



The Little Dipper (Ursa Minor)



Cassiopeia



Perseus



Draco



Hercules



Pegasus



Cephus

What else can you identify in the sky?

Download the



SkySafari

OR



Star Chart

app to help you find these constellation and more!



The Summer Triangle



The Double Cluster



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