



Space & Astronomy:

Perseid Meteor Shower Peak

The Perseid meteor shower is reaching its annual peak on the nights of August 12–13. This shower, caused by Earth passing through the debris left by Comet Swift-Tuttle, is one of the year's most anticipated celestial events. Under ideal conditions, it can produce up to 100 meteors per hour. However, this year, viewing conditions are less than ideal. A bright waning gibbous moon will be in the sky, washing out all but the brightest meteors. Despite this, experts say it's still possible to see some of the spectacular, brighter-than-average fireballs for which the Perseids are famous. The best time to view is in the predawn hours when the constellation Perseus, the radiant point of the shower, is higher in the sky.

Venus and Jupiter Conjunction

On the morning of August 12, there will be a close conjunction of Venus and Jupiter. These two brightest planets will appear just a degree apart in the eastern sky before sunrise. This is a rare and visually stunning event, easily visible to the naked eye. The close approach makes them look like a single, brilliant "double star." For observers, this conjunction provides a great opportunity to see two of the solar system's brightest objects side-by-side in the dawn sky.

Other Notable Skywatching Events

Dumbbell Nebula: For those with binoculars or a small telescope, the Dumbbell Nebula, a planetary nebula, is a good target to observe high overhead in the August night sky. It offers a

glimpse into how stars like our Sun end their lives.

Mars and Saturn: Mars is visible low in the western sky for about an hour after sunset, while Saturn is observable from late night until dawn.

Asteroid Flybys: On August 8, two large near-Earth asteroids, (2025 OJ1) and (2019 CO1), made close but safe flybys of Earth, with NASA confirming they posed no collision threat.

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MCQS

1. What celestial event is reaching its annual peak on the nights of August 12-13?

- a. A solar eclipse
- b. The Leonid meteor shower
- c. The Perseid meteor shower
- d. A total lunar eclipse

Answer: c. The Perseid meteor shower
The text clearly states that "The Perseid meteor shower is reaching its annual peak on the nights of August 12-13."

2. What celestial object is responsible for the Perseid meteor shower?

- a. Asteroid (2025 OJ1)
- b. The Moon
- c. Comet Swift-Tuttle
- d. The Dumbbell Nebula

Answer: c. Comet Swift-Tuttle

The news explains that the Perseid meteor shower is "caused by Earth passing through the debris left by Comet Swift-Tuttle."

3. What celestial event is visible on the morning of August 12, where two planets appear just a degree apart in the eastern sky?

- a. An asteroid flyby
- b. The peak of the Perseid meteor shower
- c. A close conjunction of Venus and Jupiter
- d. The visibility of the Dumbbell Nebula

Answer: c. A close conjunction of Venus and Jupiter

The text describes a "close conjunction of Venus and Jupiter" on the morning of August 12, where they appear close together in the eastern sky before sunrise.

4. Which planets are visible low in the western sky for about an hour after sunset and from late night until dawn, respectively?

- a. Venus and Jupiter
- b. Mars and Saturn
- c. Mercury and Uranus
- d. Jupiter and Mars

Answer: b. Mars and Saturn

The news mentions that "Mars is visible low in the western sky for about an hour after sunset, while Saturn is observable from late night until dawn."

5. What type of celestial object is the Dumbbell Nebula?

- a. A galaxy
- b. A comet
- c. A planetary nebula
- d. A black hole

Answer: c. A planetary nebula





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The text identifies the Dumbbell Nebula as a "planetary nebula," which "offers a glimpse into how stars like our Sun end their lives."

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