

The Street Astronomer's Guide to Meteor Showers for Summer 2015

Most meteor showers are best viewed after midnight and have a specific peak night. However, don't worry if you can't see a meteor shower on the night recommended, showers still display increased activity a few days before and after the peak dates indicated. On a night when there is no active meteor shower, you expect to see an average of 7 meteors per hour.

The South Delta-Aquarid meteor shower reaches its peak on the night of July 28th and morning of the 29th. Aquarius is a zodiacal constellation low in the southern sky during July, so meteors from this shower are best observed from the southern hemisphere. From our location, we can expect to see around 10 meteors per hour from this shower after midnight. This year the 12 day old moon sets around 4:30 AM, therefore, moonlight is a serious obstacle to observing the shower this year. Meteors in this shower enter the atmosphere at a speed of 25 miles per second

Arguably, the best meteor shower, the Perseid meteor shower reaches its peak intensity on the night of August 11th - 12th. With the warm nights of August, this is one of the better attended night time events. The moon doesn't rise until dawn; therefore, the sky will remain dark during the entire night. You can expect to see upwards of 60 meteors per hour from this shower in a dark location and several will be bright.

