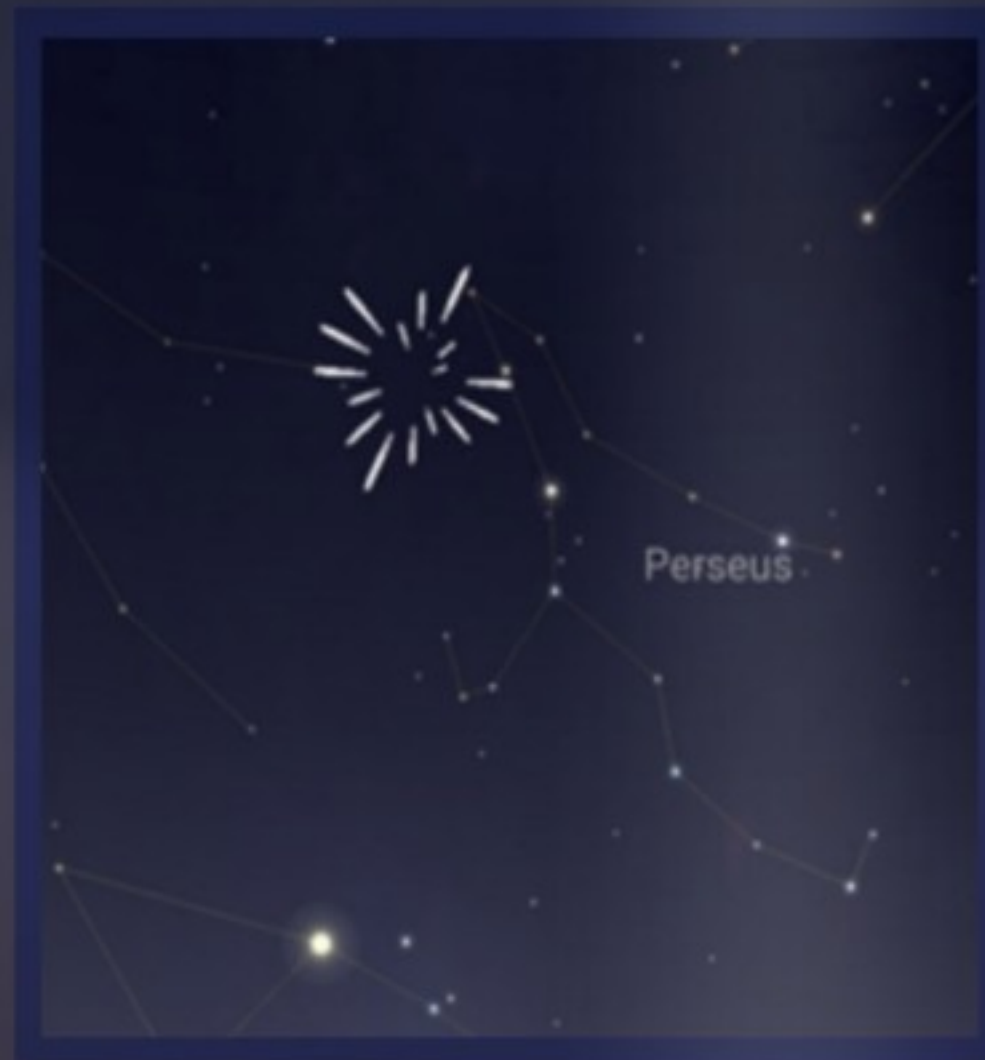


AUGUST 11TH TO 12TH - THE PERSEID METEOR SHOWER

We have two meteor showers guaranteed to put on a good show every year. The first of these, the Perseids, reaches its peak in the early hours of August 12th, but you could begin your meteor watch as soon as it gets dark on the 11th.

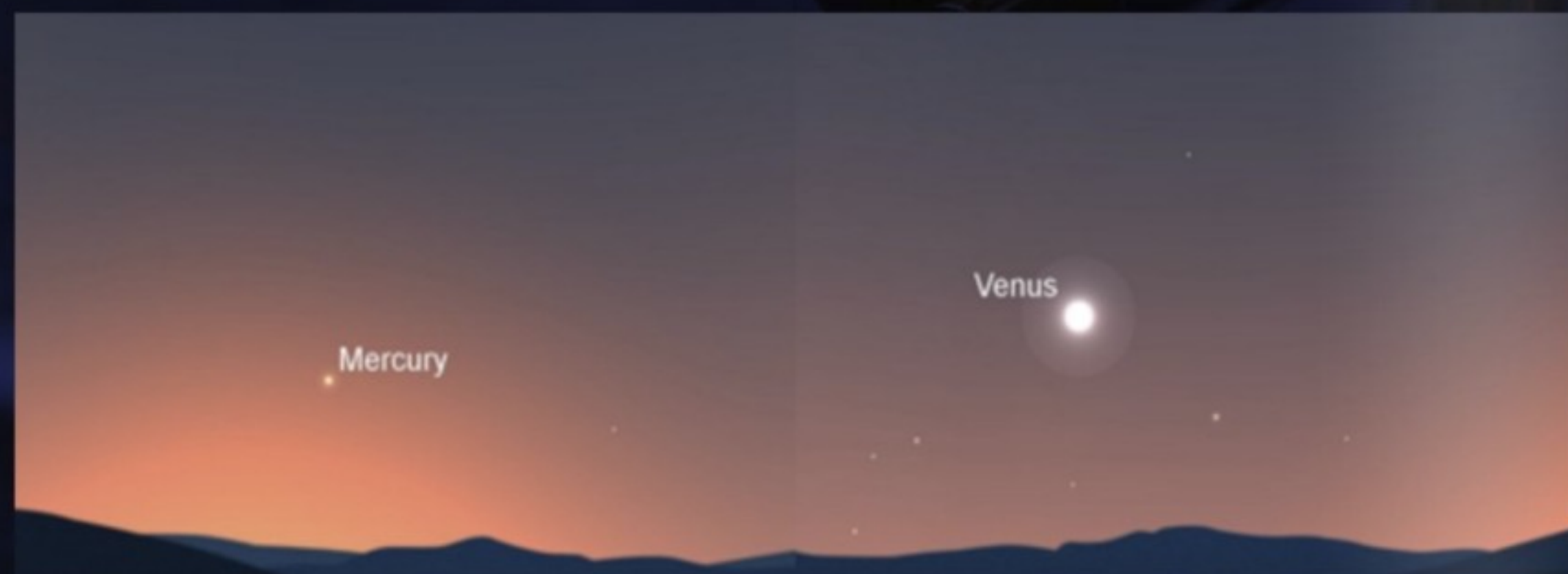
To see the most shooting stars, be sure to get away from the bright lights of a town or city and look towards the north and east. Under ideal conditions, you could expect to see around 100 meteors an hour, and with the Moon a crescent in the evening sky, it shouldn't brighten the sky too much.



OCTOBER 25TH - MERCURY & VENUS AT THEIR BEST

Mercury is an elusive planet, and you have to know when and where to look for it. It reaches its greatest distance from the Sun today and can be seen with the naked eye in the predawn twilight. You can find it relatively easily, low over the eastern horizon at about thirty minutes before sunrise.

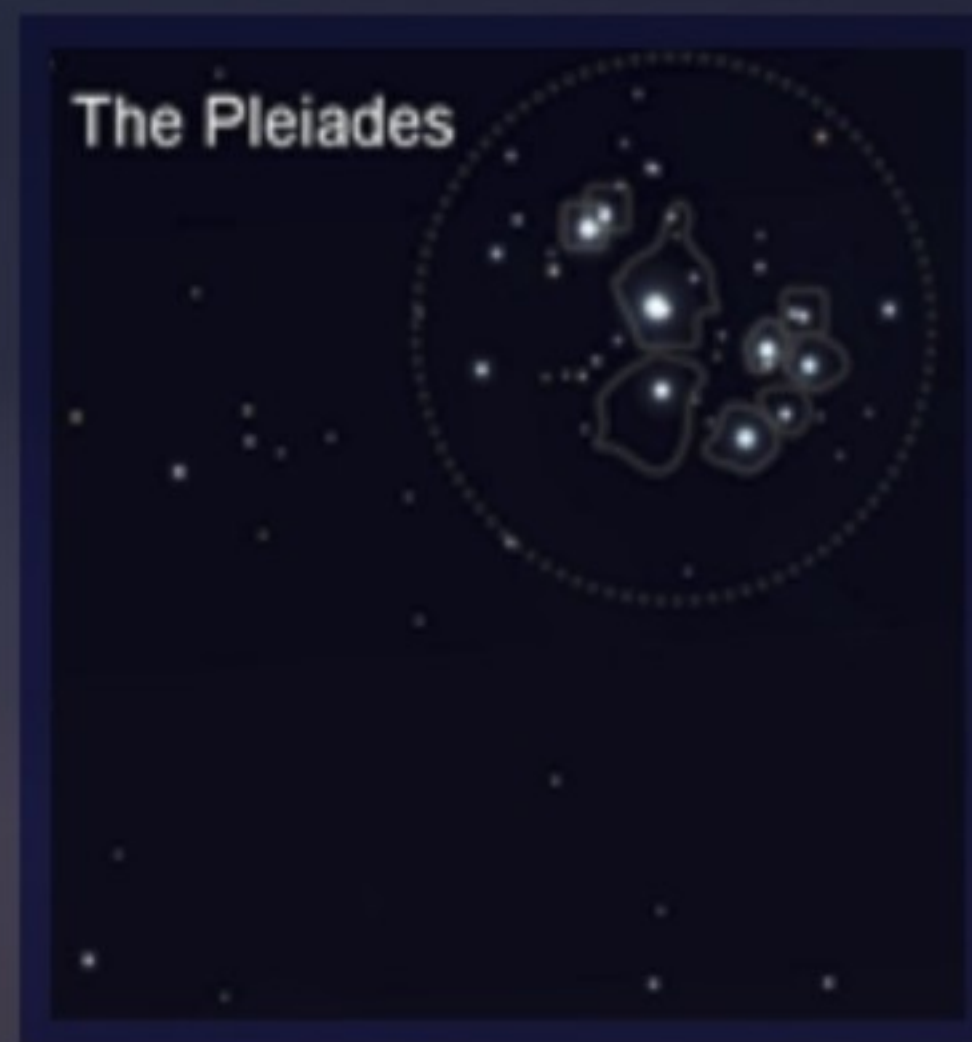
Coincidentally, Venus is almost furthest from the Sun in the evening sky and appears as a brilliant white "star" in the southwest for several hours after sunset. If you have a telescope, both planets will appear roughly 50% illuminated, like a half Moon.



NOVEMBER 18TH/19TH - PARTIAL LUNAR ECLIPSE

There's no total lunar eclipse in the second half of 2021, but November's partial eclipse is almost as good. With 97% of its disc in eclipse, you'll see a sliver of silvery light along its southern edge.

Partial eclipse begins at 2:18am ET on the 19th (11:18pm PT on the 18th) with mid-eclipse occurring at 4:02am ET (1:02am PT). Best of all, the eclipsed Moon will be within the same binocular field of view as the Pleiades star cluster, making this a sight worth staying up for.



DECEMBER 6TH TO 8TH - A CRESCENT MOON & PLANETS

Three planets become visible in the evening twilight at the end of the year: Venus, Saturn and Jupiter. You'll find them almost equally spaced out toward the southwest after sunset, with the Moon passing by each of them from the 6th to the 8th.

It all starts on the 6th, when the three-day-old crescent Moon appears just to the lower left of Venus. The following night, you'll find it to the lower left of Saturn (the faintest of the three) and then, lastly, on the 8th, the Moon appears below brilliant Jupiter.

