



THE MANX NIGHT SKY 2012

JANUARY

3rd-4th

Moon - Full 9th New 23rd

The Quadrantids meteor shower, an above average shower, with up to 40 meteors per hour at their peak. The shower peaks on January 3rd & 4th, but some meteors can be visible from January 1st to 5th. The near first quarter moon will set shortly after midnight, leaving dark skies for what should be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight, Look for meteors radiating from the constellation Bootes.

FEBRUARY

Moon - Full 7th, New 21st

MARCH

3rd

Moon - Full 8th, New 22nd

Mars at Opposition. The red planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. This is the best time to view and photograph Mars.

14th

Conjunction of Venus and Jupiter. The two bright planets will be within 3^o of each other

21st

Equinox. The spring or Vernal equinox occurs at 05:14 GMT. The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of spring in the **Isle of Man** (and the entire northern hemisphere) and the first day of autumn (autumnal equinox) in the southern hemisphere.

APRIL

15th

Moon - Full 6th, New 21st

Saturn at Opposition. The ringed planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. This is the best time to view and photograph Saturn

21st-22nd

Lyrid meteor shower The Lyrids are an average shower, usually producing about 20 meteors per hour at their peak. These meteors can produce bright dust trails that last for several seconds. The shower usually peaks on April 21st and 22nd, although some meteors can be visible from April 16th to 25th. With no moon to get in the way this year, this really should be a good show. Look for meteors radiating from the constellation of Lyra after midnight.

MAY

5th - 6th

Moon - Full 6th, New 20th

The Eta Aquarid Meteor shower is a light shower, usually producing about 10 meteors per hour at their peak. The shower's peak usually occurs on May 5th & 6th; however viewing should be good on any morning from May 4th to 7th. The full moon will probably ruin the show this year, washing out all but the brightest meteors with its glare. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation Aquarius. Best viewing is usually to the east after midnight

20th

Annular Solar Eclipse. (Not visible from the **Isle of Man**). The path of annularity will begin in southern China and move east through Japan, the northern Pacific Ocean, and into the western United States.

JUNE

4th

Moon - Full 4th, New 18th

Partial Lunar Eclipse. (Not visible from the **Isle of Man**) The eclipse will be visible throughout most of Asia, Australia, the Pacific Ocean, and the Americas.

6th

Transit of Venus across the Sun. This extremely rare event will be entirely visible throughout most of eastern Asia, eastern Australia, and Alaska. A partial transit can be seen in progress at sunrise from Europe, western Asia, and eastern Africa, and the **Isle of Man**, where Sunrise will be at 04.55 BST. Venus will leave the solar disc at 06.10 BST until the year 2117

21st

The Summer Solstice (or June solstice) occurs at 00:09 BST. The North Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its northernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Cancer at 23.44 degrees north latitude. This is the first day of summer in the **Isle of Man** and the northern hemisphere and the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the southern hemisphere.

JULY
28th - 29th

Moon . Full 3rd, New 19th

Southern Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower. The Delta Aquarids can produce about 20 meteors per hour at their peak. The shower usually peaks on July 28th & 29th, but some meteors can also be seen from July 18th to August 18th. The moon will set after midnight, leaving dark skies

AUGUST
6th

Moon . Full 2nd New 16th and Full again on the 31st (a Blue Moon)

Curiosity Rover at Mars. NASA's Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) is scheduled to land on the red planet between August 6 and August 20, 2012.

12th-13th

Perseids Meteor Shower. The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at their peak, you may be able to see some meteors any time from July 23rd to August 22nd. The near last quarter moon will be hanging around for the show, but shouldn't be too much of a problem

24th

Neptune at Opposition. The blue planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. it will only appear as a tiny blue dot in most telescopes

SEPTEMBER
21st

Moon . New 16th Full 29th.

September Equinox. Occurs at 15:49 BST. The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of autumn (autumnal equinox) in the northern hemisphere and the **Isle of Man** and the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the southern hemisphere.

29th

Uranus at Opposition. The blue-green planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun., it will only appear as a tiny dot in telescopes

OCTOBER
21st . 22nd

Moon . New 15th Full 29th

Orionids Meteor Shower. The Orionids is an average shower producing about 20 meteors per hour at their peak. This shower is highly irregular. A good show could be experienced on any morning from October 20th to 24th; the moon will set by midnight, hopefully leaving a dark sky

NOVEMBER
13th

Moon . New 13th Full 27th.

Total Solar Eclipse (Not visible from the **Isle of Man**).The path of totality will only be visible in parts of extreme northern Australia and the southern Pacific Ocean.

17th- 18th

The Leonids Meteor Shower. The Leonids is one of the better meteor showers to observe, producing an average of 40 meteors per hour at their peak. The shower itself has a cyclic peak year every 33 years where hundreds of meteors can be seen each hour. The last of these occurred in 2001. The moon will set early in the early evening leaving dark skies

27th

Conjunction of Venus and Saturn. These two bright planets will be within 1 degree of each other in the morning sky. Look to the east around sunrise.

28th

Penumbral Lunar Eclipse. This partial eclipse will be visible throughout most of Europe including the **Isle of Man**, eastern Africa, Asia, Australia, the Pacific Ocean, and the US

DECEMBER
3rd

Moon . New 13th Full 27th

Jupiter at Opposition. The giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. This is the best time to view and photograph Jupiter

13th - 14th

Geminids Meteor Shower. Considered by many to be the best meteor shower in the heavens, the Geminids are known for producing up to 60 multicoloured meteors per hour at their peak, some meteors should be visible from December 6th . 19th. This year the new moon will guarantee a dark sky for what could be an awesome show

21st

Winter (or December) Solstice. The December solstice occurs at 11:12 GMT. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its northernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.44 degrees south latitude. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Isle of Man and the northern hemisphere and the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the southern hemisphere.

22nd

The Ursid Meteor shower. Often forgotten the Ursid shower can produce up to 20 meteors an hour. The meteors peak on the 22nd but can may be seen between the 19th & 25th

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