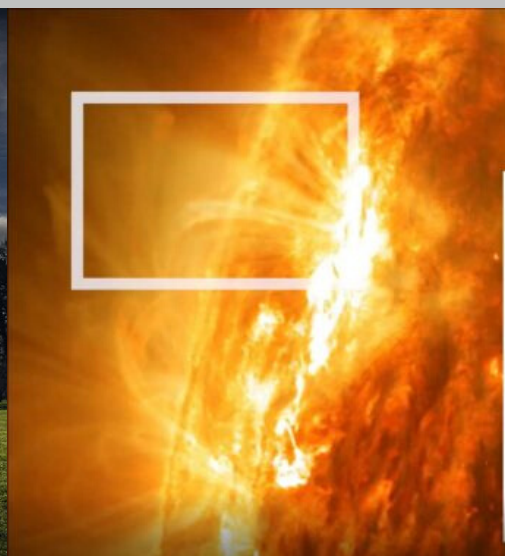


DUBAI ASTRONOMY GROUP

Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



THE SKY THIS WEEK FROM DECEMBER 27 TO JANUARY 5

While the Moon and Venus meet in a spectacular conjunction early in the week, the prolific Quadrantid meteor shower peaks under a Moon-free sky late this week.

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HOW OFTEN ARE THERE 3 ECLIPSES IN A MONTH?

In a calendar month, 3 eclipses are rare. But in a lunar month, 3 eclipses are more common. From 2000-2050, it happens 14 times.

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SCIENTISTS SEE A NEW KIND OF EXPLOSION ON THE SUN

A new kind of magnetic explosion, called forced magnetic reconnection, was seen for the first time in images from NASA's SDO spacecraft. Learn more in this beautiful video.

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BETELGUESE'S BIZARRE DIMMING HAS ASTRONOMERS SCRATCHING THEIR HEADS

One of the night sky's brightest stars is now the faintest it's been in a century. Astronomers aren't sure what it means.

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ASTRONOMY PICTURE OF THE WEEK



The Northern Winter Hexagon Image Credit & Copyright: Petr Horálek

Explanation: December's New Moon brought a solar eclipse to some for the holiday season. It also gave beautiful dark night skies to skygazers around the globe, like this moonless northern winter night. In the scene, bright stars of the Winter Hexagon along the Milky Way are rising. Cosy mountain cabins in the snowy foreground are near the village of Oravska Lesna, Slovakia. The shining celestial beacons marking the well-known asterism are Aldebaran, Capella, Pollux (and Castor), Procyon, Rigel, and Sirius. This winter nightscape also reveals faint nebulae in Orion, and the lovely Pleiades star cluster.

JANUARY CELESTIAL EVENTS

January 3, 4 - Quadrantids Meteor Shower

The Quadrantids is an above average shower, with up to 40 meteors per hour at its peak. It is thought to be produced by dust grains left behind by an extinct comet known as 2003 EH1, which was discovered in 2003. The shower runs annually from January 1-5. It peaks this year on the night of the 3rd and morning of the 4th. The first quarter moon will set shortly after midnight, leaving fairly dark skies for what could be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Bootes, but can appear anywhere in the sky.



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