

## Astronomy in the Two Dales

January

Happy New Year and welcome to 2016.

We start this glorious year of our lord , 2016 , on the 3<sup>rd</sup> with the Quadrantids Meteor Shower . This display can rival that seen in December , however it is renowned for being a swift and sudden downpour and rarely lasts more than a few hours. Its name is a bit confusing as the meteors are seen radiating from the constellation Bootes , the ploughman , so they should be called the Bootids , however they are named after a defunct constellation created in 1795 by the French astronomer Jerome Lalande , the Quadrans Muralis. They are best seen in the early morning , however the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter moon will be bright enough to obscure some but not all , so look eastward before dawn.



The planets are still residing in the early morning southern sky , forming a line of Saturn , Venus , Mars and Jupiter. The best time for viewing this is 6.30am onwards , and on the 9<sup>th</sup> Saturn will be eclipsed by Venus . This event will occur over the 8<sup>th</sup> , 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of January , with the two planets getting ever nearer until they are seen as one. This event will occur low in the sky so a higher vantage point may be necessary .



The moon will also get in on the act , and as the new moon occurs on the 10<sup>th</sup> , there will be dark skies free of moon light , for our planetary display , until the 24<sup>th</sup> when the full moon , known as the Full Wolf Moon by those with hairy knuckles , howls down at us.

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