

Astronomy in the Two Dales

October

Hello darkness my old friend , it is time to view the stars again
make sure the lenses are free from dust , ensure your clothes and shoes are warm enough
check the mirror , on your scope , for lint and grit , then polish it
for the stars are shining. copyright Garmin and Sifunkel

This month the sky contains a veritable feast of observation , including two meteor showers , another supermoon , a rare three planet conjunction and a comet becoming visible to the naked eye.

The first installment of our astronomical buffet commences on the 1st , with a comet , C/2013 US10 Catalina , not the most inspiring name , which will gradually brighten until it reaches its closet approach to the sun in November. The comet can be found in the constellation of Virgo and will be visible before sunrise in the east and after sunset in the west , remember **DO NOT LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE SUN.**

On the 8th we have the Draconids meteor shower , this particular sight is best viewed in the early evening , though the moon may block out all but the brightest meteors , which will radiate from the constellation Draco , a circumpolar constellation that never sets and can only be seen from the northern hemisphere. Its stars are not very bright , however it does contain one of the wonders of the sky , the Cats Eye nebula , the remains of an exploded star .

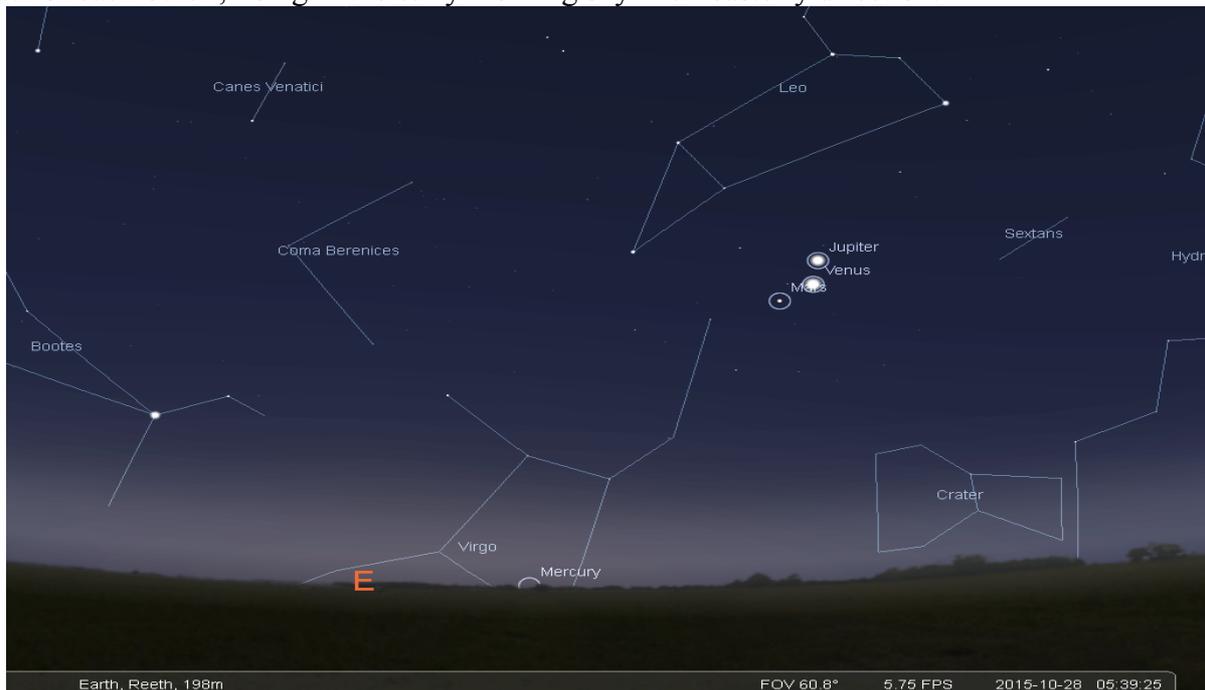


The moon is new on the 13th and full on the 27th with the final of the three supermoons occurring for this year.

The Orionid meteor shower peaks on the 21st and 22nd of October , producing approximately 20 meteors an hour from the direction of the constellation Orion . As the moon sets just after midnight on these dates any meteors will show up well in the darkened sky. Orion rises in the East just after midnight.



On the 28th we have a rare planetary conjunction of Mars , Venus and Jupiter all within a finger width of each other , rising in the early morning sky in an easterly direction.



So there you have it , a gourmet selection to satisfy your observing taste buds . Still hungry ? Well , wait for December when we have the banquet of all meteor showers on one of the darkest nights of the year.

The Starman , Reeth Informal Astronomy Group , Reethastro.org