

# Fire Raining from the Sky

Written By: Laura Haynes  
Illustrations by Mark Paul-Sobral

1am viewing conditions are due to improve, however the best time (weather dependent) will be from 2-4am so prepare for a late night!

**Where:** Pick somewhere with an elevated position and away from light pollution. To find an ideal star gazing spot check out the Dark Sky Discover Sites website for a map of verified star gazing spots which offer good site-lines of the sky and are away from the worst of light pollution. This year we will be heading for Surprise View in the Peak District near Hathersage - a Milky Way class Dark Sky site. However, next year we are hoping to make it to the Northumberland International Dark Sky Park located in the Kielder Water and Forest Park.

**Equipment:** No special star gazing equipment is needed to view the Perseids! You will be able to see the meteor shower perfectly well with the naked eye so this is not an event only for those with a telescope. The main thing is to bring along a torch to help you find a suitable spot to lie down safely but then to make sure all lights are turned off. Your eyes can take several hours to adjust fully to the dark, the longer you stare at the sky the more stars, and in this case meteors, you will be able to see. We also recommend bringing blankets and warm drinks to keep yourself comfy.

## The Perseid Meteor Shower

The summer's best shooting star display is upon us! The spectacular Perseids meteor shower dominates the night skies in the northern hemisphere every summer, the phenomenon takes place from mid-July through to the first 3 weeks of August, with a peak in activity for several nights around the 13th of August. So over the next few nights you are going to want to be looking up!

This year the display has the potential to be extra special on the nights of the 11th and 12th as NASA forecasters have predicted a Perseid outburst on that night. If conditions fall in to place there could be rates of 200 meteors per hour - here's hoping for clear skies!

**When:** For the best chance of viewing the peak this year you will need to be out after 01:00am to stop the light from the waxing gibbous moon from disrupting your view. Once the moon has set at

