

Meteor Showers with Friends

Chicago Park District extends beach hours to allow for star-gazing meteor event



For Immediate Release

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(Chicago, IL) – Chicagoans will have a special opportunity to view the annual Perseid Meteor Shower of shooting stars at 12th Street Beach and Montrose Beach in the evenings of **August 11 and 12**. The [Chicago Park District](#), in partnership with the [Illinois Science Council](#), will extend access hours at those two beaches until midnight on Saturday August 11 and Sunday, August 12 so people can use the lakefront to look for shooting stars. Participants need to remain on the beach. The City of Evanston will extend access hours at Lighthouse Beach until midnight on Saturday, August 11.

Best viewing of this annual astronomical event is in the night sky in mid-August. In 2012, the Perseids' peak activity takes place August 11-13 in the evenings through pre-dawn hours. While stargazing in Chicago is hampered by light pollution, the City's position west of the lake is fortunate. Ideal viewing for Chicagoans, aside from driving away from the City, is along the lakefront, facing northeast away from city lights and toward rising stars. The moon phase this year – a late-rising waning crescent – also helps. It will not be too bright to interfere with viewing on that date, provided the sky is clear of clouds.

Illinois Science Council will present a **free educational talk about meteor-watching and meteorites on Thursday, August 9, 2012**, at 7:00pm, at the Levy Community Center in Evanston. Dr. Laura Trouille, astronomer from Northwestern University's Center for Interdisciplinary Exploration and Research in Astronomy (CIERA) and the Department of Physics and Astronomy, will provide a lively talk on the Perseid meteor shower and, more generally, night-sky objects of interest. James Holstein of the Field Museum Department of Geology will discuss meteorites that come through the atmosphere and fall to earth and will bring samples people can view.

The Perseid Meteor Shower phenomenon occurs when the earth's orbit passes through the cloud of particles ejected from the comet Swift-Tuttle as it travels on its 130-year orbit. The Perseids are so-called because the point from which they appear (to come) in the sky, called the radiant, lies in the constellation Perseus. This display of "shooting stars" is visible in the night sky for several weeks each year, with peak activity between August 9 and 14. They can be seen all across the sky, but because of the Swift-Tuttle's orbit path, Perseids are primarily visible in the northern hemisphere.

[Illinois Science Council](#) ("ISC") is an independent, volunteer-driven 501c3 organization that engages, educates, and entertains the adult public about science and technology in our

everyday lives. We showcase the scientists and the research of Chicago-area institutions and companies that make Chicago our nation's true "City of Science."

Public Perseid Meteor Talk:

Thursday, August 9, 2012 7:00 – 8:30pm
Presentation with astronomer and geologist with Q&A
Levy Community Center, 300 Dodge Avenue, Evanston, IL 60202
Phone: 847-448-8250
Event is free and open to all ages.
To ensure a seat, reserve space on-line at www.Meteors.EventBrite.com

Meteor Viewing:

Saturday, August 11, 2012 9:00pm – 12:00 midnight
Lighthouse Beach Park
2611 Sheridan Road (Central Street at Sheridan Road), Evanston, IL
(No swimming or entry into the water is allowed at the beaches during this event.)

Saturday, August 11, 2012 9:00pm – 12:00 midnight
12th Street Beach (1200 South), Chicago, IL
Montrose Beach, (4400 North), Chicago, IL
(No swimming or entry into the water is allowed at the beaches during this event.)

Sunday, August 12, 2012 9:00pm – 12:00 midnight
12th Street Beach (1200 South), Chicago, IL
Montrose Beach, (4400 North), Chicago, IL
(No swimming or entry into the water is allowed at the beaches during this event.)

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