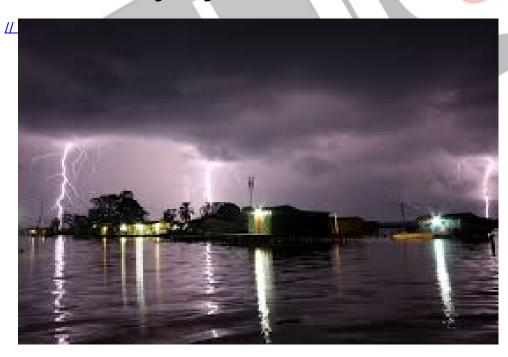


Catatumbo Lightning

Source: TOI

<u>Catatumbo lightning</u> is a natural phenomenon that occurs over the **Catatumbo River** in **Venezuela**, where **lightning strikes** almost continuously.

- The strikes occur for up to 160 nights in a year, with an average of 28 lightning strikes per minute at its peak.
- This phenomenon primarily happens at the mouth of the Catatumbo River, where it meets
 <u>Lake Maracaibo</u>, the largest lake in Latin America. It is also among the oldest water bodies on the planet.
- Warm, moist air from the <u>Caribbean Sea</u> is pushed towards the <u>Andes mountains</u>, where it collides with cooler air descending from the peaks.
- This collision creates a perfect storm of sorts, as the warmer air is forced to rise rapidly by the shape of the local landscape.
- It cools and condenses, forming towering <u>cumulonimbus clouds</u>. The combination of **strong**winds and temperature differentials generates electrical charges within these clouds.
- The cumulonimbus clouds sometimes reach heights of more than 5 km loaded up on static electricity. When the electrical potential within the clouds becomes too great, it discharges in the form of lightning.



Read more: Report on Lightning Strikes

