



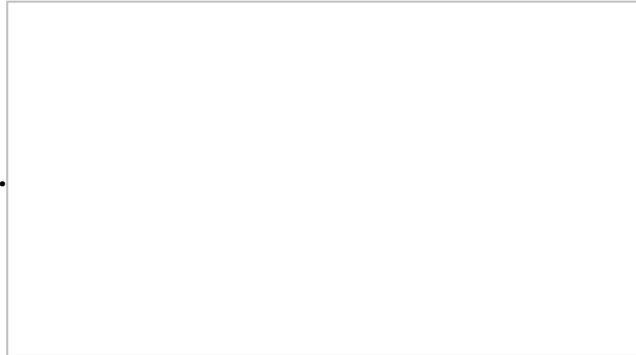
Perseid Meteor Shower

 drishtiias.com/printpdf/perseid-meteor-shower

The Perseid Meteor Shower, which has been active from 17th July 2019 onward, can be seen until 26th August, 2019.

- The Perseids occur as the Earth runs into pieces of cosmic debris left behind by **the**

comet Swift-Tuttle.



- The cloud of debris is about 27 km wide — and at the peak of the display, between 160 and 200 meteors streak through the Earth's atmosphere every hour as the pieces of debris, travelling at some 2.14 lakh km per hour, burn up a little less than 100 km above the Earth's surface.
- The Perseids currently visible in the night sky **are not due to the debris left** behind by the **comet Swift-Tuttle** during its **most recent pass, which happened in 1992.**
This particular comet **goes around the Sun once every 133 years**, and the meteors now visible were left behind by the pass before the last one — or perhaps even earlier.

Meteor Shower

- The cosmic debris are the **remnants of comets** — great frigid chunks of matter that leave behind dirty trails of rocks and ice that linger long after the comets themselves have passed.
- **As the Earth wades through this cloud of comet waste**, the bits of debris create what appears from the ground to be a **fireworks display in the sky** — known as a meteor shower.

- **Meteor showers take their name from the location of the radiant.**

The Perseid radiant is in the constellation Perseus. The Geminid meteor shower, which is observed each December, is named for a radiant in the constellation Gemini.

Source: IE