

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

A Splendid Astronomical Show in August
The Perseids Are Coming!

Montréal, August 4, 2010 – Montréal's Nature Museums invite everyone to come out and admire the **Perseids** shooting stars. For the second straight year, the Montréal Planetarium team will be waiting at the Îles-de-Boucherville Park on August 11 and 12 to host a star-filled evening sponsored by Rio Tinto Alcan. Good news: the observation conditions will be excellent this year!

The Perseids: shooting stars

Astronomy buffs know them well, but for amateur stargazers, the Perseids are shooting stars that cross the skies between late July and the third week of August. Once a year, the Earth passes through the orbit of comet Swift-Tuttle, whose tail is full of specks of dust. These bits of space debris speed through our atmosphere at some 60 km/s, producing the spectacular natural fireworks that can be seen on clear, dark nights. Under ideal conditions you can spot up to 70 meteors an hour – fewer near urban areas. This year, the best night for watching the shooting stars will be **August 12 to 13**, until dawn, with the show peaking at around 8 p.m. The nights of August 11-12 and 13-14 will also be very good.

Observation tips

You don't need much in the way of equipment: a clear, dark and cloudless sky (light pollution from cities spoils the experience), a lawn chair or a mat to lie on, warm clothing (even in late summer!), a notebook and pencil to keep count of how many meteors you see, a dim flashlight and, for would-be photographers, a camera on a sturdy tripod. And remember your wish list, too, of course!

Then just lie back in your chair or on the ground and keep your eyes to the left or right of the spot in the sky where the shooting stars seem to originate, in the Perseus constellation. You won't have to wait long.

The Perseids in Boucherville

The observation sessions presented in the park by Rio Tinto Alcan will be held in the parking lot (Saint-Laurent sector), near the chalet. The Planetarium team will be there on August 11 and 12 only, between 9 and 11:30 p.m., ready to hand out advice and share their enthusiasm. It's a perfect introduction to astronomy, with friends or family. Why not bring along dinner or a snack and enjoy a picnic? The Planetarium team will be there rain or shine. Note that park admission fees apply.

Now just hope for a clear sky, and come wish upon a star!

General information:

August 11 and 12, 2010, 9 to 11:30 p.m.

Park admission:

Adults – \$3.50/Families (2 adults + 3 children) – \$7.00/1 adult + 1 child – \$5.00

Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville

55, île Sainte-Marguerite

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BIODÔME

INSECTARIUM

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PLANÉTIUM

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