



## Berkeley Public Library Weekly Sky Report December 10 - December 16, 2023

### Meteor Showers

Old Asteroid 3200 Phaethon is back, or at least the tail end of it. This is the source of one of the best meteor showers, the **Geminids**. Chabot Space and Science Center is having a viewing party on their Observation Deck, Wednesday - Thursday morning, 11:45pm - 3:00am! (members free, others pay fee; tickets: <https://chabotspace.org/calendar/geminids-meteor-shower-viewing/>). The moon will be newish, so it will not interfere with this viewing. As usual, the best time to look for these meteors is the middle of the night. Look towards the Gemini twins almost straight overhead after midnight. Allow time for your eyes to adjust to the dark. And dress warmly!

### Planets

**Venus** rises just after 4 a.m. as the Morning Star and is visible high in the east until it gets lost in the glare of the sunrise; it is, in fact, still visible after 6 a.m. **Saturn** is halfway across the sky towards the south as it gets dark with **Jupiter** blazing away in the east.

### Planetariums

The **Lawrence Hall of Science** has some great planetarium shows to get you ready for the fall and our upcoming trips to Mars:

**Mission to the Red Planet** recounts the history of our missions to Mars, from “landers, fly-bys, orbiters and rovers...and learn how to locate Mars in our own night sky.”

**Traditions of the Winter Sky**, which explores different cultural perspectives and traditions.

They have a new experience called **Planetarium Pilots**, which lets you “control the dome and choose which planets, moons, and more to explore. Learn all about space from Planetarium voice overs as you fly around the universe!”

### Launches

The second launch of SpaceX’s **Starship** was quite exciting. SpaceX hopes to launch the next flight by the end of December. You can watch the largest, most powerful rocket ever launched as it gets ready for the next test flight by searching for videos: spacex boca chica. They have just installed a giant sign on the side of one of their buildings: GATEWAY TO MARS



### **Central Library**

2090 Kittredge Street  
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Fax: 510-981-6111



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Please refrain from wearing scented products to public programs.

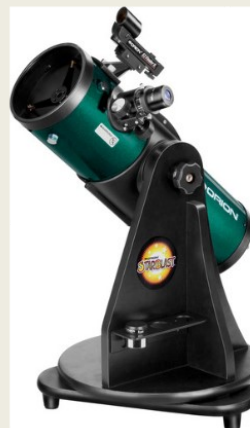
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## Telescopes @Berkeley Public Library!

We have **5 Orion StarBlast Astro Reflector Telescopes** that you can borrow! **Each BPL Branch has a telescope**, which may be borrowed for 1 week. Place a hold on it and then pick it up from your branch when it is ready. It is fairly easy to carry at 13 lbs., and stands about 2 feet tall.

### **Here's what you get:**

"A great compact grab-and-go telescope designed for entry-level and intermediate astronomy enthusiasts. Substantial 4.5" aperture and fast f/4 focal ratio provides bright, detailed views of solar system targets like the Moon and planets, as well as wide-field celestial objects like nebulas and star clusters."



Much of the information for this report comes from the wonderful web site, Heavens Above. You can enter your home city location and bookmark it for easy access: <http://www.heavens-above.com>. Other stellar sources include: <http://www.space.com> and <http://www.nasa.gov>. And check [spacex.com](http://spacex.com) for launches.

## Binoculars @Berkeley Public Library!

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cal Falcons program, we have 9 Vortex-Raptor binocular kits that you can put on hold and pick up at the location of your choice.

### **Here's what you get:**


Porro prism performance in a mid-size, wide-angle design, the Raptors deliver a bright, crisp image with excellent color fidelity - even in low light conditions. With a wide range of interpupillary distance, they can easily be adjusted to fit anyone in the family, making them ideal for serious, hard-core youth hunters. The kit comes with a copy of The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western America and a pocket guide to local birds of the SF Bay Area. But it is also great for looking at planets, the moon and the stars!



This **Sky Report** is brought to you by Berkeley Public Library's [Cornerstones of Science](#), which is funded in part by the Silberstein Foundation. Cornerstones of Science is part of a multi-library initiative to bring STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming to patrons.



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