

# Leonids Meteor Shower

November 12, 2021

**In news**– The annual Leonids Meteor Shower has begun, with peak activity expected on November 17.

## **About Leonids Meteor Shower**

- The debris that forms this meteor shower **originates from a small comet called 55P/Tempel-Tuttle in the constellation Leo, which takes 33 years to orbit the sun.**
  - It was originally **discovered in 1833.**
  - The meteor shower has been named the Leonids Meteor Shower as it seems to emanate from the sector of the sky where the head of the Leo constellation lies.
  - **The Leonids are considered to be a major shower that features the fastest meteors, which typically travel at speeds of 71 km per second,** although the rates are often as low as 15 meteors per hour.
  - **They are also called fireballs and earthgrazer meteors,** fireballs, because of their bright colours, and earthgazer, because they streak close to the horizon.
  - **The light which is why a meteor is called a shooting star – is a result of the friction between the meteorite and the molecules** present in the Earth's atmosphere because of which it burns.
  - A meteor storm should have at least 1,000 meteors per hour.
  - The last such storm took place in 2002.
- 
- **The showers are visible on any cloudless night when the Moon is not very bright.**
  - Ideally, the viewing location should have no light pollution and the farther away from cities the better.

- The peak time of a meteor shower comes when the Earth passes through the densest part of the debris.

### Leo(Constellation)

- It is a large equatorial constellation which represents a lion.
- It is lying between Cancer, the crab to the west and Virgo the maiden to the east.
- It is located in the Northern celestial hemisphere.
- It appears highest in the midnight sky in the months around February.
- Its brightest star, Regulus lies very close to the ecliptic, the path that the Sun traces across the sky each year.