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Upstate NY stargazing in December: Geminid and Ursid meteor showers close out the year

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By [Special to nyup.com](#)

A monthly preview of stars you can observe over Upstate NY from Damian Allis, contributing writer

Winter has come again, marking the time when many pack up their equipment and seek indoor lectures over outdoor observing. The situation is even worse for amateur astronomers, as the arrival of the Winter Solstice on the 21st also marks the point at which the days start to get longer - and the observing nights start to get shorter. As for 2017, New York observers saw mixed results in the "with my own eyes" department. The solar eclipse was generally excellent, with random blocks of overcast observing time. Some of the more subtle phenomena, such as lunar occultations and one lunar eclipse, also received mixed reviews for observability. The recent Venus-Jupiter conjunction was a wash for most, and the general consensus for the year was that none of the meteor showers lived up to the attention they received.

Major NASA missions this year did provide focus for many observers and outreach lecturers, with Juno at Jupiter and Cassini at Saturn highlights both in imagery and hard science. The list of major events for 2018 is lengthy, including a number of lunar and solar eclipses. Sadly, New York will only be able to catch a sliver of only one of these - the total lunar eclipse occurring on Jan. 31st. That said, any reason to get outside is a good one - and if you know of any NY astronomy clubs or events that could use some additional promotion, please consider [contacting the author](#) with information.

Lectures And Observing Opportunities In Upstate/Central New York

New York has a number of astronomers, astronomy clubs, and observatories that host public sessions throughout the year. Announced sessions from respondent NY astronomy organizations are provided below for December. As wind and cloud cover are always factors when observing, please check the provided contact information and/or email the groups a day-or-so before an announced session, as some groups will also schedule weather-alternate dates. Also use the contact info for directions and to check on any applicable event or parking fees. And bring one more layer of clothing than you think you are going to need!

Astronomy Events Calendar

Organizer	Location	Event	Date	Time	Contact Info
Albany Area Amateur Astronomers & Dudley Observatory	Schenectady	Senior Science Day	Dec. 4	3 - 4 p.m.	email , website

