

Our Night Sky for December 16th, 2024

Last night and for the next few nights, you may have noticed that the moon rise was further north than you would expect. Last night and tonight are the maximum northern you will see the moon rise and set all year. Because of the tilt of the earth the position of moon rise and set varies constantly as does the related time and position of equinoxes. The timing follow a pattern that repeats every 18 and a half years, during this larger cycle are minor patterns on a shorter two year cycle called a major lunar standstill which produces several events of most northern moonrise and set and full moons that are very slightly more illuminated than others. A full moon with a few hundreds less illumination would not even be noticeable. But measuring and documenting them verifies the precision that is the clockwork of our solar system.

That reminds me of last week, I was down in the bowl and drove up Peden hill late in the evening. Down in the bowl the fog and headlight glare made driving difficult and if you had any plans of sky viewing you were lucky to see the taillights ahead of you. But as I drove past Walmart the sky cleared as if you had flipped a switch. It was a beautifully clear night. May I remind you do a google search for “sky clock Prince George”.

Select Prince George observatory or customize your own location. There is no better tool for predicting when you will have your best chance to enjoy Our Night Sky