

Image: Comet NEOWISE seen in an aurora-filled sky

July 16 2020, by Sarah Frazier



Credit: Donna Lach, used with permission

Comet NEOWISE is visible in an aurora-filled sky in this photo by Aurorasaurus Ambassador Donna Lach. The photo was taken early on July 14, 2020, in western Manitoba, Canada. The purple ribbon-like

structure to the left is STEVE, an aurora-related phenomenon discovered with the help of citizen scientists working with the Aurorasaurus project. The bright streak near the top of the image is a meteor.

Lach tells how she captured the photo: "I took several shots of the [comet](#) a few days prior with my zoom lens, and caught a whiff of aurora in a few shots. I had hoped the aurora forecast was right, since we had [clear skies](#) the previous night. I fought off mosquitoes as I waited for the never-ending dusk to show me what was in the sky. Finally, at about 11:30 p.m. CDT, the aurora and comet were both appearing, and I could see it was going to be epic. The large, thick band of aurora soon started to dance, showing brilliant blues and purples looking to the west. When I saw some loops skipping out of the main band at the westward side, I was pretty sure I would see STEVE soon also, so I kept watching. Finally, at about 1:00 a.m., STEVE was visible. I was excited to see my wide-angle lens could capture the span from STEVE to NEOWISE, and got about 10 photos. I observed the incredible aurora for about three hours, and it sometimes stretched above me. At times NEOWISE was outshone by the brilliant [aurora](#), but it was visible the entire time."

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

Citation: Image: Comet NEOWISE seen in an aurora-filled sky (2020, July 16) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-07-image-comet-neowise-aurora-filled-sky.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--