

Aurora Borealis

By Mao Sugiyama

The Aurora Borealis also known as the Northern Lights is one of the greatest attractions in the world. People come from all over the world to see this phenomenon. It is one of the magnificent and memorizing, light shows that has fascinated mankind for hundreds of years. It still continues to attract visitors and give them an unforgettable experience that will hold memories for a lifetime.

The yellow-green colors light up the night sky and even the stars are more visible.



The purplish hues that are visible here are ionized nitrogen released along with the oxygen.



The red lights appear to be stretching towards the sky, are formed from excited oxygen.



These bright lights form shapes and look like they are dancing in the night sky.



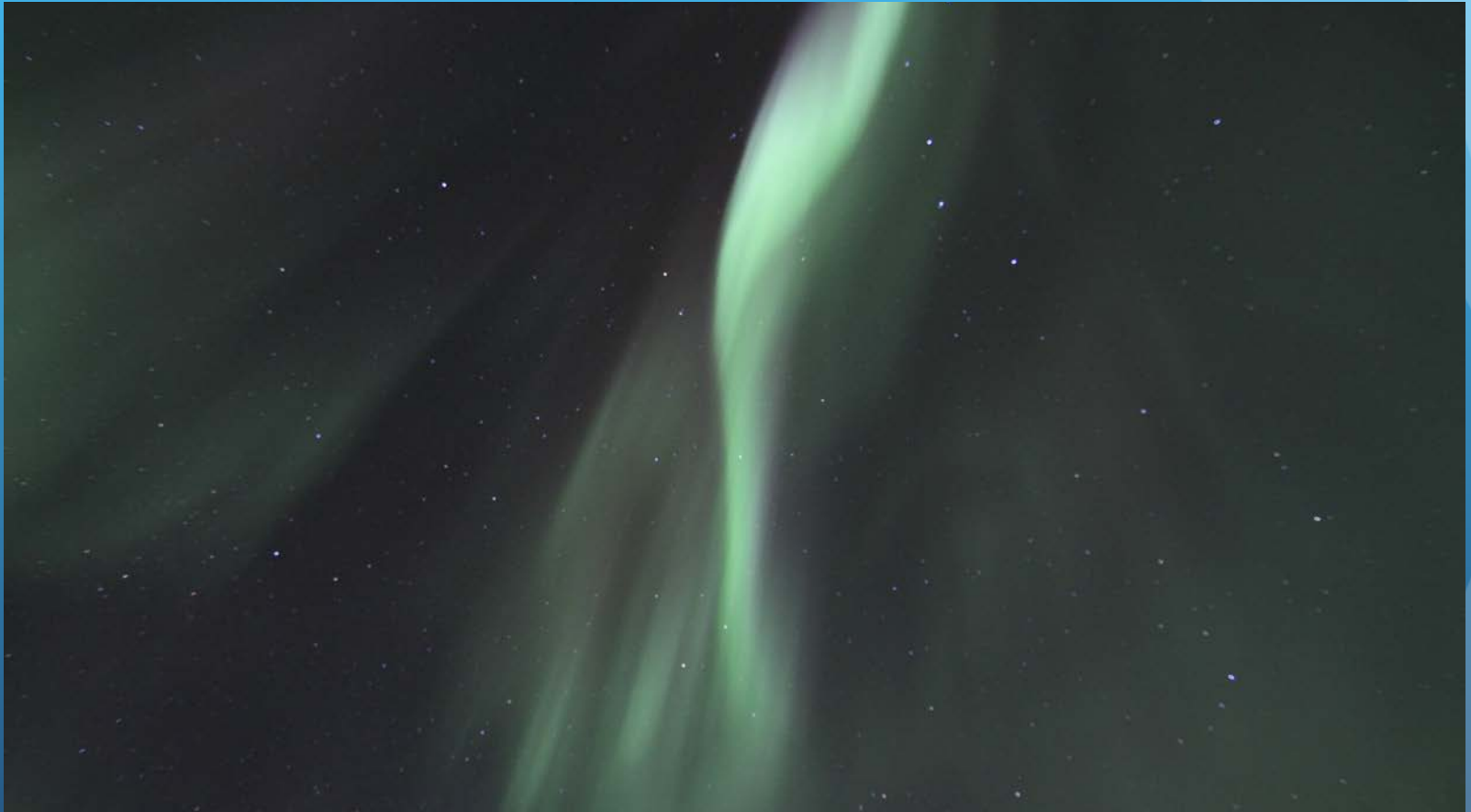
This photo looks like a hand reaching from the heavens. Very eerie!



A wave appears to be washing through the sky.



The purple and green lights are intertwined to form this magnificent color display.



It appears as if a bird is flapping its wings and flying off into the night sky...



The night sky separates the green and red lights in a almost symmetrical way.



The Northern Lights are not only spectacular colors but also form tremendous and graphic shapes.



The Northern Lights are a collision between electrically charged particles from the earth's atmosphere. They form colorful bands of lights mostly green, yellow blue, purplish red, and even pink. The varieties of colors are due to the types of gas particles colliding. Green is the most common northern light because oxygen molecules are released.

The Northern lights is a natural phenomenon that occurs in the polar regions. These spectacular lights dance across the sky in symmetric ovals centered on southern and northern poles. People can only see the Northern Lights few times in a decade. The Aurora activity is on an 11 year cycle and hits its peak for about 2 years. The best place to see the lights is in Alaska, in the month of December.

It has fascinated people and scientists for hundreds of years. It was discovered by Pierre Gassendi who actually named it Aurora Borealis. He named it after 2 Roman deities, Aurora the goddess of the dawn and Borealis the God of the north wind. Galileo Galilei was in awe with its magnificent beauty. Many others have written about these exquisite lights. A Norwegian explorer and scientist, Fridtjof Nansen says, "It seems to cast a spell over both sight and sense. It is impossible to tear oneself away. It begins to dawn with a pale yellow spectacle light... like a reflection of a fire far away. It broadens, and soon the whole...sky is one glowing mass of fire."

The Aurora Borealis is an incredible attraction and has fascinated people from all over the world. It is an once in a life time trip that I was able to experience and I will remember it for rest of my life. I don't think I will ever witness such magnificent natural phenomenon again.

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