

Aurora Borealis and aurora australis (southern lights)

Aurora Borealis and Aurora Australis People living at high latitude regions (near Arctic or Antarctic) might experience dazzling coloured natural lights across the night sky. This ethereal display on the sky is known as aurora borealis (northern lights) or aurora australis (southern lights). These lights are often called as polar lights.

The lights are seen above the magnetic poles of the northern and southern hemispheres. They are called as “Aurora borealis” in the north and “Aurora australis” in the south. This occurs as a result of interaction between the gaseous particles in the Earth’s atmosphere with highly charged particles released from the Sun’s atmosphere through solar wind.

These particles emit light due to collision and variations in colour are due to the type of the gas particles that take part in the collisions. A pale yellowish – green colour is produced when the

ionized oxygen takes part in the collision and a blue or purplish – red aurora is produced due to ionized nitrogen molecules.

