

# Explore the most heavily hit places in the world, 28 lightning bolts every minute, 10 hours a night

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1. Stunned the impressive moment when lightning struck the crater that was erupting
2. We can still survive after being struck by lightning, why?

Maracaibo is the largest saltwater lake in South America, with a length of 99 km, width of 67 km, the most depth up to 60m, an area of 13,210 km<sup>2</sup>. According to calculations by scientists, every km<sup>2</sup> of Lake Maracaibo has to suffer 603 times of lightning strikes every year.



## Why is this place so struck by lightning?

According to meteorologists, there are many such storms coming from the terrain. Lake Maracaibo is entirely in a branch of the Andes, encompassing 3 surrounding mountains, the other is the Caribbean Sea. During the day, the steam rises from the lake surface, the night wind from the sea pushes moist air up high to meet cold air

masses on the mountain forming clusters of thunderstorms. Inside the clouds, the moisture of moist air collides with the ice crystals of cold air to produce electrical charge and form continuous lightning storms.



In the first 2 months of the year, storms appear sparsely and gradually increase in density afterwards. Clay here reaches the highest density 28 times / minute when in the October rainy season.

According to researchers' calculations, the amount of lightning here produces a source of energy that can light all bulbs in Latin America in a year.



The color of lightning at Lake Maracaibo will change with the molecules in the air. The clay will be white when the air is dry and will gradually turn to red or purple if there is a lot of moisture in the air.

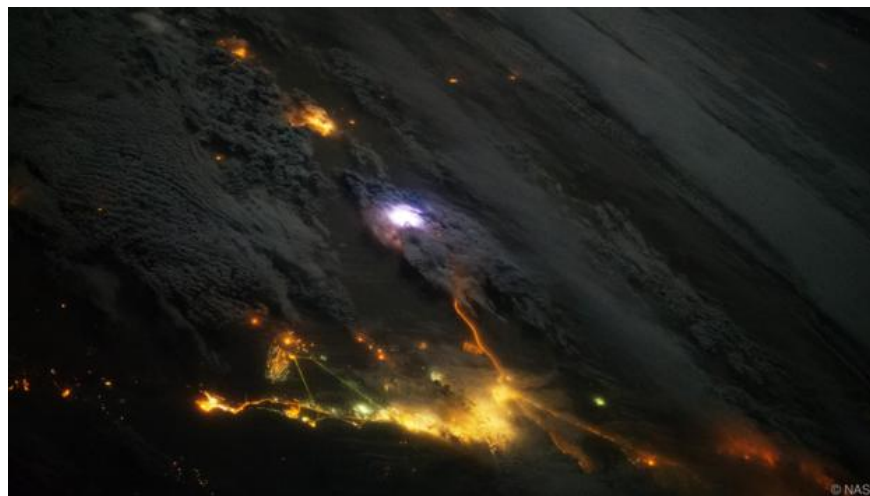
In 2015, Guinness Book of Records officially recognized Maracaibo Lake as the region with the highest density of lightning in the world with a density of 250 rays / km<sup>2</sup>. Much higher than the old record of the Brahmaputra valley in eastern India, with a density of up to 158 rays / km<sup>2</sup> / year.



## **How does science measure indicators of lightning?**

The Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM), a cooperative agency between NASA and the Japanese Space Exploration Agency, will collect data from Maracaibo.

For the past 17 years, they used light-sensitive sensors on satellites, exactly on the ISS space station to record all the lightning in the sky. Since then, the TRMM family has created a map of hot spots with a large density of lightning around the world.



Thunder observation from ISS.

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