

A Different Perspective – NASA Images of the Day

NASA Drogue Parachute Test

On February 28, 2009, NASA successfully conducted the second drop test of the drogue parachute. The first test was conducted in July 2008. The parachute was designed for the purpose of slowing down the Ares I rocket. The Ares I will be used by NASA to launch the Orion spacecraft, a spacecraft designed to assist NASA with human space lift missions.

The drogue parachute will help slow down the Ares I first-stage motor, which will be eliminated from the rocket upon its climb to space.



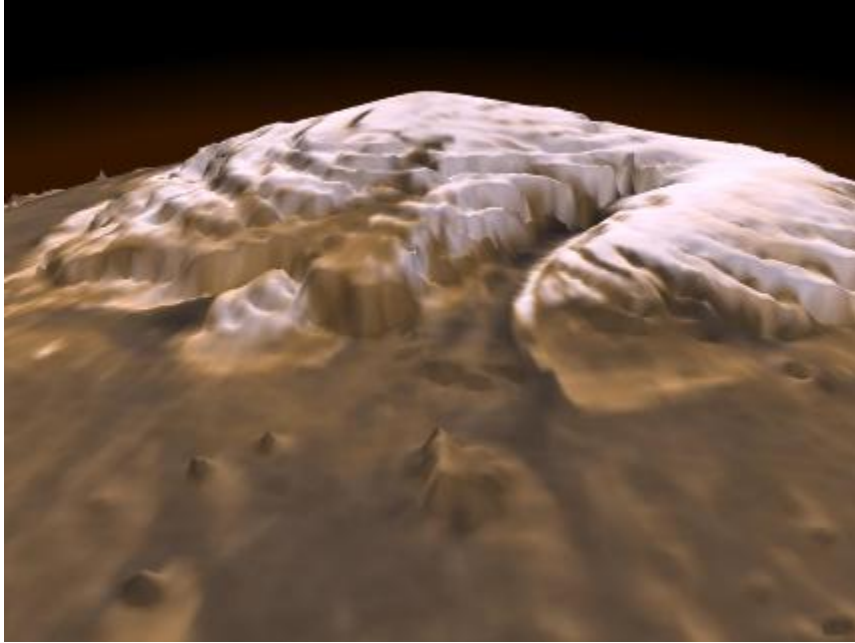
And It's Lift Off!

On March 15, 2009, space shuttle Discovery launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Center for its journey to the International Space Station. The launch of the space shuttle arrives after being postponed several times over the course of a month, the most recent reason being due to a hydrogen gas leak. Discovery's original launch date was set to be in mid-February 2009.



Mars in 3D

This photo was taken by the Mars Orbiter Laser Altimeter also known as the MOLA. The images of Mars are taken in 3-D by the MOLA, allowing NASA scientists to determine height and objects on the planet's surface. The MOLA works by transmitting pulsating infrared lasers towards Mars recording the distance between laser flight times from the MOLA to the surface of Mars.



Comet Lulin

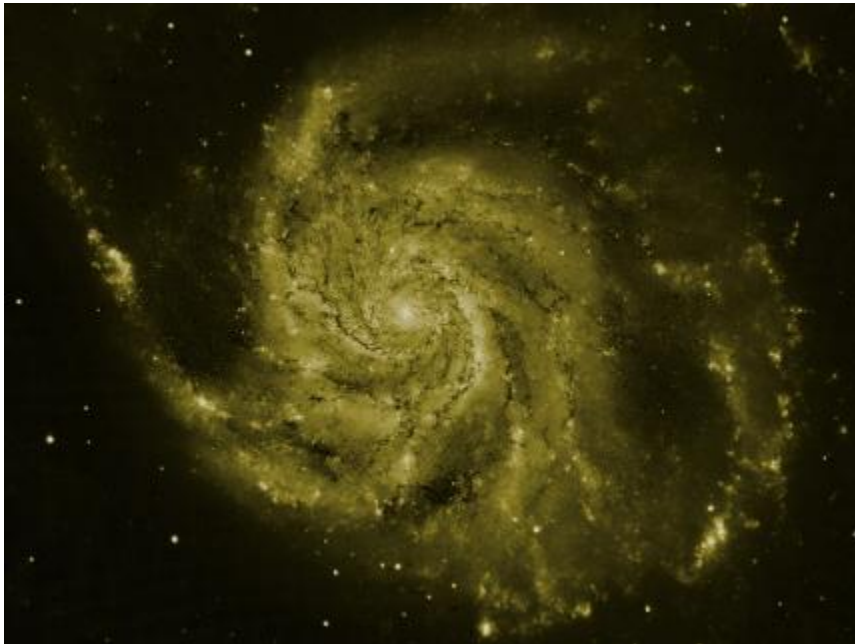
On February 23, 2009, Comet Lulin was captured from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. This photograph captures the most recent visible comet through a few trees after it had been making its way into the atmosphere for over a month. On the night this shot was taken, comet Lulin was making its closest approach to earth, making it visible to the general public.



Another Vision of the Universe

As viewed from the Hubble Space Telescope, this image provides astronomers with a clear image of the spiral galaxy Messier 101, which was discovered by Pierre Mechain on March 27, 1781.

This image celebrates how far telescope technology has come since it was first invented in 1609 by Galileo Galilei. Galileo improved the telescope and played a major role in the Scientific Revolution. The images captured with the Hubble Space Telescope are equivalent to images captured with a camera, night vision goggles and X-ray vision all at once.



The Beehive of Satellites

This image depicts an artist's exaggerated view of what our earth's orbit looks like surrounded by the countless debris distributed by the numerous satellites launched every year. The first T.V. satellite was launched into space in 1964 when the Olympic Games were taking place in Tokyo Japan. Since then, countless satellites have steadily been launched from around the globe causing an influx of debris and therefore pollution of the atmosphere surrounding earth.



World's Largest Vacuum Chamber

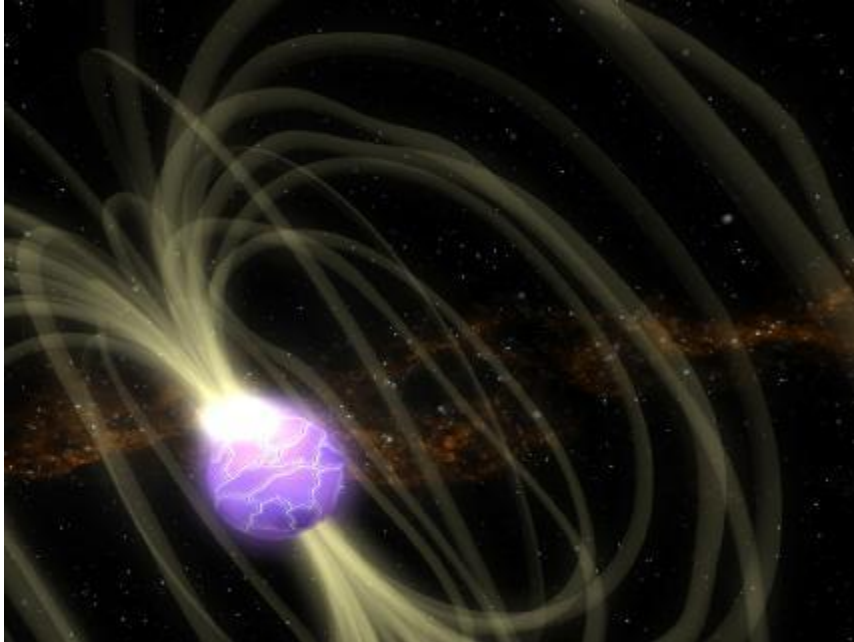
The world's largest vacuum chamber, located at the NASA Glenn Research Center, provides training and testing ground for the purpose of testing the limits of the Orion spacecraft. Orion is a spacecraft designed to take explorers on a journey to our solar system, including the moon and Mars. Before lift-off, Orion must endure intense assessments to confirm it is ready to endure the environmental challenges of space.



A Shining Star

Outbursts of gamma-rays, a form of electromagnetic radiation, were visible on the SGR J1550-5418, a soft gamma repeater or neutron star. The firework-type explosions were seen 30,000 light years away using NASA's Swift Satellite.

Gamma-rays produce high amounts of electromagnetic radiation with the tiniest wavelength, creating a bright glow around the object they are coming from. Gamma rays tend to produce more energy than the sun can produce in 20 years. The gamma-rays produced in this instance may have been caused by a sudden loss of energy from within the gamma repeater and is only the sixth known to astronomers.



Self Portrait of an Explorer

Michael Fincke, an Expedition 18 commander takes a self portrait as he glides about outside the International Space Centre. This photo was taken on December 23, 2008 with Fincke's digital camera. Fincke previously served as on Expedition 9 in 2004 as ISS flight engineer and NASA Space Station science officer.



Black Hole

This image of Centaurus A, one of the closest galaxies to earth located 14 million light years away in the constellation Centaurus, shows the power of an out flowing Black Hole. This Black Hole is causing a luminous and active central region within the Centaurus A galaxy, producing X-ray and radio emission. This photo reveals the jets and lobes emanating from the black hole and shows background stars and the galaxy's dust lane.

This image was made possible using the 870-micron sub millimetre data from LABOCA on APEX, X-ray data from the Chandra X-ray Observatory and the Wide Field Imager (WFI) on the MPG/ESO 2.2 m telescope located at La Silla, Chile.

