

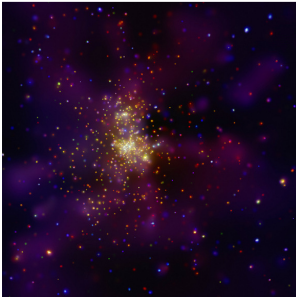


SPACE NEWS

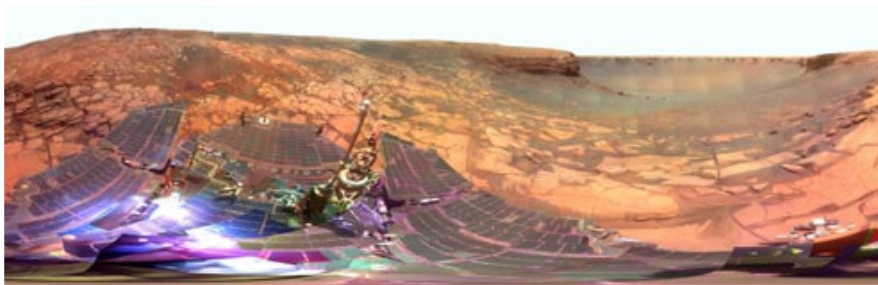
N° 13

28th January 2008

Last week in space

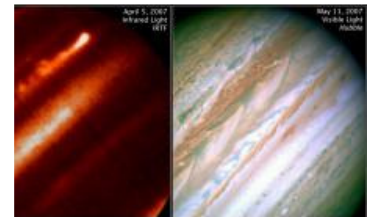


This Chandra X-ray Observatory image shows Westerlund 2, a young star cluster with an estimated age of about one or two million years. Until recently little was known about this cluster because it is heavily obscured by dust and gas. However, using infrared and X-ray observations to overcome this obscuration, Westerlund 2 has become regarded as one of the most interesting star clusters in the Milky Way galaxy. It contains some of the hottest, brightest and most massive stars known. For more information, take a look here: <http://chandra.harvard.edu/photo/2008/wd2/>



During four months prior to the fourth anniversary of its landing on Mars, NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity examined rocks inside an alcove called "Duck Bay" in the western portion of Victoria Crater. The main body of the crater appears in the upper right of this panorama, with the far side of the crater lying about 800 meters away. Bracketing that part of the view are two promontories on the crater's rim at either side of Duck Bay. They are "Cape Verde," about 6 meters tall, on the left, and "Cabo Frio," about 15 meters tall, on the right. The rest of the image, other than sky and portions of the rover, is ground within Duck Bay. For more information, take a look here: www.physorg.com/news120490049.html

Scientists around the globe have observed an astonishing and rare change in Jupiter's atmosphere -- a huge disturbance churning in the middle northern latitudes of the planet as two giant storms erupted. Jupiter's winds are the strongest at middle northern latitudes, reaching about 600 kilometers per hour. Similar phenomena occurred in 1975 and 1990, but this event has never been observed before with high-resolution modern telescopes. For more information, take a look here: www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.cfm?release=2008-013



Not to be missed next week

Monday 28th January. Both today and tomorrow, the moon and Spica (brightest star in the Virgin) can be seen close together in the late evening sky.

Friday 1st February: Just before sunrise, take a look south-east to catch Venus and Jupiter side by side!