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### China's Fastest Rocket Carries Deep Space Dream

A Long March-5 rocket blasted off Thursday at the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in south China's Hainan Province, carrying the country's Mars probe, Tianwen-1. It is the first time that the Long March-5 carrier rocket, currently China's largest launch vehicle, is put into practical use after a series of trial launches.

It is also the first time the Long March-5 exceeded the second cosmic velocity, the fastest China's carrier rockets have gone to date, said Li Dong, the rocket's chief designer at the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALVT). [SpaceDaily.com](http://SpaceDaily.com)



### NASA's Mars Rover Perseverance Launches This Week

NASA's next Mars rover will take flight this week, if all goes according to plan. The car-sized Perseverance rover, the centerpiece of NASA's \$2.7 billion Mars 2020 mission, is scheduled to launch Thursday (July 30) during a two-hour window that opens at 7:50 a.m. EDT (11:50 GMT).

The spacecraft will lift off atop a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

## NASA Juno Takes First Images Ganymede's North Pole

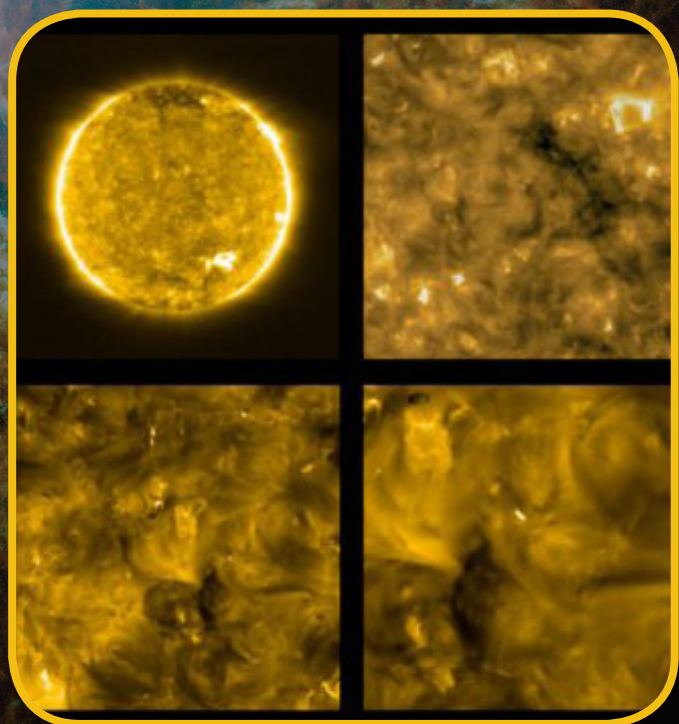


On its way inbound for a Dec. 26, 2019, flyby of Jupiter, NASA's Juno spacecraft flew in the proximity of the north pole of the ninth-largest object in the solar system, the moon Ganymede. The infrared imagery collected by the spacecraft's Jovian Infrared Auroral Mapper (JIRAM) instrument provides the first infrared mapping of the massive moon's northern frontier. Ganymede is also the only moon in the solar system with its own magnetic field. On Earth, the magnetic field provides a pathway for plasma (charged particles from the Sun) to enter our atmosphere and create aurora.

*Phys.org*

## Close-Ups of the Sun

Only a few months after its launch, ESA's SolarOrbiter has captured images of the Sun from a previously unattainable distance. Among other things, these images reveal structures in the Sun's atmosphere that could possibly be interpreted as so-called nanoflares, very small bursts of radiation. The images from the six remote sensing instruments published today were taken in the days before and after 15 June, when the spacecraft reached the point closest to the Sun on its current orbit. Only 77 million kilometres separated the probe from our star.



*Technology.org*

## James Webb Space Telescope Launch Date Delayed

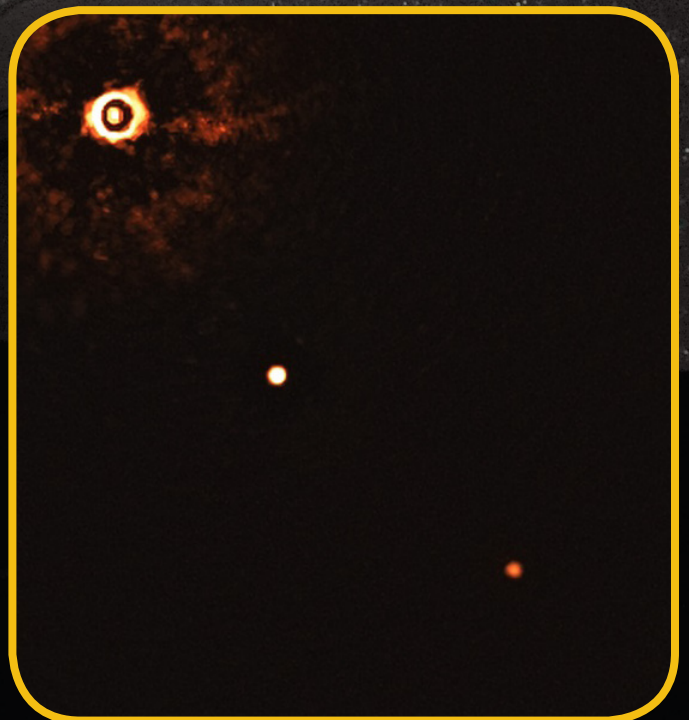


NASA is delaying the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope for another 7 months, from March 2021 to October 31, 2021, due to, among other factors, work stoppages during the coronavirus pandemic. NASA now is targeting October 31, 2021, for the launch of the agency's James Webb Space Telescope from French Guiana, due to impacts from the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as technical challenges. This decision is based on a recently completed schedule risk assessment of the remaining integration and test activities prior to launch. Previously, Webb was targeted to launch in March 2021.

*EarthSky.org*

## Two Exoplanets Seen Dancing Around Sun-Like Star for the First Time

In another exoplanetary first, the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope (VLT) in Chile's Atacama Desert has captured an image of two worlds orbiting a younger version of the Sun. The system, called TYC 8998-760-1, is located roughly 300 light-years away in the southern constellation Musca. And although it hides two gas giants orbiting a Sun-like star, we don't have anything quite like these worlds in our own solar system.



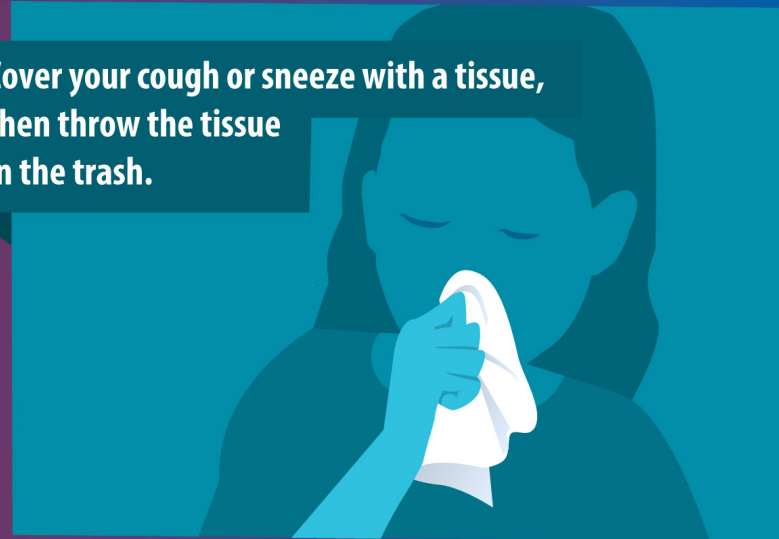
*Astronomy.com*

## How to Protect Ourselves?

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.





## Astronomy Picture of the Day

### Comet and Lightning Beyond Bighorn Mountains

Image Credit & Copyright: Kevin Palmer

Normally, Steamboat Point looks cool -- but not this cool. Every day, the iconic peak of the Bighorn Mountains is an interesting sight, in particular from US Highway 14 in Wyoming. On some rare days, the rocky vertical ridges look even more incredible when seen in front of a distant lightning storm. Earlier this month, though, something even more unusual happened -- the naked-eye Comet NEOWISE rose above it in the middle of the night. Just as a distant lightning storm was occurring in the background. Recognizing a rare opportunity, a determined astrophotographer spent a sleepless night capturing over 1400 images of this unusual triple conjunction. The featured image is among the best of them, with the foreground lit by the Moon off to the right. Comet C/2020 F3 (NEOWISE) is now headed back to the outer Solar System, destined to return only in about 6700 years.

[apod.nasa.gov](http://apod.nasa.gov)



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