

Hinode looks into a hole on the Sun

February 9 2011



Image credit: Hinode/XRT

On Feb. 1, 2011, the Hinode satellite captured this breathtaking image of a coronal hole, seen in the top center of the image. A polar coronal hole can also be seen at the bottom of the image.

A coronal hole is an opening in the sun's [magnetic field](#) through which gas can easily escape into space.

The holes are relatively cool in temperature as compared to the active

regions nearby -- such as the bright region on the lower left portion of the solar disk -- the cooler temperature is one of the reasons for the darker appearance.

Hinode, a Japanese mission in partnership with [NASA](#), NAOJ, STFC, ESA, and NSC, currently in Earth orbit, is studying the sun to improve our understanding of the mechanisms that power the solar atmosphere and drive solar eruptions.

Provided by JPL/NASA

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