

A ghost in Cepheus

November 1 2012



Credit: NASA/Stephen Leshin

Described as a "dusty curtain" or "ghostly apparition," mysterious reflection nebula VdB 152 really is very faint. Far from your neighborhood on this Halloween Night, the cosmic phantom is nearly 1,400 light-years away.

Also catalogued as Ced 201, it lies along the northern Milky Way in the

royal constellation Cepheus. Near the edge of a large [molecular cloud](#), pockets of [interstellar dust](#) in the region block light from background stars or [scatter light](#) from the embedded bright star giving parts of the nebula a characteristic blue color.

Ultraviolet light from the star is also thought to cause a dim reddish luminescence in the nebular dust. Though stars do form in molecular clouds, this star seems to have only accidentally wandered into the area, as its measured velocity through space is very different from the cloud's velocity.

This deep telescopic image of the region spans about 7 light-years.

Provided by NASA

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