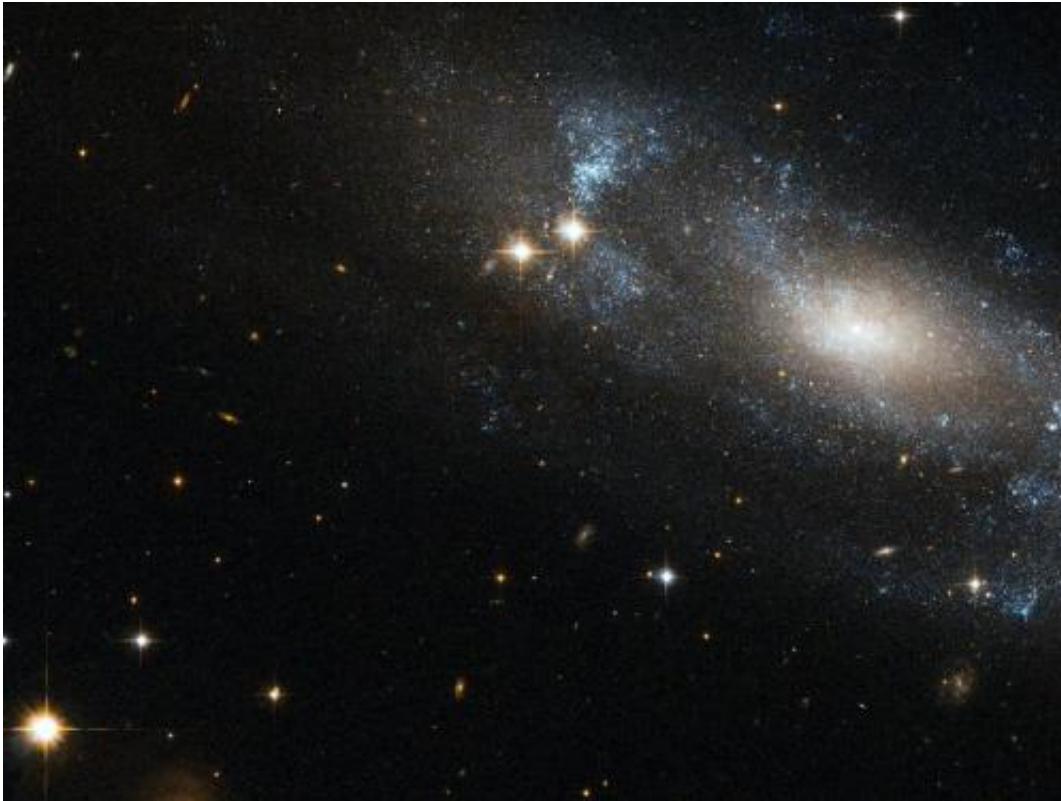


Hubble eyes a loose spiral galaxy

November 26 2012



Credit: NASA/Hubble

(Phys.org)—The Hubble Space Telescope has spotted the spiral galaxy ESO 499-G37, seen here against a backdrop of distant galaxies, scattered with nearby stars.

The galaxy is viewed from an angle, allowing Hubble to reveal its spiral nature clearly. The faint, loose [spiral arms](#) can be distinguished as bluish

features swirling around the galaxy's nucleus. This blue tinge emanates from the hot, young stars located in the spiral arms. The arms of a spiral galaxy have large amounts of gas and dust, and are often areas where new stars are constantly forming.

The galaxy's most characteristic feature is a bright elongated nucleus. The bulging central core usually contains the highest density of stars in the galaxy, where typically a large group of comparatively cool old stars are packed in this compact, spheroidal region.

One feature common to many spiral galaxies is the presence of a bar running across the center of the galaxy. These bars are thought to act as a mechanism that channels gas from the spiral arms to the center, enhancing the star formation.

Provided by NASA

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