

# Image: NASA's Hubble looks at a members-only galaxy club

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Credit: European Space Agency

(Phys.org) —This new Hubble image shows a handful of galaxies in the constellation of Eridanus (The River). NGC 1190, shown here on the right of the frame, stands apart from the rest; it belongs to an exclusive club known as Hickson Compact Group 22 (HCG 22).

There are four other members of this group, all of which lie out of frame: NGC 1189, NGC 1191, NGC 1192, and NGC 1199. The other galaxies shown here are [nearby galaxies](#) 2MASS J03032308-1539079 (center), and dCAZ94 HCG 22-21 (left), both of which are not part of

## HCG 22.

Hickson Compact Groups are incredibly tightly bound groups of galaxies. Their discoverer Paul Hickson observed only 100 of these objects, which he described in his HCG catalog in the 1980s. To earn the Hickson Compact Group label, there must be at least four members—each one fairly bright and compact. These short-lived groups are thought to end their lives as giant elliptical [galaxies](#), but despite knowing much about their form and destiny, the role of compact galaxy groups in galactic formation and evolution is still unclear.

These groups are interesting partly for their self-destructive tendencies. The group members interact, circling and pulling at one another until they eventually merge together, signaling the death of the group, and the birth of a large galaxy.

Provided by NASA

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