

Image: Antares and sunspots at sunrise

January 17 2014



Credit: Dave Parrish Photography

An Orbital Sciences Corporation Antares rocket is seen on the launch pad at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va., on Jan. 8, 2014. Dark blemishes can be clearly seen on the face of the sun.

These are an intense, magnetically complex sunspot group that erupted with solar flares and [coronal mass ejections](#). The eruptions resulted in

enough [solar energetic particles](#) (SEP) funneling into near-Earth space that the Jan. 8 Antares launch was postponed, as the SEPs could have interfered with its computer systems.

The rocket launched successfully on Jan. 9.

Provided by NASA

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