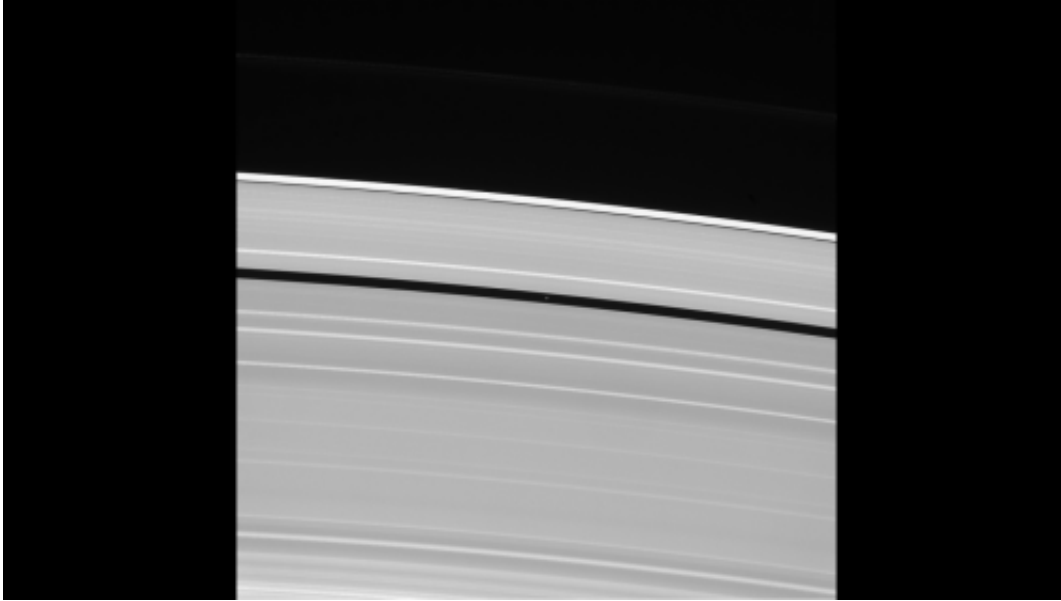


NASA image: God of the Gap

April 21 2014



Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Space Science Institute

(Phys.org) —Saturn's moon Pan, named for the Greek god of shepherds, rules over quite a different domain: the Encke gap in Saturn's rings.

Pan (17 miles, or 28 kilometers across) keeps the Encke gap open through its [gravitational influence](#) on the ring particles nearby.

This view looks toward the sunlit side of the rings from about 48 degrees above the ringplane. The image was taken in visible light with the Cassini spacecraft narrow-angle camera on Dec. 25, 2013.

The view was obtained at a distance of approximately 1.4 million miles (2.3 million kilometers) from Pan and at a Sun-Pan-spacecraft, or phase, angle of 87 degrees. Image scale is 9 miles (14 kilometers) per pixel.

The Cassini-Huygens mission is a cooperative project of NASA, the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a division of the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, manages the mission for NASA's Science Mission Directorate, Washington, D.C. The Cassini orbiter and its two onboard cameras were designed, developed and assembled at JPL. The imaging operations center is based at the Space Science Institute in Boulder, Colo.

Provided by NASA

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