

Image: Grand swirls from Hubble

June 12 2014



Credit: ESA/Hubble & NASA, Acknowledgement: Flickr user Det58

(Phys.org) —This new Hubble image shows NGC 1566, a beautiful galaxy located approximately 40 million light-years away in the constellation of Dorado (The Dolphinfish). NGC 1566 is an intermediate

spiral galaxy, meaning that while it does not have a well-defined bar-shaped region of stars at its center—like barred spirals—it is not quite an unbarred spiral either.

The small but extremely bright nucleus of NGC 1566 is clearly visible in this image, a telltale sign of its membership of the Seyfert class of [galaxies](#). The centers of such galaxies are very active and luminous, emitting strong bursts of radiation and potentially harboring [supermassive black holes](#) that are many millions of times the mass of the sun.

NGC 1566 is not just any Seyfert galaxy; it is the second brightest Seyfert galaxy known. It is also the brightest and most dominant member of the Dorado Group, a loose concentration of galaxies that together comprise one of the richest galaxy groups of the southern hemisphere. This image highlights the beauty and awe-inspiring nature of this unique galaxy group, with NGC 1566 glittering and glowing, its bright nucleus framed by swirling and symmetrical lavender arms.

This image was taken by Hubble's Wide Field Camera 3 (WFC3) in the near-infrared part of the spectrum. A version of the image was entered into the Hubble's Hidden Treasures image processing competition by Flickr user Det58.

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