

Partial solar eclipse sweeps across North America

October 24 2014



A woman (C) reacts while watching a partial solar eclipse with a child at the Sydney Observatory on May 10, 2013

A partial solar eclipse swept across much of North America on Thursday, triggering floods of blurry pictures of a crescent-shaped sun on Twitter and other social media.

The best views were on the west coast including California, where the

moon blanked out nearly half of the solar disc in cloudless mid-afternoon skies.

The [partial eclipse](#), which was even bigger farther north in San Francisco and Seattle, turned the "[sun](#) into hugelargeous croissant," tweeted @ProBirdRights, quipping: "I nominate me to go to space now bye."

But New York and the rest of the US northeast mostly missed it because the sun was setting by the time the moon moved into position, with only a tiny bite visible at sunset.

An eclipse is created by the moon passing in front of the sun, in this case obscuring about half its bright light.

Unlike a full solar eclipse it does not turn the sky dark because there is still plenty of sunlight.

The effect can only be seen through special solar filters made of a black polymer. Looking directly at the sun risks severe injury or even blindness.

A more dramatic [solar eclipse](#) is in store for the United States on August 21, 2017.

At that time, the moon will entirely cover the sun across a 60-mile wide (90-kilometer) swath of the United States, while the rest of the country should see about 80 percent of the sun covered.

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Citation: Partial solar eclipse sweeps across North America (2014, October 24) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-10-partial-solar-eclipse-north-america.html>

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