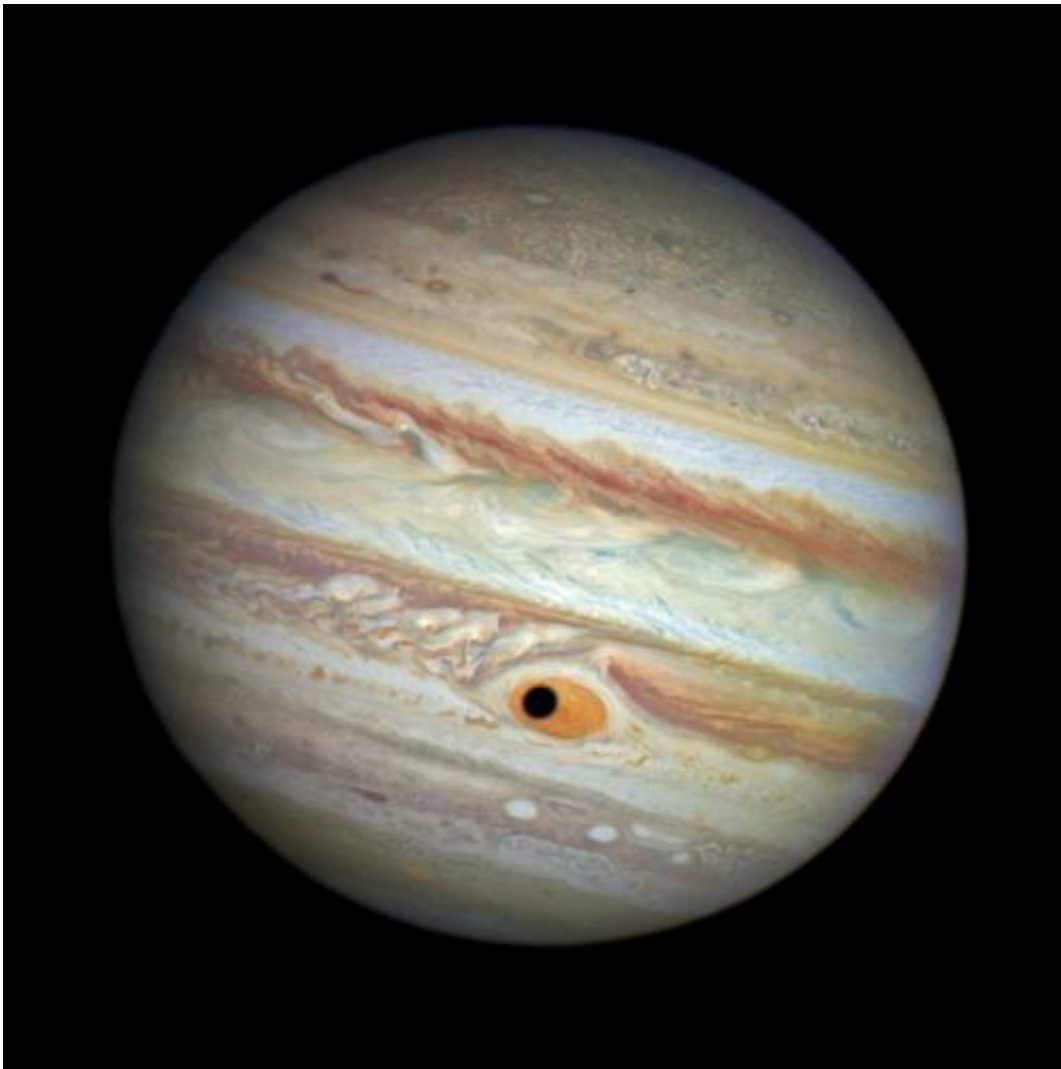


Here's looking at you: Spooky shadow play gives Jupiter a giant eye

October 28 2014



Credit: NASA, ESA, and A. Simon (Goddard Space Flight Center)

The Hubble Space Telescope treats astronomers to gorgeous close-up views of the eerie outer planets. But it's a bit of a trick when it seems like the planet's looking back at you! In this view, the shadow of the Jovian moon Ganymede swept across the center of the Great Red Spot—a giant storm on the planet. This gave Jupiter the uncanny appearance of having a pupil in the center of a 10,000-mile-diameter "eye." Now if it blinks, we may really have to worry!

Hubble treats astronomers to gorgeous close-up views of the eerie outer planets. But it's a bit of a trick when it seems like the planet's looking back at you! This happened on April 21, 2014, when Hubble was being used to monitor changes in Jupiter's immense Great Red Spot (GRS) storm. During the exposures, the shadow of the Jovian moon Ganymede swept across the center of the GRS.

This gave the giant planet the uncanny appearance of having a pupil in the center of a 10,000-mile-diameter "eye." Momentarily, Jupiter took on the appearance of a Cyclops planet! The shadows from Jupiter's four major satellites routinely cross the face of Jupiter.

This natural-color picture was taken with Hubble's Wide Field Camera 3.

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