

# NASA spacecraft to fly over Jupiter's Great Red Spot

July 10 2017

---



This is Jupiter's Great Red Spot in 2000 as seen by NASA's Cassini orbiter.  
Credit: NASA/JPL/Space Science Institute

An unmanned NASA spacecraft is about to fly over a massive storm raging on Jupiter, in a long-awaited a journey that could shed new light on the forces driving the planet's Great Red Spot.

The flyby of the Juno spacecraft, surveilling the 10,000-mile-wide (16,000-kilometer-wide) storm, is scheduled for 9:55 pm Monday (0155 GMT Tuesday).

"Jupiter's mysterious Great Red Spot is probably the best-known feature of Jupiter," said Scott Bolton, principal investigator of Juno from the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio.

"This monumental storm has raged on the solar system's biggest planet for centuries."

The storm looks like a churning red knot on the planet's surface. It has been monitored since 1830, and may have existed for more than 350 years, the US space agency said.

Juno, which earlier this month marked its first year in orbit of the gas giant, will offer "humanity's first up-close and personal view of the gigantic feature," NASA said in a statement.

Equipped with instruments that can penetrate clouds to measure how deep the roots of this storm go, scientists hope to learn more about the workings of the raging tempest.

All eight of Juno's instruments, including its camera, will be on when the spacecraft passes about 5,600 miles (9,000 kilometers) above the Giant Red Spot clouds, NASA said.

Juno launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida in August, 2011, on a mission to learn more about Jupiter's origins, structure, atmosphere and magnetosphere.

© 2017 AFP

Citation: NASA spacecraft to fly over Jupiter's Great Red Spot (2017, July 10) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-07-nasa-spacecraft-jupiter-great-red.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.