

# NASA develops solar eclipse Braille book

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Credit: NASA

On Monday, August 21, 2017, all of North America will be in the path of a solar eclipse, which occurs when the sunlight reaching Earth is blocked by the moon.

These phenomena occur somewhere on Earth about once every 18 months, but for the first time since June 1918, a total solar eclipse will be visible from coast to coast in the United States. From Oregon to South Carolina, those with clear skies in the "path of totality" can experience one of nature's most awe-inspiring events - the moon passing directly between Earth and the sun to completely cover our star.

For this historical occasion, NASA has created a tactile guide, "Getting a Feel for Eclipses," to allow everyone to learn more about the upcoming

eclipse – including people who won't be able visibly experience it. Indeed, the book is designed to depict basic concepts about the interaction and alignment of the sun with the moon and Earth during a [solar eclipse](#).

This book will help sighted as well as visually-impaired people better understand the science of eclipses by adding the sense of touch to their learning process.

"NASA is privileged to help bring this historic eclipse to a segment of our population who have previously not had an opportunity to enjoy these celestial phenomena," said Greg Schmidt, deputy director of NASA's Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute. "We feel strongly that everyone should have a part to play in exploring our universe."

Over 5,000 copies of the eclipse book have been sent to schools and libraries for the blind, science centers and museums, state libraries, NASA centers and other institutions. The books are also being distributed at this summer's National Federation of the Blind Conference. The project team is working with park rangers to take advantage of opportunities to engage the public using these books for the blind.

The eclipse tactile guide is the latest in a series of space-related braille books, following "Getting a Feel for Lunar Craters" and "Exploring Mars," as part of a larger effort to get students excited about [science](#) and math.

The development of the books is managed by the Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute, or SSERVI, at NASA's Ames Research Center in California's Silicon Valley, with funding from the agency's Science Mission Directorate.

Provided by NASA

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