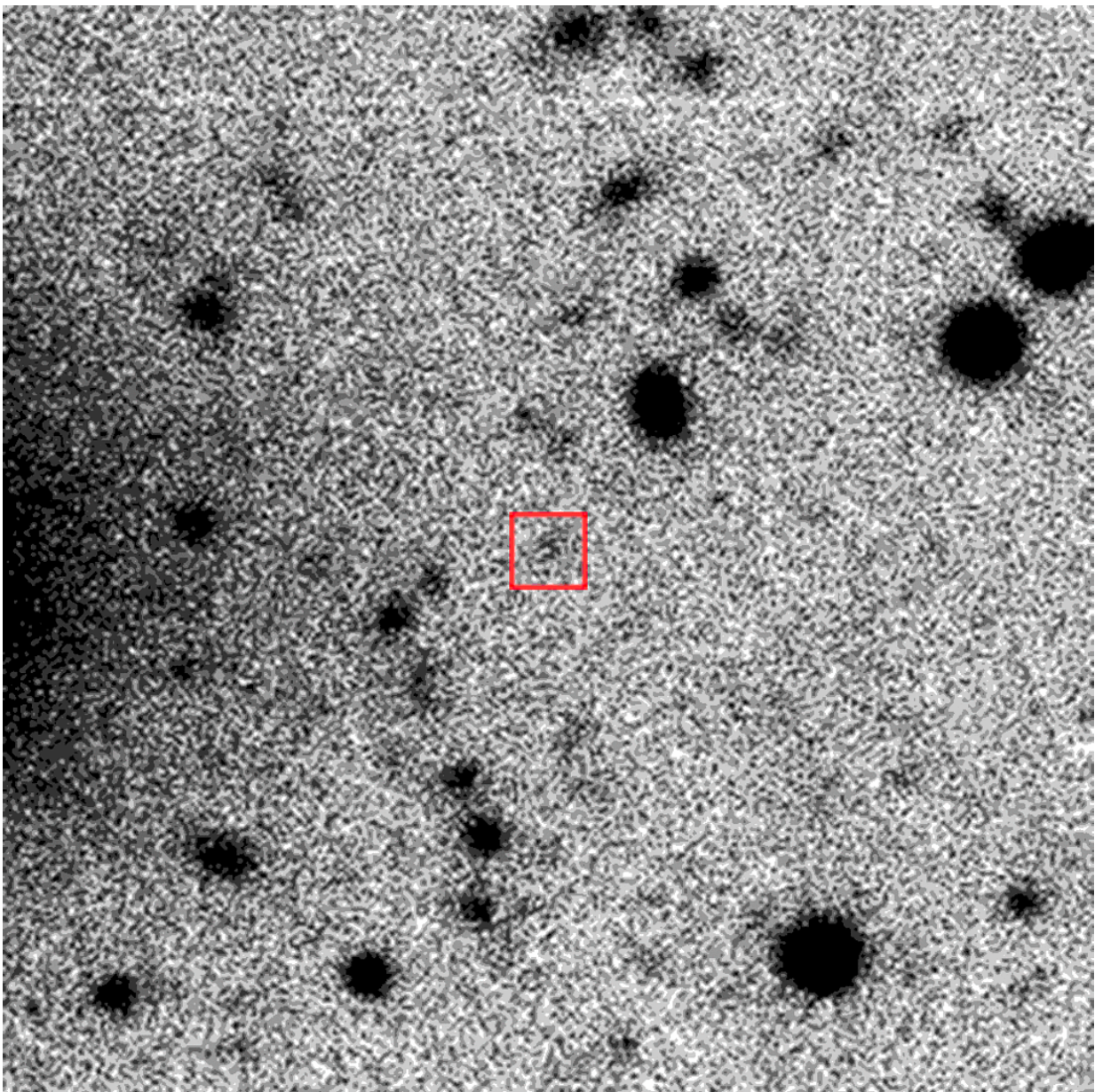


Image: Large Binocular Telescope snags first glimpse of NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft since launch

September 11 2017



Credit: NASA

This set of magnified, cropped images shows NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft (highlighted in red) as it approaches Earth for its Sept. 22 Earth Gravity Assist. To improve visibility, the images have been inverted so that black and white are reversed. The images were taken Sept. 2, by the Large Binocular Telescope Observatory located on Mount Graham in Arizona. This is the first Earth-based view of the spacecraft since its launch on Sept. 8, 2016.

OSIRIS-REx, which was approximately 7 million miles (12 million kilometers) away when the images were taken, appears at approximately 25th magnitude.

The Large Binocular Telescope is a pair of 8.4-meter mirrors mounted side by side on the same mount, that can work together to provide resolution equivalent to a 22.7-meter telescope. The telescope typically conducts imaging of more distant objects but took this opportunity to look for OSIRIS-REx with a pair of wide-field cameras (one per mirror) as the spacecraft approaches Earth for its gravity assist. This encounter will change the spacecraft's trajectory and set it on course to rendezvous with asteroid Bennu, where it will collect a sample of surface material and return it to Earth for study in 2023. The Large Binocular Telescope Observatory is headquartered on the Tucson campus of the University of Arizona.

The OSIRIS-REx mission team is collecting other images of the spacecraft taken by observatories and other ground-based telescopes around the world during this period – approximately Sept. 10-23,

depending on location and local conditions. Individuals and groups may submit [images](#) of the spacecraft via the mission's website, where instructions to locate the [spacecraft](#) in the sky are also available.

More information: For more information on the OSIRIS-REx mission, visit: www.nasa.gov/osirisrex and www.asteroidmission.org

Provided by NASA

Citation: Image: Large Binocular Telescope snags first glimpse of NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft since launch (2017, September 11) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-image-large-binocular-telescope-snags.html>

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