

Hubble images unusual galaxy NGC 1156

August 29 2022



Credit: ESA/Hubble & NASA, R. B. Tully, R. Jansen, R. Windhorst

The galaxy featured in this image from NASA's Hubble Space Telescope has a shape unlike many of the galaxies familiar to Hubble. Its thousands of bright stars evoke a spiral galaxy, but it lacks the characteristic "winding" structure. The shining red blossoms stand out as well, twisted by clouds of dust—these are the locations of intense star formation. The galaxy also radiates a diffuse glow, much like an elliptical galaxy and its core of older, redder stars. This galactic marvel is known to astronomers as NGC 1156.

NGC 1156 is located around 25 million light-years from Earth, in the constellation Aries. It has a variety of different features that are of interest to astronomers. A dwarf irregular galaxy, it's also classified as isolated, meaning no other galaxies are nearby enough to influence its odd shape and continuing star formation. The extreme energy of freshly formed [young stars](#) gives color to the galaxy, against the red glow of ionized hydrogen gas, while its center is densely packed with older generations of stars.

Hubble has captured NGC 1156 before. This new image features data from a galactic gap-filling program simply titled "Every Known Nearby Galaxy." Astronomers noticed that Hubble had observed only three quarters of the galaxies within just over 30 million light-years of Earth in sufficient detail to study the makeup of the stars within them. They proposed that in between larger projects, Hubble could take snapshots of the remaining quarter, including NGC 1156. Gap-filling programs like this ensure the best use of Hubble's valuable observing time.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

Citation: Hubble images unusual galaxy NGC 1156 (2022, August 29) retrieved 25 April 2024

from <https://phys.org/news/2022-08-hubble-images-unusual-galaxy-ngc.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.