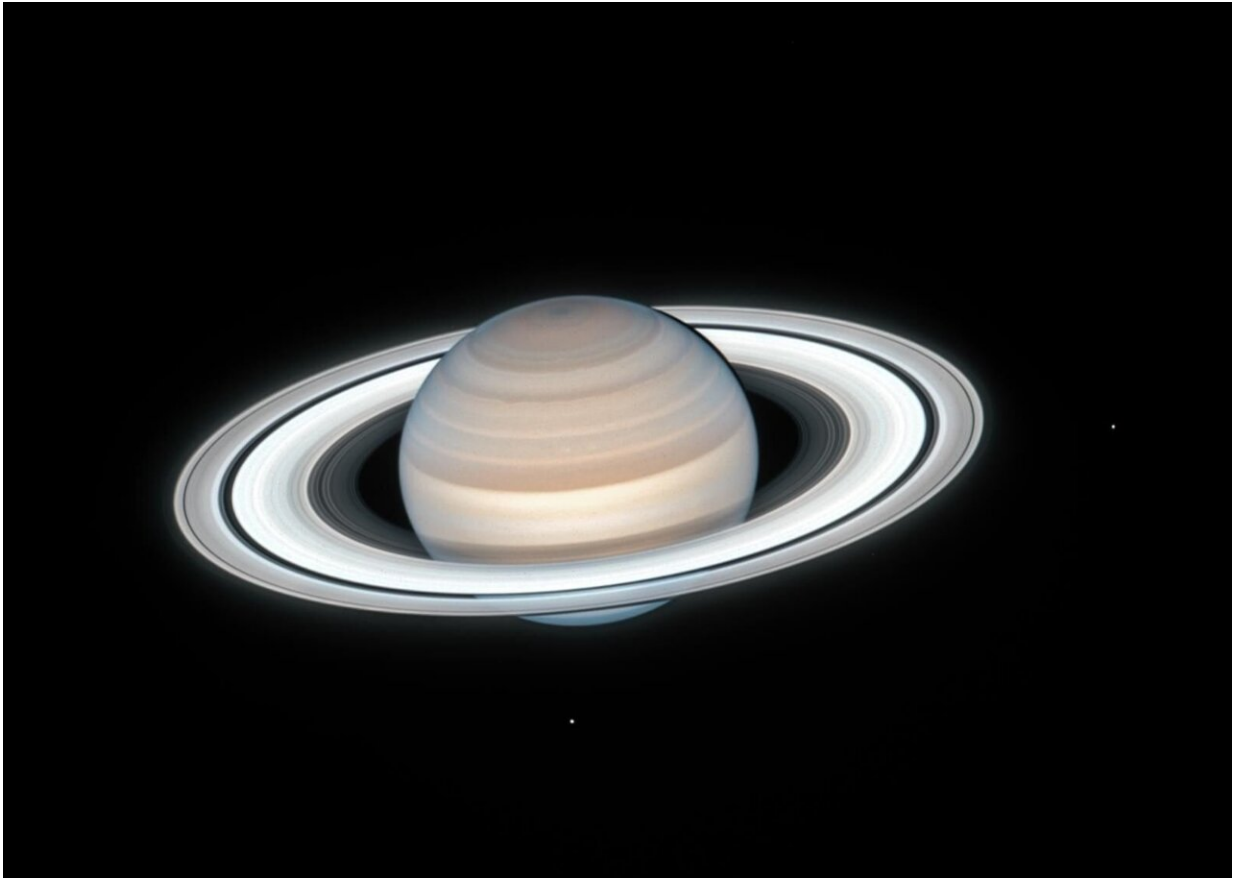


Image: A Saturnian summer

July 25 2024, by Monika Luabeya



Credit: NASA, ESA, A. Simon (Goddard Space Flight Center), M.H. Wong (University of California, Berkeley), and the OPAL Team

NASA's Hubble Space Telescope captured this image of Saturn and its colossal rings on July 4, 2020, during summer in the gas giant's northern hemisphere. Two of Saturn's icy moons are also clearly visible: Mimas at

right, and Enceladus at bottom.

The light reddish haze over the northern hemisphere seen in this color composite could be due to heating from increased sunlight, which could either change the atmospheric circulation or remove ices from aerosols in the atmosphere.

Another theory is that the increased sunlight in the [summer months](#) is changing the amounts of photochemical haze produced. Conversely, the just-now-visible south pole has a blue hue, reflecting changes in Saturn's winter hemisphere.

This image was taken as part of the Outer Planets Atmospheres Legacy (OPAL) project. OPAL is helping scientists understand the atmospheric dynamics and evolution of our solar system's gas [giant planets](#). In Saturn's case, astronomers continue tracking shifting [weather patterns](#) and storms.

Provided by NASA

Citation: Image: A Saturnian summer (2024, July 25) retrieved 27 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-07-image-saturnian-summer.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.