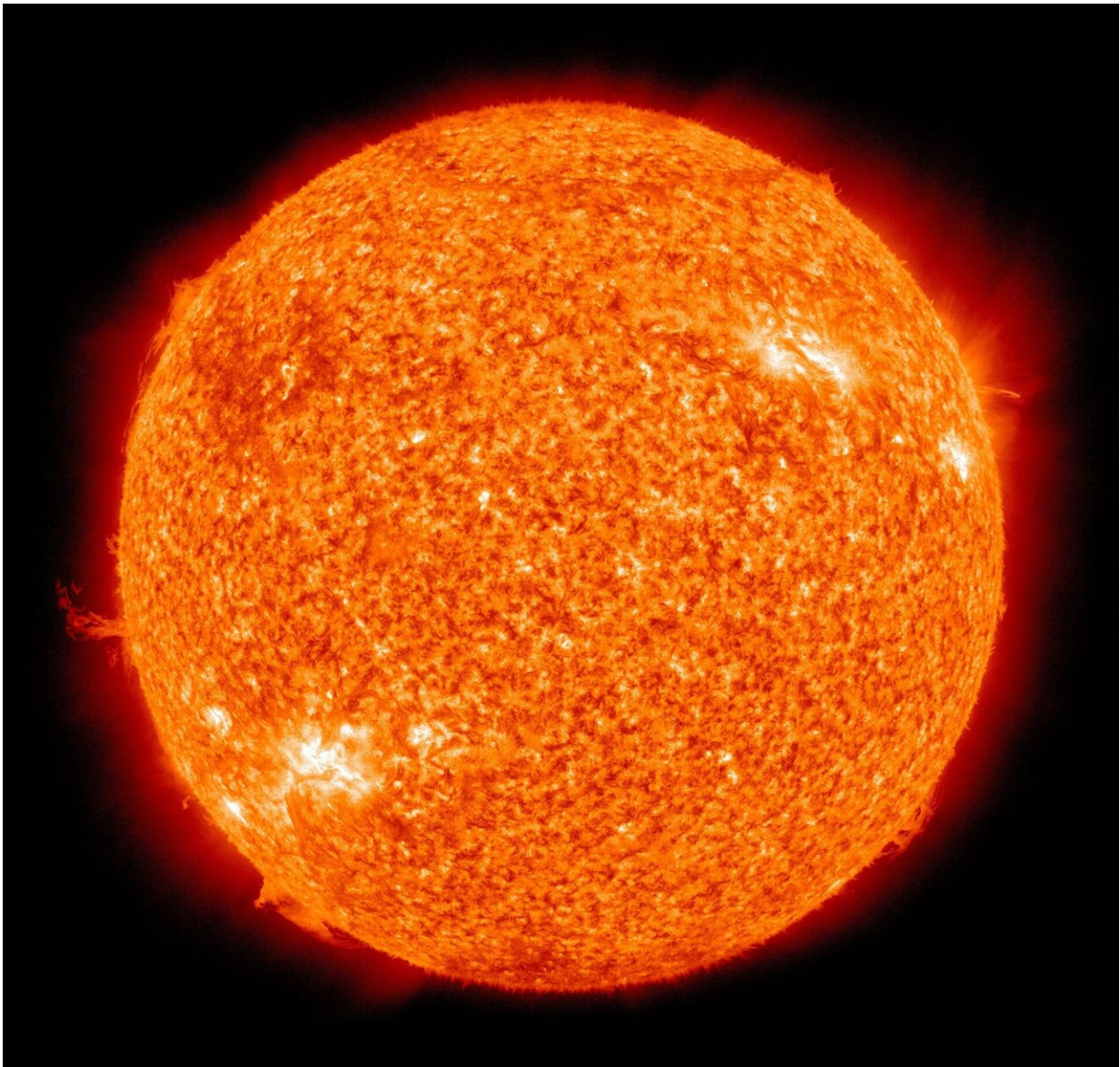


NASA's Parker Solar Probe completes 20th close approach to the sun

July 5 2024, by Michael Buckley



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NASA's Parker Solar Probe completed its 20th close approach to the sun on June 30, 2024, matching its own distance record by coming about 4.51 million miles (7.26 million kilometers) from the solar surface.

The [close approach](#) (known as perihelion) occurred at 3:47 UTC (11:47 p.m. EDT on June 29), with Parker Solar Probe moving 394,736 miles per hour (635,266 kilometers per hour) around the sun, again matching its own record.

On July 2, the [spacecraft](#) checked in with mission operators at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland (where the spacecraft was also designed and built), with a beacon tone indicating it was in [good health](#) and all systems were operating normally.

The milestone also marked the midpoint in the mission's 20th solar encounter, which began June 25 and continues through July 5.

Parker will fly around the sun at the same distance and speed one more time this year—on Sept. 30—before making the first of its three final planned closest approaches on Dec. 24. At that point, with Parker's orbit shaped by the mission's final Venus gravity assist-flyby on Nov. 6, the spacecraft will zoom just 3.8 million miles from the solar surface, moving about 430,000 miles per hour.

Provided by NASA

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