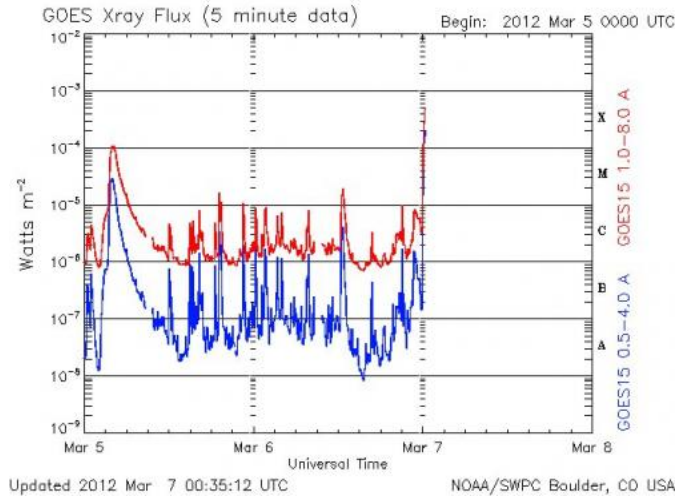
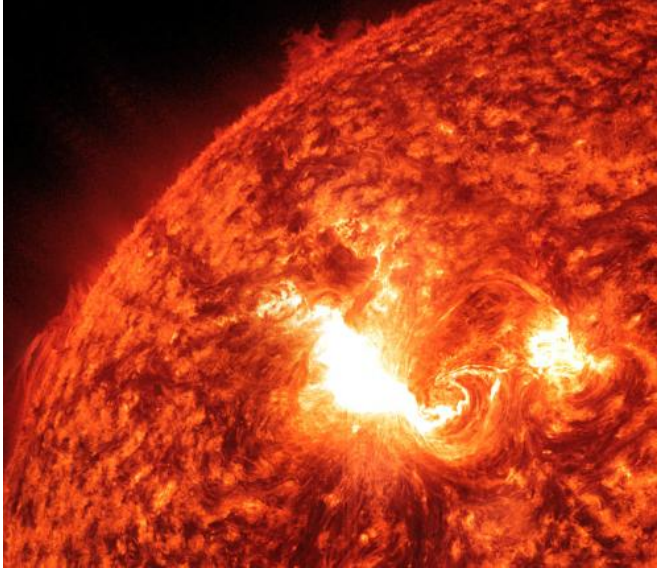


Sun releases a powerful X5 flare

7 March 2012, by Jason Major



AR1429 released an X-class flare on March 7 at 00:28 UT. Credit: NASA/SDO

Active Region 1429 unleashed an X5.4-class solar flare early this morning at 00:28 UT, as seen in this image by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (AIA 304). The eruption belched out a large coronal mass ejection (CME) into space but it's not yet known exactly how it will impact Earth - it may just be a glancing blow.

Solar flares are categorized by a scale according to their x-ray brightness. X is the strongest class, followed by M and then C-class. Within each class the numbers 1 through 9 subdivide the flares' intensity.

A run-in with an X5-class flare is a major geomagnetic event that can cause radio blackouts on [Earth](#) and disrupt satellite operations, as well as intensify auroral activity.

The GOES satellite data for the March 7 flare is below:

The CME is expected to impact Earth sometime on the 8th or 9th. Check back here or at Spaceweather.com for updates on the storm (and any subsequent aurora photos!)

Also, check out the video below, assembled by the SDO team. Just after the X5.4-class flare another smaller X1-class flare occurred, sending a visible wave cross the Sun.

Source: Universe Today

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