This image shows the galaxy Messier 94, which lies in the small northern constellation of the Hunting Dogs, about 16 million light-years away.

Within the bright ring or starburst ring around Messier 94, new stars are forming at a high rate and many young, bright stars are present within it.

The cause of this peculiarly shaped star-forming region is likely a pressure wave going outwards from the galactic center, compressing the gas and dust in the outer region.

The compression of material means the gas starts to collapse into denser clouds. Inside these dense clouds, gravity pulls the gas and dust together until temperature and pressure are high enough for stars to be born.