



Chandra X-Ray
Observatory Center

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Quintuplet Cluster: A dense young star cluster near the Galactic Center about 26,000 light years from Earth.

Credit: NASA/CXC/Northwestern U./C.Law & F.Yusef-Zadeh

This Chandra image presents the first detection of X-rays from stars in the Quintuplet star cluster. Named for its five brightest stars at infrared wavelengths, the Quintuplet is known to be home to hundreds of stars. Several of these are very massive stars that are rapidly losing gas from their surfaces in high-speed stellar winds. The bright point-like concentrations of 50 million degree Celsius gas in Chandra's image are thought to be caused by collisions between the high-speed winds in massive stars that have closely orbiting partners. Colliding stellar winds could also explain the diffuse X-radiation seen between the stars in the Quintuplet.

Scale: Image is 0.6 arcmin per side.

Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image

CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory
