



**Chandra X-ray
Observatory Center**

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Sagittarius A*: The supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way about 26,000 light years from Earth.

(Credit: NASA/CXC/Northwestern Univ/D.Haggard et al)

Caption: Astronomers have detected the largest X-ray flare ever from the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way, known as Sagittarius A* (Sgr A*), using NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory. This event was 400 times brighter than the usual X-ray output from Sgr A*. The main portion of this graphic shows the area around Sgr A* in a Chandra image where low, medium, and high-energy X-rays are red, green, and blue respectively. The inset box contains an X-ray movie of the region close to Sgr A* and shows the giant flare, along with much steadier X-ray emission from a nearby magnetar, to the lower left. A magnetar is a neutron star with a strong magnetic field.

Scale: Image is 8 arcmin across (about 61 light years); Inset is about 1 arcmin across (about 6 light years)

Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image

CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory