



M101

This Chandra image of M101 is one of the longest exposures ever obtained of a spiral galaxy in X-rays. The point-like sources include binary star systems containing black holes and neutron stars, and the remains of supernova explosions. Other sources of X-rays include hot gas in the arms of the galaxy and clusters of massive stars. These X-ray observations of M101 will be used to establish a valuable X-ray profile of a galaxy similar to the Milky Way. This will help astronomers better understand the evolutionary paths that produce black holes, and provide a baseline for interpreting the observations of distant galaxies.

FEBRUARY 2009

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