



spaceweather.com
News and information about the Sun-Earth environment

Subscribe to SpaceweatherNews

- [AURORA ALERTS](#)
- [SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!](#)
- [CONTACT US](#)
- [SOLAR TELESCOPES](#)
- [SUBSCRIBE](#)
- [NIGHT-SKY CAMERAS](#)

SPACE WEATHER
Current conditions

Solar wind
speed: **331.1** km/sec
density: **0.6** protons/cm³
[explanation](#) | [more data](#)
Updated: Today at 1306 UT

X-ray Solar Flares
6-hr max: **A0** 1300 UT Mar18
24-hr: **A0** 1300 UT Mar18
[explanation](#) | [more data](#)
Updated: Today at: 1300 UT

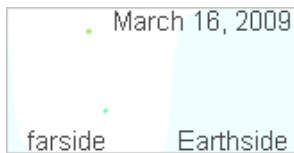
Daily Sun: 18 Mar 09



The sun is blank--no sunspots.
Credit: SOHO/MDI

Sunspot number: 0
[What is the sunspot number?](#)
Updated 17 Mar. 2009

Far side of the Sun:

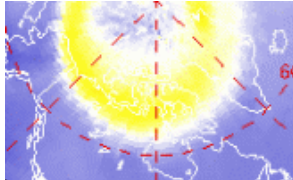


This [holographic image](#) reveals no sunspots on the far side of the sun.
Image credit: SOHO/MDI

Planetary K-index

Now: **Kp= 0** quiet
24-hr max: **Kp= 1** quiet
[explanation](#) | [more data](#)

Current Auroral Oval:



<http://spaceweather.com/>

 **What's up in Space**

March 18, 2009

AURORA ALERT: Did you sleep through the [Northern Lights](#)? Next time get a wake-up call: [Spaceweather PHONE](#).



ASTEROID FLYBY: Newly-discovered asteroid [2009 FH](#) is flying past Earth today, March 18th, only 85,000 km (0.00057 AU) away. That's a little more than twice the altitude of a geosynchronous communications satellite. There is no danger of a collision with the 20-meter-wide space rock--just a close shave. Experienced amateur astronomers can track 2009 FH using [this ephemeris](#). It is shining about as brightly as a 14th magnitude star.

asteroid images: [from Eric Allen](#) of Observatoire du Cégep de Trois-Rivières, Champlain, Quebec, Canada; [from Dean Drumheller](#) of San Mateo, California;

SPACESHIP SIGHTINGS: Space shuttle Discovery docked to the International Space Station on March 17th at 5:20 p.m. EDT. Just before the two spaceships joined, Quintus Oostendorp watched them fly side-by-side over his backyard in the Netherlands:



"It was a beautiful sight seeing both spacecraft moving together past the bright star Sirius," says Oostendorp. "I photographed the event using my [Canon 350D](#)."

Now that Discovery is docked, construction can begin. The shuttle is delivering a new set of solar arrays to the station. They will be bolted in place on March 19th and unfurled on March 22nd. The arrays are so large, you can actually [see them](#) through backyard telescopes. The trick is knowing [when to look](#).

more images: [from Jens Hackmann](#) of Weikersheim, southern Germany; [from Marco Langbroek](#) of Leiden, the Netherlands; [from Matthew Cook](#) of Ann Arbor, Michigan; [from Robert Hoetink](#) of Enschede, the Netherlands; [from Dennis Put](#) of Brielle, Zuid-Holland,

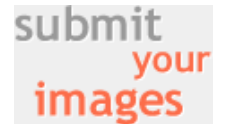
Cool links:

archives

March

18

2009

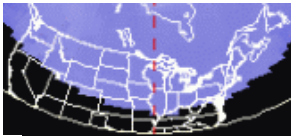


Hot Buy - Spotting Scopes

Special Sale - 80mm Spotting Scope. 20-60X Zoom lens. Free Shipping.
www.EagleOptics.com



3/18/2009



Switch to: [Europe](#), [USA](#), [New Zealand](#), [Antarctica](#)
Credit: NOAA/POES
[What is the auroral oval?](#)

Interplanetary Mag. Field

B_{total} : 1.8 nT
 B_z : -0.0 nT
[explanation](#) | [more data](#)
Updated: Today at 1307 UT

Coronal Holes:



A solar wind stream flowing from the indicated coronal hole should reach Earth on or about March 20th. Credit: SOHO Extreme UV Telescope

SPACE WEATHER NOAA Forecasts



Updated at: 2009 Mar 17 2201 UTC

FLARE	0-24 hr	24-48 hr
CLASS M	01 %	01 %
CLASS X	01 %	01 %

Geomagnetic Storms:

Probabilities for significant disturbances in Earth's magnetic field are given for three activity levels: [active](#), [minor storm](#), [severe storm](#)

Updated at: 2009 Mar 17 2201 UTC

Mid-latitudes

	0-24 hr	24-48 hr
ACTIVE	05 %	05 %
MINOR	01 %	01 %
SEVERE	01 %	01 %

High latitudes

	0-24 hr	24-48 hr

<http://spaceweather.com/>

SpaceWeather.com -- News and infor...

the Netherlands; [from Guy Blattmann](#) of Saint-Etienne-de-Crossey, France

RAINBOW PLANET: Something special is happening to Venus. The brightest of all planets is hanging low in the western sky at sunset, and if you look at it with a backyard telescope, you'll see that it is a slender 4% crescent. But that's not the special part.

What's special is, Venus looks like a rainbow:



Mark D. Marquette took the picture from Boones Creek, Tennessee on March 16th. It shows the view through his [8-inch Celestron](#). "There was an extreme rainbow effect," he says.

Venus resembles a rainbow because Earth's atmosphere acts like a prism. When Venus is near the horizon, refraction separates the red crescent from the blue. The crescent is so thin, the splitting of colors is obvious. Later this month, Venus will disappear into the glare of the spring sun--so catch the rainbow planet while you can!

more images: [from Maurice Gavin](#) of Worcester Park SW London UK; [from Sadegh Ghomizadeh](#) of Tehran, Iran; [from Joe Ricci](#) of Rochester, New York; [from Elias Chasiotis](#) of Markopoulo, Greece; [from Lorenzo Comolli](#) of Tradate (VA), Italy; [from Paul Kinzer](#) of Galesville, Wisconsin; [from P-M Hedén](#) of Vallentuna, Sweden; [from Alan Simpson](#) of Renfrew, Scotland; [from Frederic Caron](#) of Victoriaville, Qc, Canada; [from Paul Schneider](#) of Wilton, Connecticut;

[March 2009 Aurora Gallery](#)

[previous Marches: [2008](#), [2007](#), [2006](#), [2005](#), [2004](#), [2003](#), [2002](#)]

[Comet Lulin Photo Gallery](#)

[[Comet Hunter Telescope: review](#)] [[Comet Lulin finder chart](#)]

[Explore the Sunspot Cycle](#)



[Near-Earth Asteroids](#)

Potentially Hazardous Asteroids ([PHAs](#)) are space rocks larger than approximately 100m that can come closer to Earth than 0.05 AU. None of the known PHAs is on a collision course with our planet, although astronomers are finding [new ones](#) all the time.



[How 2 Build Solar Panels](#)

Reduce Home Energy Bills up to 95% We Tested 7 "Kits" =>Only 2 Worked
[BuildSolarPanels.net](#)



3/18/2009

SpaceWeather.com -- News and infor...

	0-24 III	24-40 III
ACTIVE	10 %	10 %
MINOR	01 %	01 %
SEVERE	01 %	01 %

On March 18, 2009 there were **1043** potentially hazardous asteroids.

March 2009 Earth-asteroid encounters:

Asteroid	Date(UT)	Miss Distance	Mag.	Size
2009 DS43	Mar. 1	6.9 LD	18	32 m
2009 DD45	Mar. 2	0.2 LD	11	35 m
2009 DN4	Mar. 3	8.1 LD	21	27 m
2009 EA	Mar. 4	7.4 LD	19	24 m
2009 EW	Mar. 6	0.9 LD	16	23 m
161989 Cacus	Mar. 7	70.5 LD	16	1.7 km
2009 EH1	Mar. 8	1.6 LD	18	12 m
2009 ET	Mar. 9	9.5 LD	21	15 m
2009 DV43	Mar. 10	8.5 LD	18	80 m
2009 EU	Mar. 11	3.5 LD	18	21 m
1998 OR2	Mar. 12	69.8 LD	14	3.3 km
2009 DR3	Mar. 14	7.2 LD	16	225 m
2009 FH	Mar. 18	0.2 LD	14	21 m

Notes: LD means "Lunar Distance." 1 LD = 384,401 km, the distance between Earth and the Moon. 1 LD also equals 0.00256 AU. MAG is the visual magnitude of the asteroid on the date of closest approach.



[Solar Tax Credit is Here](#)

Save up to 45% off a new Akeena Solar Power System – Learn how!

www.Akeena.com/SolarT

Essential Links

[LINK](#) [NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center](#)

The official U.S. government space weather bureau

[LINK](#) [Atmospheric Optics](#)

The first place to look for information about sundogs, pillars, rainbows and related phenomena.

[LINK](#) [Solar and Heliospheric Observatory](#)

Realtime and archival images of the Sun from SOHO.

[LINK](#) [STEREO](#)

3D views of the sun from NASA's Solar and Terrestrial Relations Observatory

[LINK](#) [Daily Sunspot Summaries](#)

from the NOAA Space Environment Center

[LINK](#) [Current Solar Images](#)

from the National Solar Data Analysis Center

[LINK](#) [Science Central](#)

[more links...](#)

©2008, SpaceWeather.com -- This site is penned daily by [Dr. Tony Phillips](#).