



WEBB SPACE TELESCOPE CAPTURES A STAR IN THE MAKING AND A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY - ASSOCIATED PRESS

Posted on March 25, 2025 by MARCIA DUNN | ASSOCIATED PRESS



An undated image from NASA's Webb Space Telescope shows an outflow from a nearby still-forming star in infrared light, with a spiral galaxy off in the distance.

The [Webb Space Telescope](#) has captured a plume of gas and dust streaming from a star in the making, with a spiral galaxy as a stunning backdrop.

The composite image makes it look as though the overflow of stellar material is the billowing contrail of a rocket on its way to the galaxy. NASA and the European Space Agency released the photo on Monday.

The outflow is about 625 light-years from Earth in one of the closest star-forming regions of our Milky Way galaxy, according to NASA. A light-year is equivalent to almost 6 trillion miles.

Launched in 2021 as the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, Webb observed the scene in the infrared. NASA said in a statement it was "a lucky alignment" of the two unrelated objects.

NASA's retired Spitzer Space Telescope captured the same shot in 2006, with scientists then dubbing the stellar jet "the cosmic tornado." But it was too fuzzy to make out the background galaxy and other details. Webb is the largest and most powerful observatory ever launched into space.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Science and Educational Media Group and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for all content.