



Chandra X-Ray Observatory Center

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The Antennae: A pair of colliding galaxies about 60 million light years from Earth.

Credit: NASA/CXC/SAO/G. Fabbiano et al.

This montage of Chandra images shows X-ray views of The Antennae (top), and a closeup of the system's central region (lower left). These images are color coded to show low (red), medium (green) and high (blue) energy X-rays produced by huge clouds of gas heated to millions of degrees by the collision. Massive stars formed in the gas clouds raced through their evolution in a few million years and exploded as supernovas. Heavy elements manufactured inside these stars were blown away by the explosions and enriched the clouds with heavy elements such as neon, magnesium, silicon and iron. The Chandra image at the lower right is processed and color-coded to show rich deposits of iron (red), magnesium (green) and silicon (blue) elements.

Scale: Top: Image is 4.8 arcmin per side; Bottom: Each panel is 2 arcmin per side.

Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image

CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory