



**Chandra X-ray
Observatory Center**

Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics
60 Garden St. Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
<http://chandra.harvard.edu>

Whirlpool Galaxy: A spiral galaxy 31 million light years from Earth.

(Credit: X-ray: NASA/CXC/Wesleyan Univ./R. Kilgard et al; UV: NASA/JPL-Caltech; Optical: NASA/ESA/S. Beckwith & Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA); IR: NASA/JPL-Caltech/ Univ. of AZ/R. Kennicutt)

Caption: A composite image of M51, also known as the Whirlpool Galaxy, shows a majestic spiral galaxy. Chandra finds point-like X-ray sources (purple) that are black holes and neutron stars in binary star systems, along with a diffuse glow of hot gas. Data from Hubble (green) and Spitzer (red) both highlight long lanes of stars and gas laced with dust. A view of M51 with GALEX shows hot, young stars that produce lots of ultraviolet energy (blue).

Scale: Image is 2.2 by 3.2 arcmin.

Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image

CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory