



 Chandra X-Ray  
Observatory Center

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**NGC 3603:** A giant star-forming region.  
**Credit:** NASA/GSFC/M. Corcoran et al.

Chandra has resolved the multitude of individual X-ray sources in one of our galaxy's most active star-forming regions. This giant cloud of dust, gas, and stars, known as NGC 3603, is approximately 20,000 light years from Earth. The hundred or more young stars in this image were born in a burst of star formation less than two million years ago. Our Sun, by comparison, is approximately 4.5 billion years old and is considered to be middle-aged.

**Scale:** Image is 8.2 arcmin on a side.

*Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image*

*CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory*