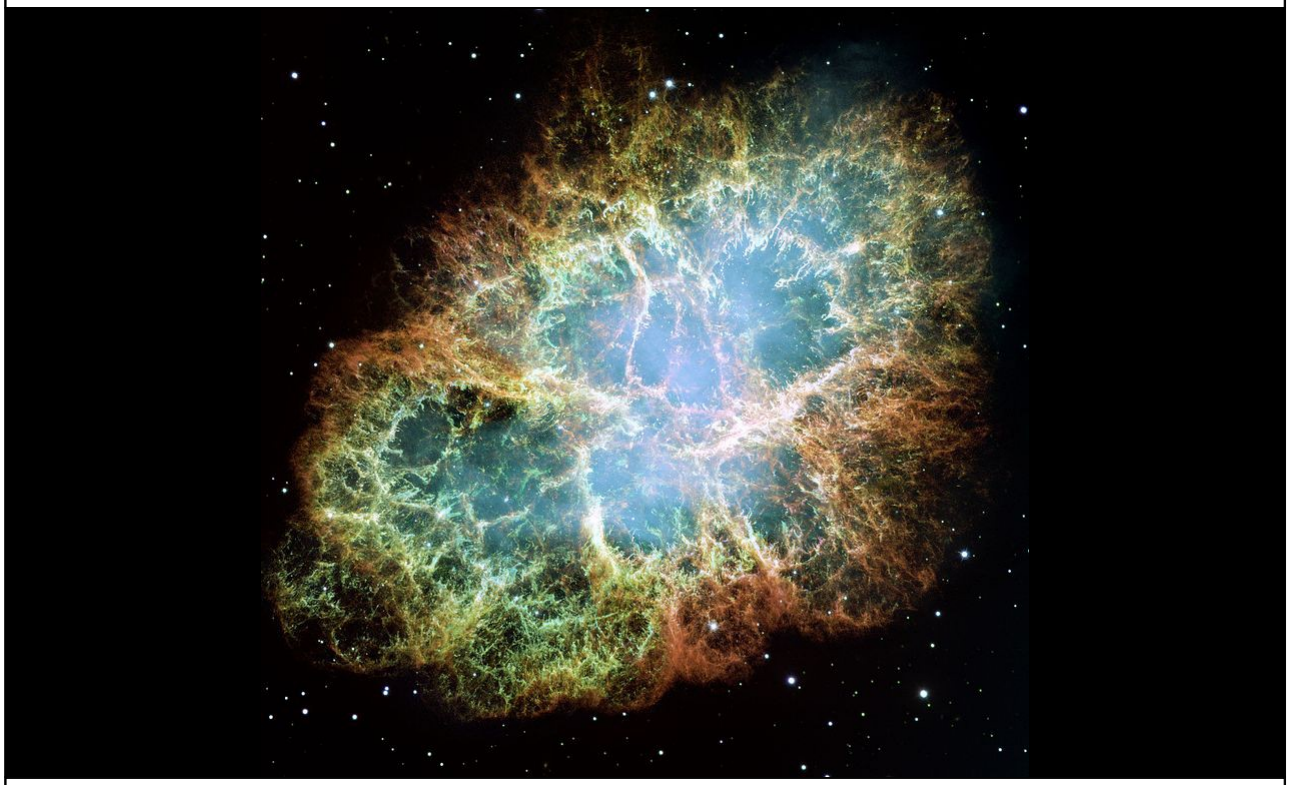
0535

Crab Nebula



Quick Facts:

Distance: 6500 Light-years. Size: Approx 11 Light-years.
Constellation: Taurus.

A bright supernova remnant from SN 1054AD. The gas cloud from the explosion is expanding at 1500 km/s (1000 mi/sec). In the center of the nebula is a neutron star 1.7x the mass of the sun in a ball just 30 km (20 mi) across. Spinning 30 times a second this pulsar flashes across many wavelengths and is the brightest x-ray and gamma-ray source in the sky. Also known as Messier 1. Find it: From Aldebaran, go east halfway to Castor to find Zeta Tauri. Sweep about 1 degree NE to the nebula. GOTO: NAMED OBJECTS, M (Messier).

Image: Hubble NASA ESA. Quick reference card by Derek Wallentinsen.