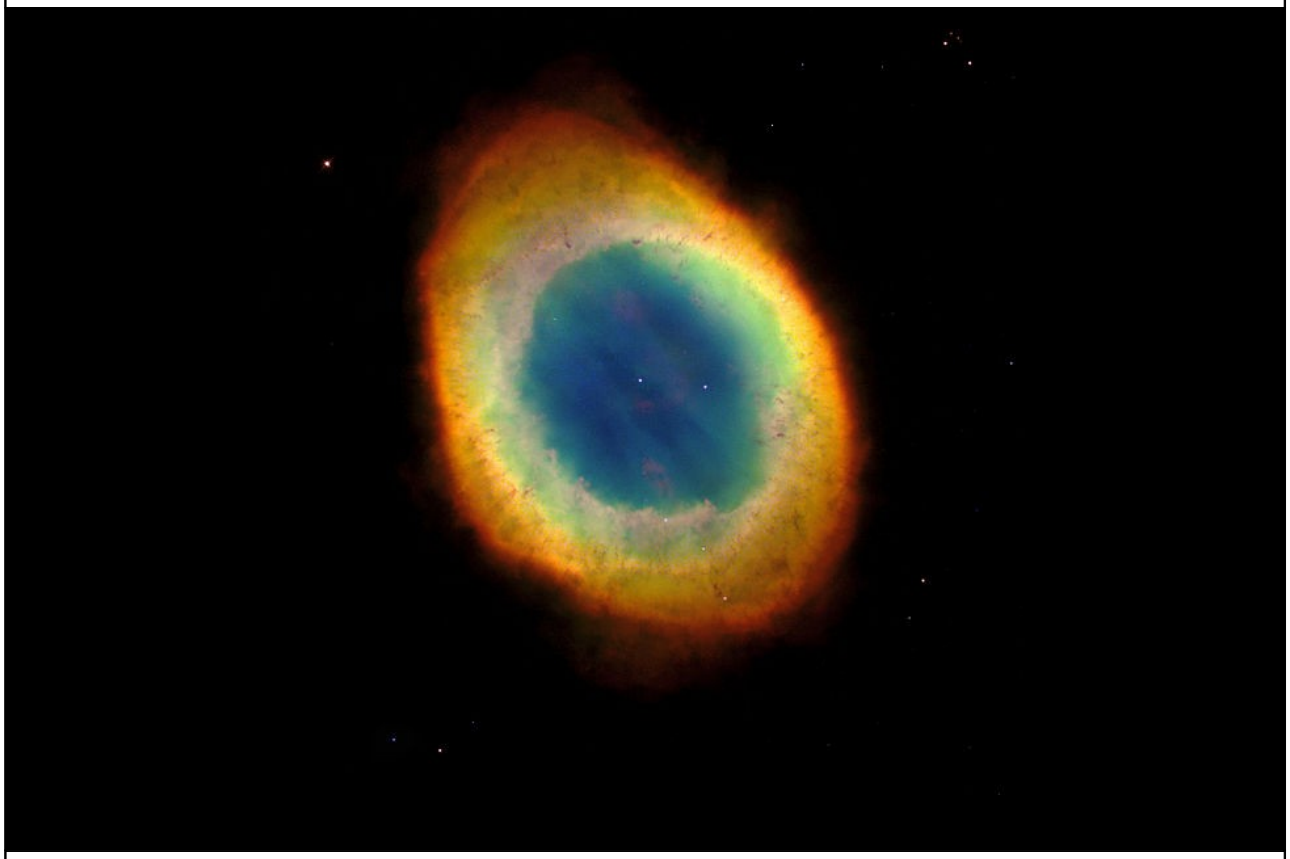
1853

Ring Nebula



Quick Facts:

Distance: 2,300 Light-years.

Size: 2.6 Light-years.

Constellation: Lyra.

A beautiful shell nebula blown off a highly evolved star. It can actually be seen in binoculars as a point of light. About 1600 years old and expanding at 15 mi per second. Also called Messier 57.

Find it: Easy to find by star hopping the base of Lyra's parallelogram, halfway between the base stars Sheliak and Sulafat. The smoke ring has an unusual blue color that makes it stand out. GOTO: M (Messier).

Image by NASA/STScI/AURA. Quick reference card by Derek Wallentinsen.