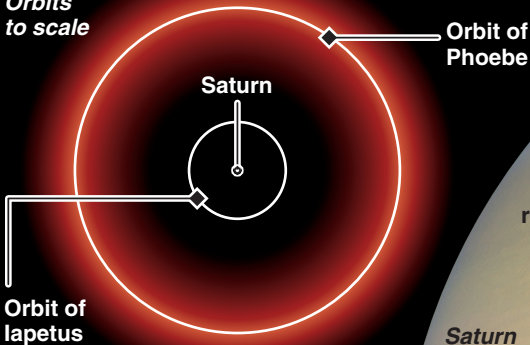


Telescope discovers giant ring around Saturn

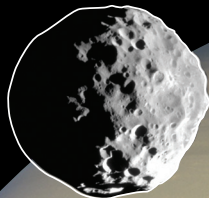
NASA's infrared *Spitzer Space Telescope* has discovered a giant ring around the planet Saturn – easily the largest of its many rings. The newly found band of ice and dust is so big it would take a billion Earths to fill it

GIANT RING: Diameter 36 million kilometres, equal to 300 Saturns placed side-by-side. Thickness about 20 times Saturn's diameter

Orbits to scale



Orbit of giant ring and Phoebe are tilted at angle of 27 degrees to Saturn's other rings

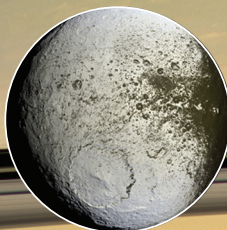


Phoebe

Diameter: 214km

Orbit of Saturn's largest outer moon falls within ring and is believed to be source of its material

Saturn
Diameter
120,000km



Iapetus

Diameter: 1,436km

Material from ring could have coated one side of Iapetus with dark dust, explaining mystery of moon's two-tone colouration