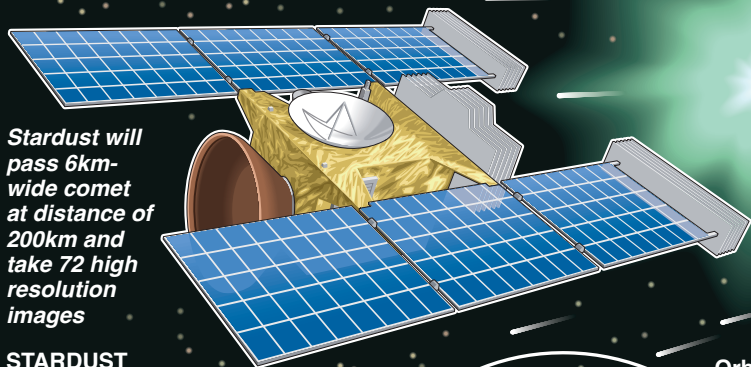


# Stardust spacecraft chases second comet

Seven years after a successful rendezvous with *Comet Wild 2*, NASA's *Stardust* spacecraft is heading for its last mission – a February 15 flyby of *Comet Tempel 1*. The venerable probe will study the icy body and seek to identify the crater left by NASA's *Deep Impact* mission in 2005



**Stardust will pass 6km-wide comet at distance of 200km and take 72 high resolution images**

## STARDUST MISSION TIMELINE

**Feb 1999:** Launch

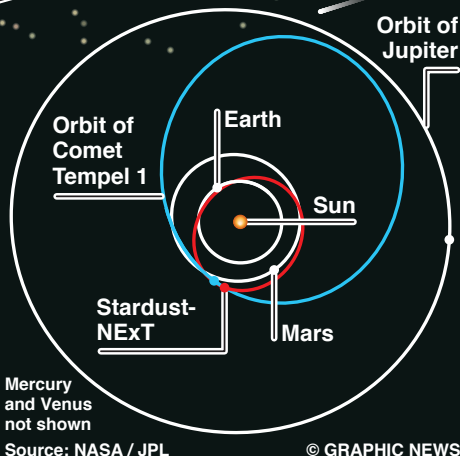
**Nov 2002:** Flyby and imaging of *Asteroid Annefrank*

**Jan 2004:** Encounter with Comet Wild 2. Collection of dust samples from comet head

**Jan 2006:** Samples returned safely in re-entry capsule – jettisoned by Stardust as it passes Earth

**Jul 2007:** Spacecraft begins new mission – *Stardust-NExT* (New Exploration of Tempel 1)

**Feb 15, 2011:** Tempel 1 flyby



Mercury and Venus not shown

Source: NASA / JPL

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