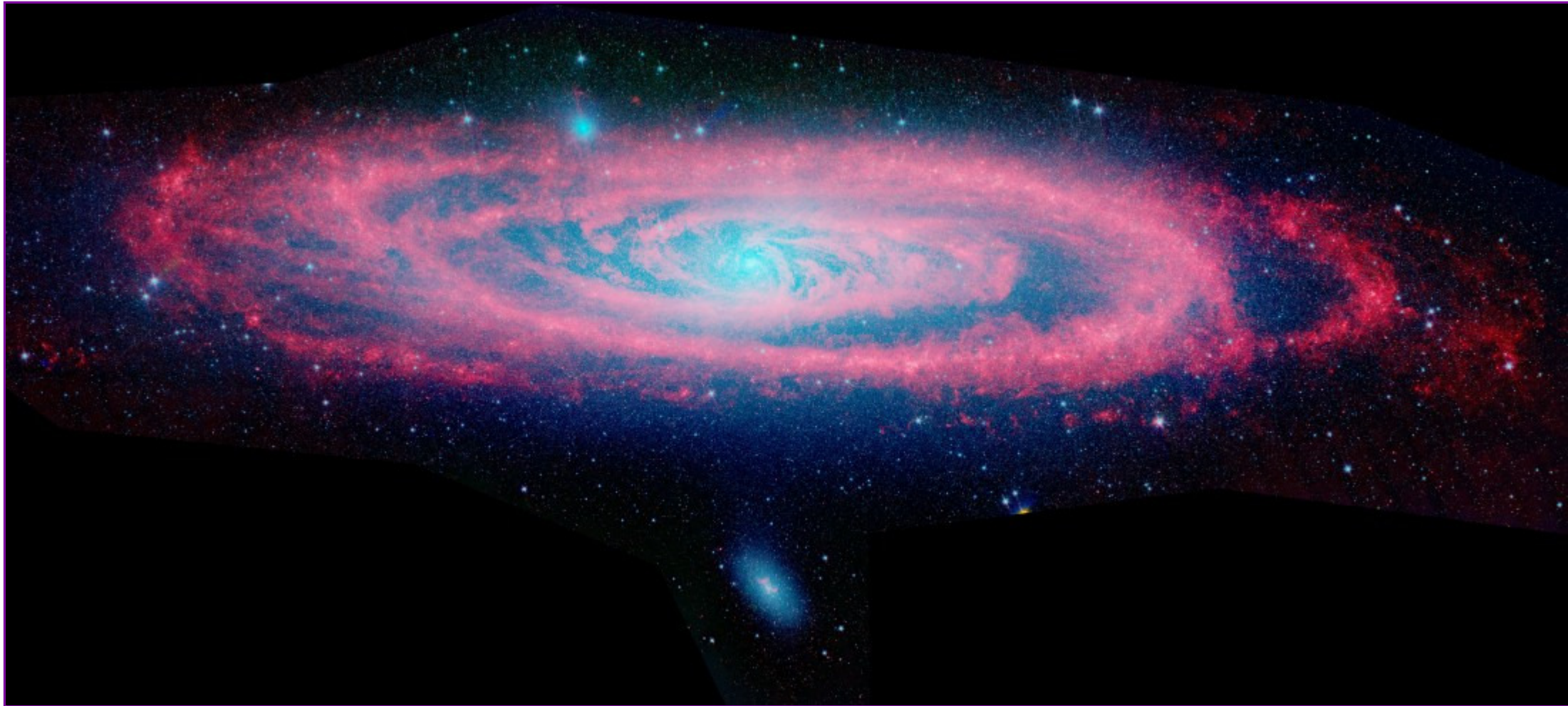


Astronomy Picture of the Day

[Discover the cosmos!](#) Each day a different image or photograph of our fascinating universe is featured, along with a brief explanation written by a professional astronomer.

2006 June 9



Infrared Andromeda

Credit: Pauline Barmby ([Harvard-Smithsonian CfA](#)) et al., [JPL](#), [Caltech](#), [NASA](#)

Explanation: This wide, detailed [Spitzer Space Telescope view](#) features infrared light from dust (red) and old stars (blue) in Andromeda, a massive spiral galaxy a mere 2.5 million light-years away. In fact, with over twice the diameter of [our own](#) Milky Way, [Andromeda is](#) the largest [nearby](#) galaxy. Andromeda's population of bright young stars define its sweeping spiral arms in [visible light images](#), but here the infrared view clearly follows the lumpy dust lanes heated by the young stars as they wind even closer to the [galaxy's core](#). Constructed to [explore](#) Andromeda's [infrared brightness](#) and stellar populations, the full mosaic image is composed of about 3,000 individual frames. Two smaller companion galaxies, [NGC 205](#) (below) and [M32](#) (above) are also included in the combined fields. The data confirm that Andromeda (aka M31) houses around 1 [trillion](#) stars, compared [to](#) 4 hundred [billion](#) for the Milky Way.

Tomorrow's picture: Moon Over Haleakela

[<](#) | [Archive](#) | [Index](#) | [Search](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Glossary](#) | [Education](#) | [About APOD](#) | [Discuss](#) | [>](#)

Authors & editors: [Robert Nemiroff \(MTU\)](#) & [Jerry Bonnell \(USRA\)](#)

[NASA Web Site Statements, Warnings, and Disclaimers](#)

NASA Official: Jay Norris. [Specific rights apply.](#)

A service of: [EUD](#) at [NASA / GSFC](#)
& [Michigan Tech. U.](#)