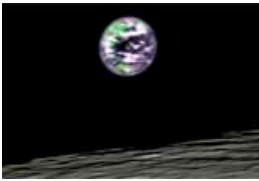


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New Photos: Earth from the Moon

By [Clara Moskowitz](#)
Staff Writer
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02:34 pm ET

The blue marble never loses its appeal. Two spacecraft have beamed back new pictures of Earth from their vantage point at the moon, which offers a view of our planet as a full globe.

NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper, an instrument onboard India's Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, captured an [image of Earth](#) hovering 124 miles (200 km) over the lunar surface.

The false-color snapshot, which was taken on July 22 and released Aug. 3, is reminiscent of the original "Blue Marble" - the nickname of a photo of the Earth taken by the Apollo 17 crew in 1972. In both images, the [orb of the Earth](#) glows in stark contrast to the blackness of space behind.

The Moon Mineralogy Mapper is one of two NASA instruments onboard Chandrayaan-1, [India's first lunar spacecraft](#), which launched in October 2008. The instrument is an imaging spectrometer designed to compile a high-resolution map of the lunar surface to learn about the origins of the moon and the solar system's terrestrial planets.

Other, slightly blurrier [new shots of Earth](#) from the moon were recently captured by NASA's Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) spacecraft, [which launched](#) along with the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) in June 2009. LCROSS took the new Earth images Aug. 1 as a calibration to check the health of the science instruments onboard.

"The Earth-look was very successful," said Tony Colaprete, LCROSS project scientist. "The instruments are all healthy and the science team was able to collect additional data that will help refine our calibrations of the instruments."

LCROSS was able to detect the signatures of Earth's water, ozone, methane, oxygen, carbon dioxide. It also may have been able to detect the planet's vegetation as well, researchers said. vegetation.

The LCROSS probe is set to watch as its launch vehicle's spent upper stage strikes down into a crater on the moon's surface in October 2009. It will search for signs of water ejected from beneath the lunar surface by the crash before making its own impact a few minutes later..

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This image of Earth from lunar orbit was acquired by NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper aboard India's Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft. Credit: NASA/JPL/Brown

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Images of the Earth from a distance of approximately 360,000 km, taken by NASA's LCROSS spacecraft. Top row: Images from the Near Infrared Cameras (NIR1 and NIR2). Bottom Row: Images from the Mid-Infrared (thermal) Cameras (MIR1 and MIR2). The graphic at the right shows the Earth as it was viewed during the activity with the NIR1 spectrometer's Field of View indicated by the inner green circle. Credit: NASA Ames

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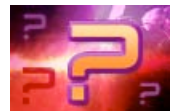
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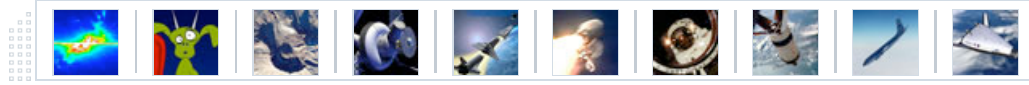
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