

DEMYSTIFYING SCIENCE: WHAT IS THE GHOST OF CASSIOPEIA?

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About 550 light years away in the constellation of Cassiopeia lies IC 63, a stunning and slightly eerie nebula. Also known as the ghost of Cassiopeia, IC 63 is being shaped by radiation from a nearby unpredictably variable star, Gamma Cassiopeiae, which is slowly eroding away a cloud of dust and gas. The Gamma Cassiopeiae is a blue-white subgiant that is surrounded by a gaseous disc, which is 19 times more massive and 65,000 times brighter than our sun. It also rotates at the incredible speed of 1.6 million km per hour — more than 200 times faster than our parent star and releases radiation. The radiation of Gamma Cassiopeiae is so powerful that it even affects IC 63 and bestows an eerie appearance that gives it its ghostly aura. — *Science Daily*

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