



**Chandra X-Ray  
Observatory Center**

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**Eta Carinae:** A supermassive star and nebula in the constellation Carina.  
**Credit:** NASA/CXC/SAO

The Chandra X-ray image shows the complex nature of the region around Eta Carinae, a massive supergiant star that is 7,500 light years from Earth. The outer horseshoe shaped ring has a temperature of about 3 million degrees Celsius. It is about two light years in diameter and was probably caused by an outburst that occurred more than a thousand years ago. The blue cloud in the inner core is three light months in diameter and is much hotter; the white area inside the blue cloud is the hottest and may contain the superstar which is vigorously blowing matter off its surface.

**Scale:** Image is 100 arcsec on a side.  
*Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image*

*CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory*