

Asteroids



These are views of the three asteroids that have been imaged at close range by the Galileo and Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (NEAR) spacecraft. The image of Mathilde (left) was taken by the NEAR spacecraft on June 27, 1997. Images of the asteroids Gaspra (middle) and Ida (right) were taken by the Galileo spacecraft in 1991 and 1993, respectively. All three objects are presented at the same scale. The visible part of Mathilde is 59 km wide by 47 km high (37x29 miles). Mathilde has more large craters than the other two asteroids. The relative brightness has been made similar for easy viewing; Mathilde is actually much darker than either Ida or Gaspra. (Courtesy of NASA)