



## Westerlund 2

Bursts of star formation and billowing plumes of hydrogen gas fill this image of Westerlund 2, a star cluster located 20,000 light-years away in the constellation Carina. The cluster holds 3,000 stars, including some of the hottest, brightest, and most massive stars in our galaxy. The cluster is only about 2 million years old and spans 6 to 13 light-years.

Ultraviolet radiation and strong stellar winds emanating from the star cluster shape the nebulous gas to the left of the image. Scientists believe that new stars form within this gaseous landscape, sparked by stellar winds barreling into dense walls of gas. Throughout this image, young stars surrounded by cocoons of gas and dust appear as red dots. To capture this level of detail, NASA's Hubble Space Telescope observed Westerlund 2 in visible and near-infrared light.

**Hubble Space Telescope – Advanced Camera  
for Surveys and Wide Field Camera 3**  
NASA, ESA, the Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA),  
A. Nota (ESA/STScI), and the Westerlund 2 Science Team