NEAR: Journey to an Asteroid

NEAR’s First Whole-Eros Mosaic from Orbit

The Color of Regolith

Trailing Away

Last, Closest Image of Eros
The Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (NEAR) Mission

The first mission in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Discovery Program, NEAR set the stage for asteroidal exploration. The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory designed and built the NEAR Shoemaker spacecraft and managed the mission for NASA, leading an international team drawn from universities, government agencies and private industry.

Launched February 17, 1996, NEAR Shoemaker began orbiting asteroid 433 Eros on February 14, 2000. Before landing on the asteroid on February 12, 2001, NEAR Shoemaker traveled at various distances around Eros, passing as close as 2 miles and orbiting farther than 200 miles from the cratered surface. The NEAR mission completed the most detailed profile ever of a small celestial body, collecting 10 times more data than planned.

For more information visit the NEAR Web site: http://near.jhuapl.edu.

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