

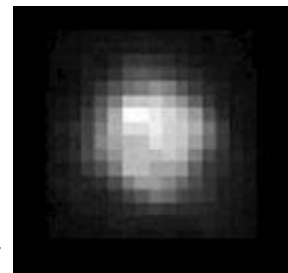


In Roman mythology, Pluto is the god of the underworld. In Greek mythology, he is known as Hades, ruler of the underworld. The planet received this name perhaps because it's so far from the Sun that it is in perpetual darkness.

This is the symbol for Pluto:



Pluto is the farthest planet from the Sun (usually) and by far the smallest of the nine planets. Pluto is smaller than seven of the solar system's moons!



To date, not much is known about the planet, Pluto. Most of the information we have is largely based on speculation and inference. Its moon, Charon, helps scientists with various calculations relating to the properties and characteristics of Pluto.

Pluto is so far away that even the Hubble Space Telescope can make out only the largest features on its surface. This is why available pictures look so blocky and ambiguous.

Like Uranus, Pluto seems to be lying on its "side." Pluto's equator points straight up and one of its poles point directly at the Sun.

**Look for Pluto!** Pluto can be seen with an amateur telescope - but it is not easy. You will need detailed charts and many months of careful observations to actually find it.

- ~ Pluto is a small, rocky planet. Scientists are still unsure as to what it's made of.
- ~ Pluto is the only planet that has not been visited by a spacecraft.
- ~ Depending on how far along it is in its orbit (path around the Sun), Pluto can be either the eighth or ninth planet. Pluto's orbit is kind of wacky, and it sometimes crosses in front of Neptune. When Pluto does this, Neptune is behind Pluto - hence, it is the eighth planet for a short time.
- ~ Pluto has one moon. It's called "Charon."