Exploring the Extreme Universe with the Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope

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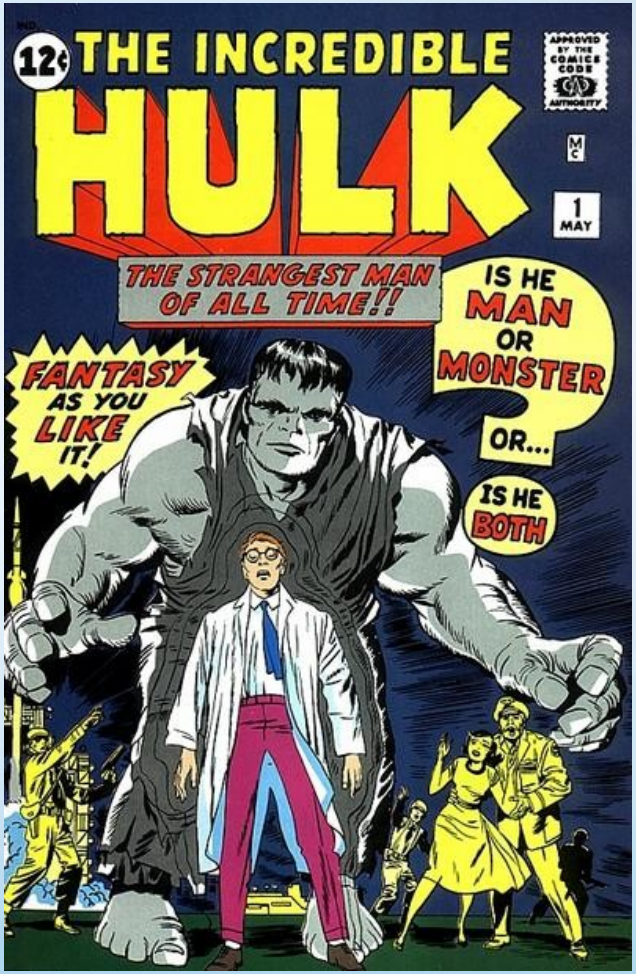
What turned Bruce Banner into the Hulk?

Gamma rays!

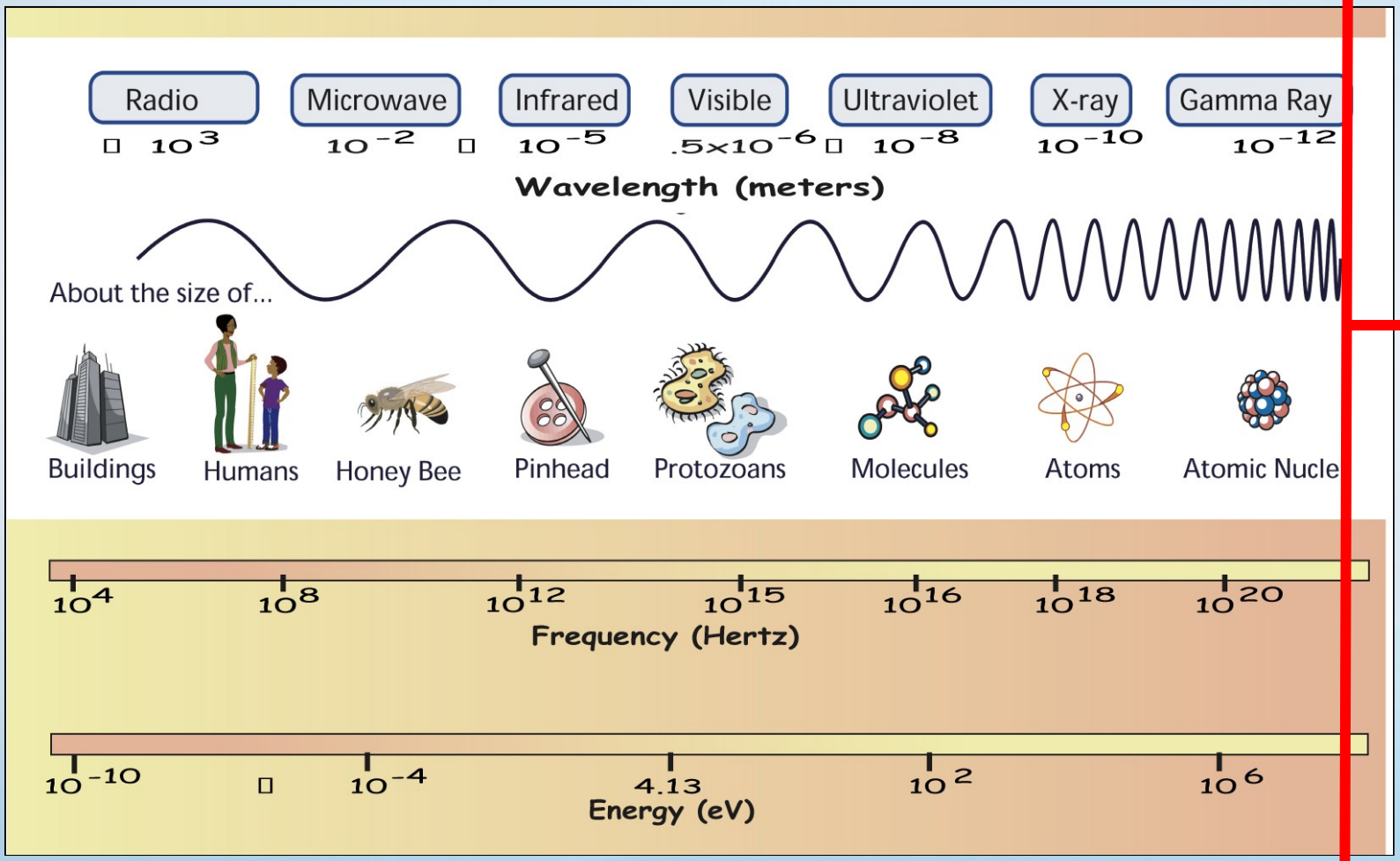
Why?

Because gamma rays are powerful!



How powerful?

100 MeV

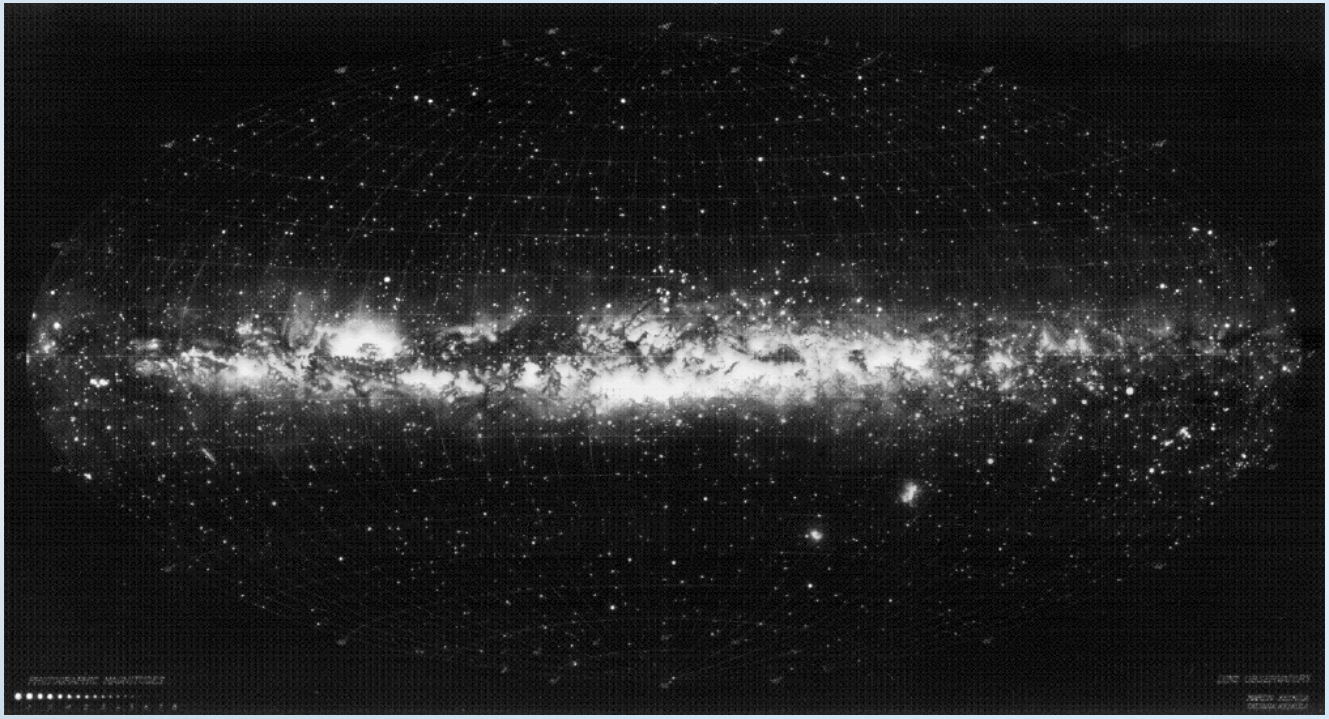


How to study gamma rays?

- Absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere
- Use rockets, balloons or satellites
- Can't image or focus gamma rays
- Special detectors: scintillating crystals, silicon-strips

Balloon experiment

Why study the extreme Universe?



- Universe as seen by eye is peaceful


But what if you had gamma-ray vision?

The Gamma-ray Sky in False Color – from EGRET/Compton Gamma Ray Observatory

mma rays
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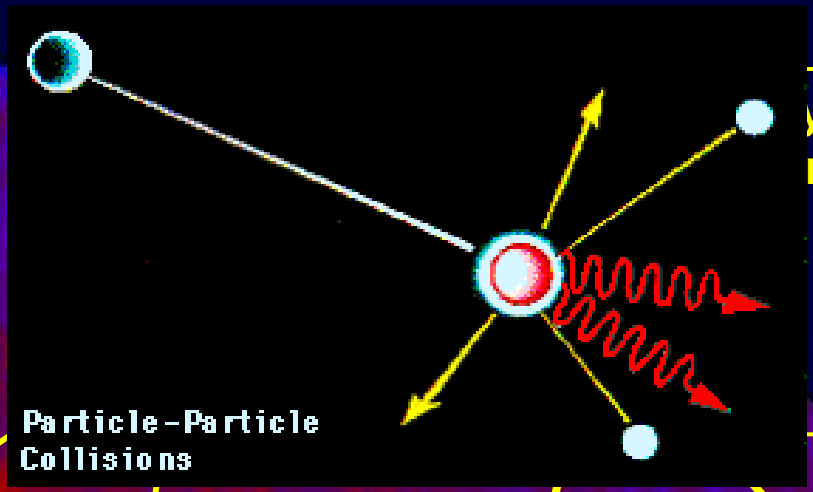

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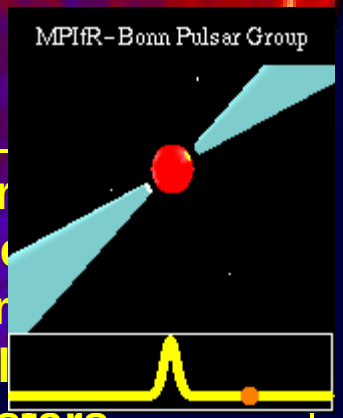
The Unknown – over half the sources seen by EGRET remain mysterious

Blazars – supermassive black holes with huge jets of particles and radiation pointed right at Earth.

Gamma-r
extreme
stars or r
black hol
neutron stars.



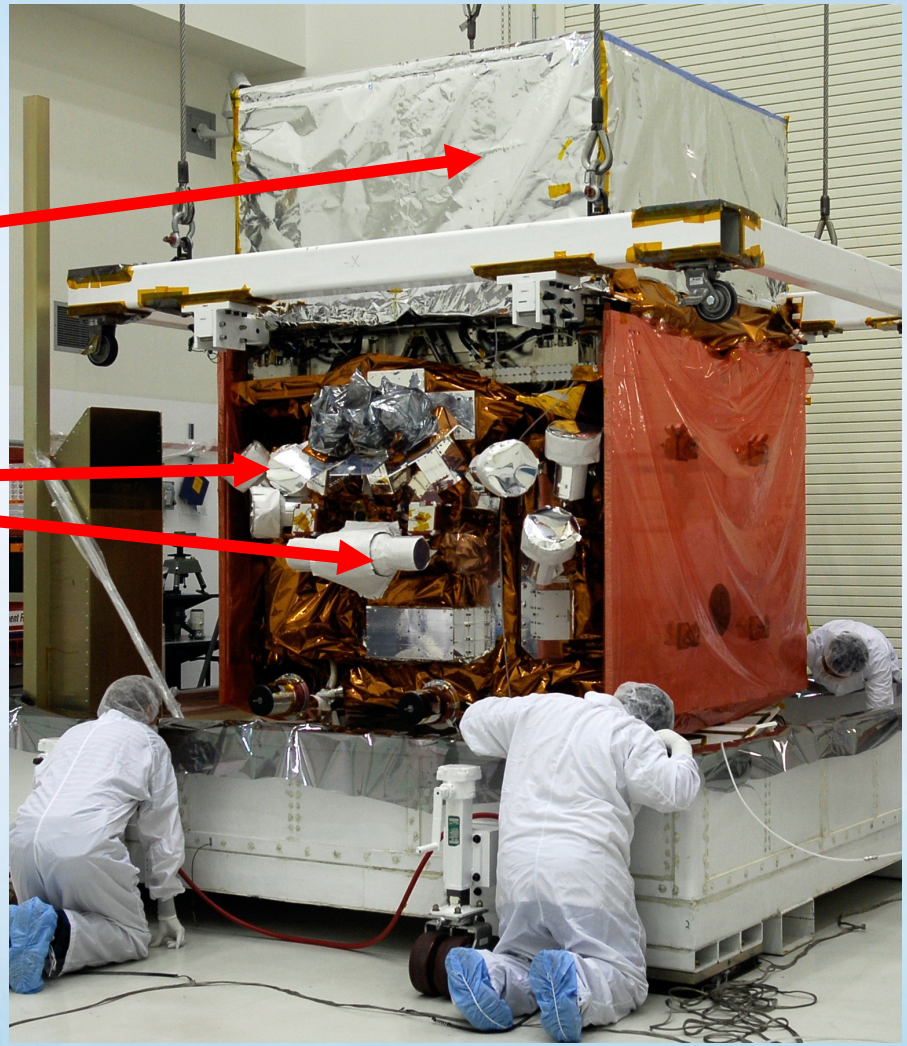
So we need a new mission…

- First space-based collaboration between astrophysics and particle physics communities
- International partners from France, Germany, Italy, Japan & Sweden
- Launched June 11, 2008
- Expected duration 5-10 years

Before launch

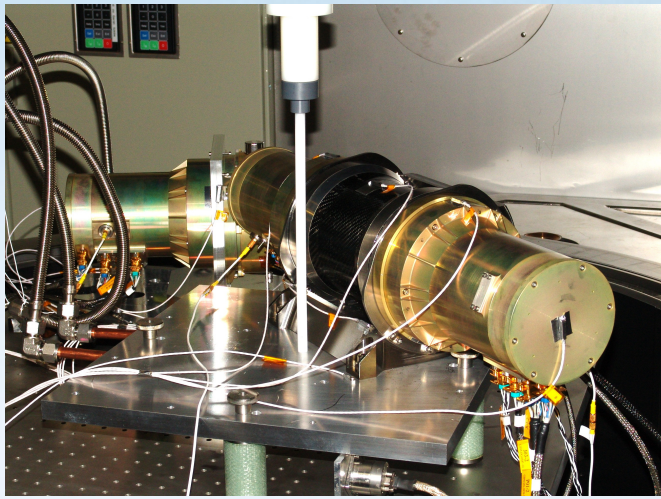
- Large Area Telescope

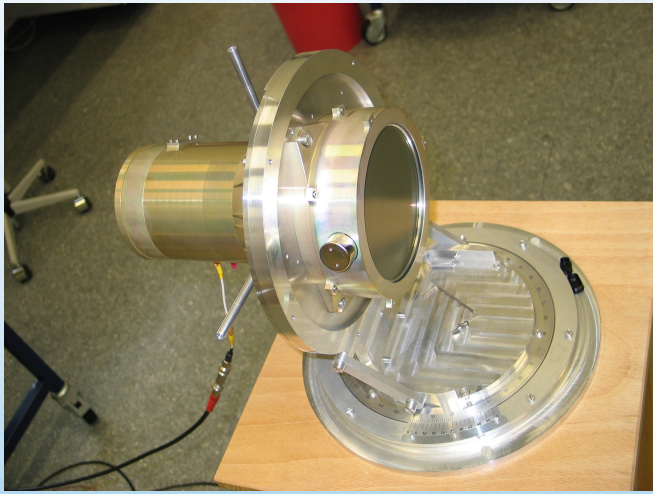
- Gamma-ray Burst Monitor



Gamma-ray Burst Monitor (GBM)

- PI Charles Meegan (NASA/MSFC)
- US-German secondary instrument
- 12 sodium iodide scintillators
  - 10 keV to 1 MeV
  - Burst triggers and locations
- 2 bismuth germanate detectors
  - 150 keV to 30 MeV
  - Overlap with LAT
- **http://gammaray.msfc.nasa.gov/gbm/**



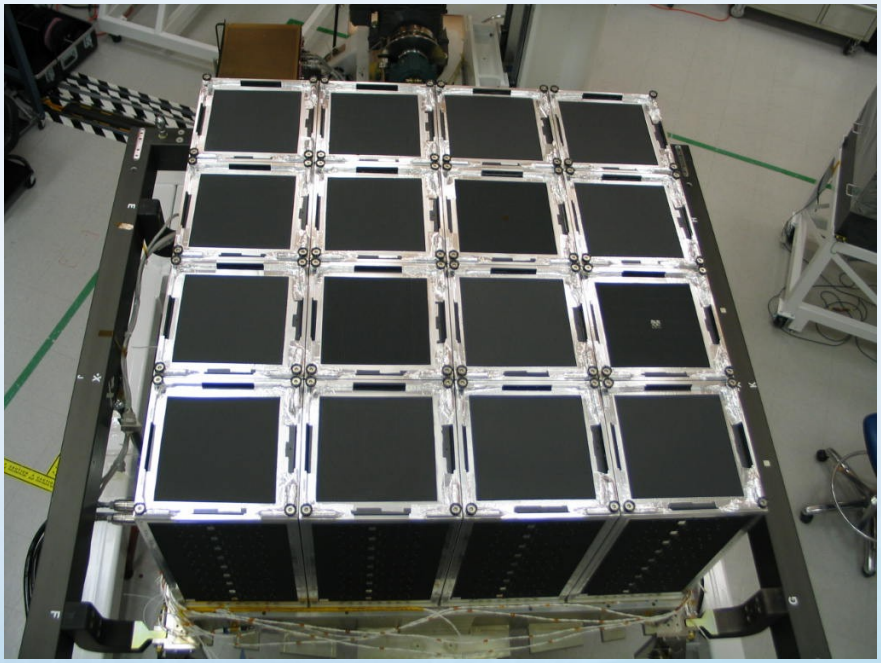


Large Area Telescope (LAT)

- PI Peter Michelson (Stanford)
- International Collaboration: USA NASA and DoE, France, Italy, Japan, Sweden

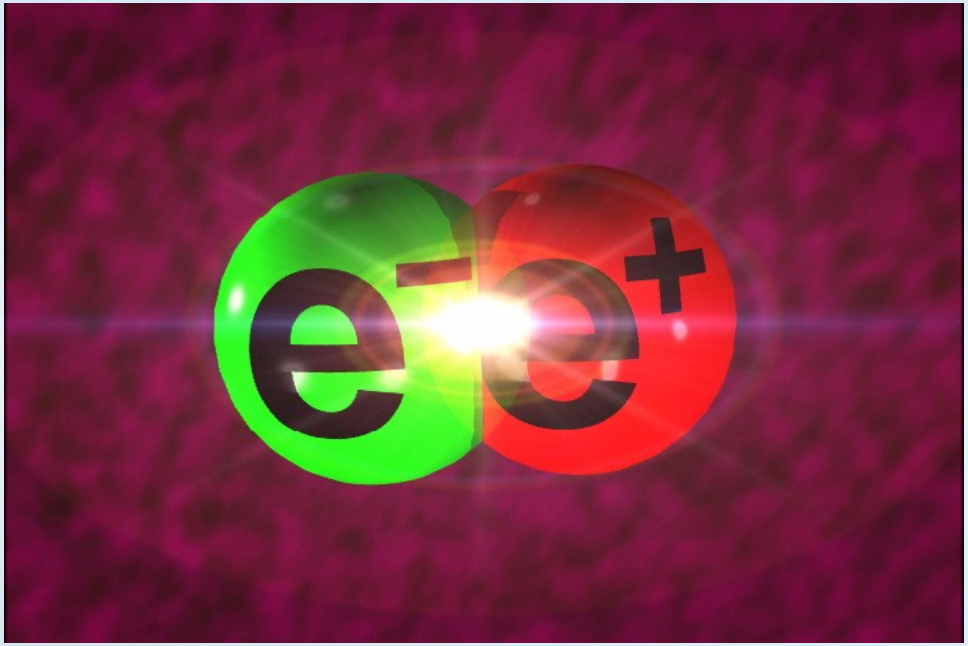
- LAT is a 4 x 4 array of towers

- Each tower is a pair conversion telescope with calorimeter



- http://glast.stanford.edu

What is “pair-conversion”?

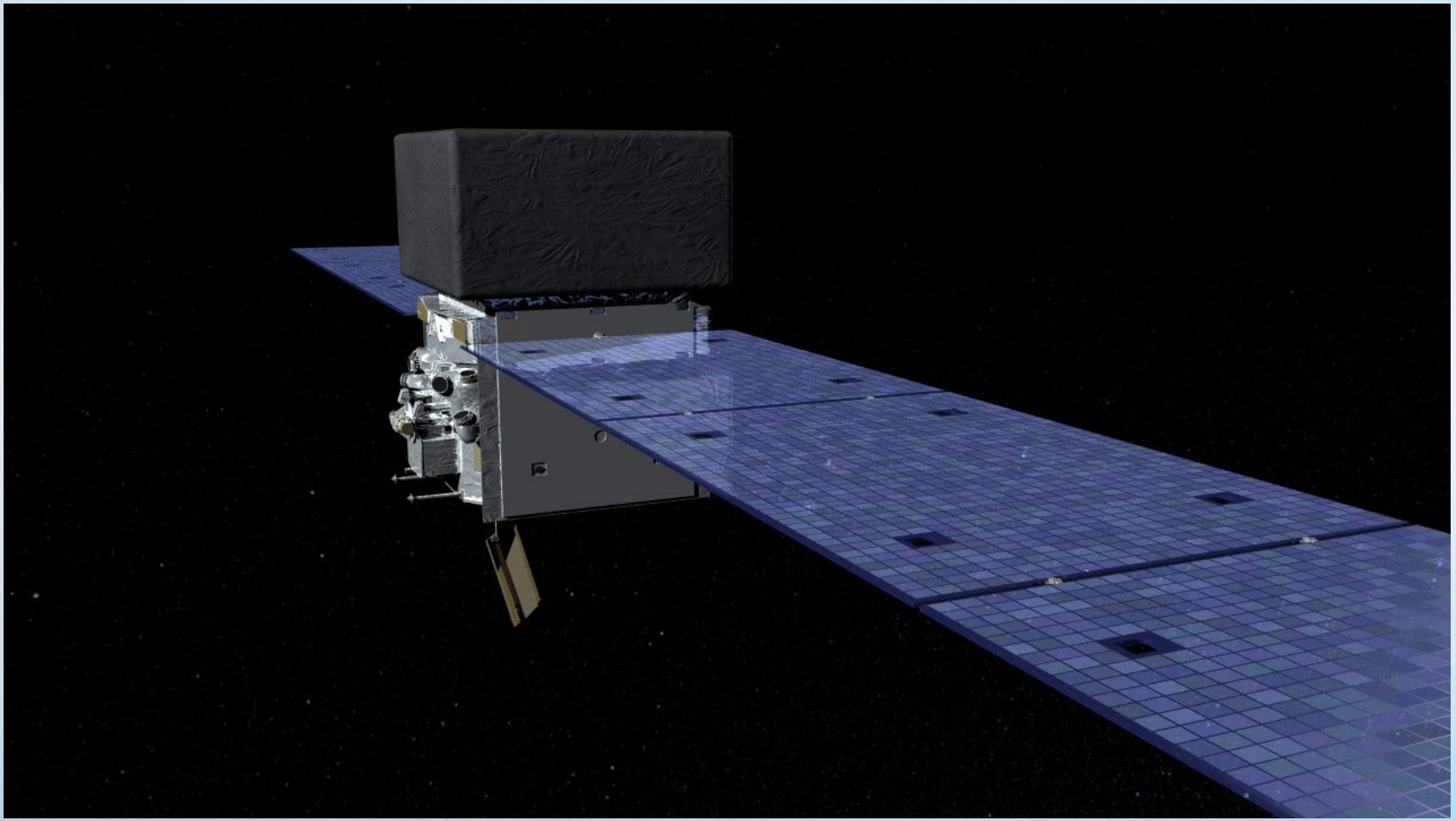


$E = mc^2$

- Positrons are anti-electrons
- When they meet, they annihilate each other!

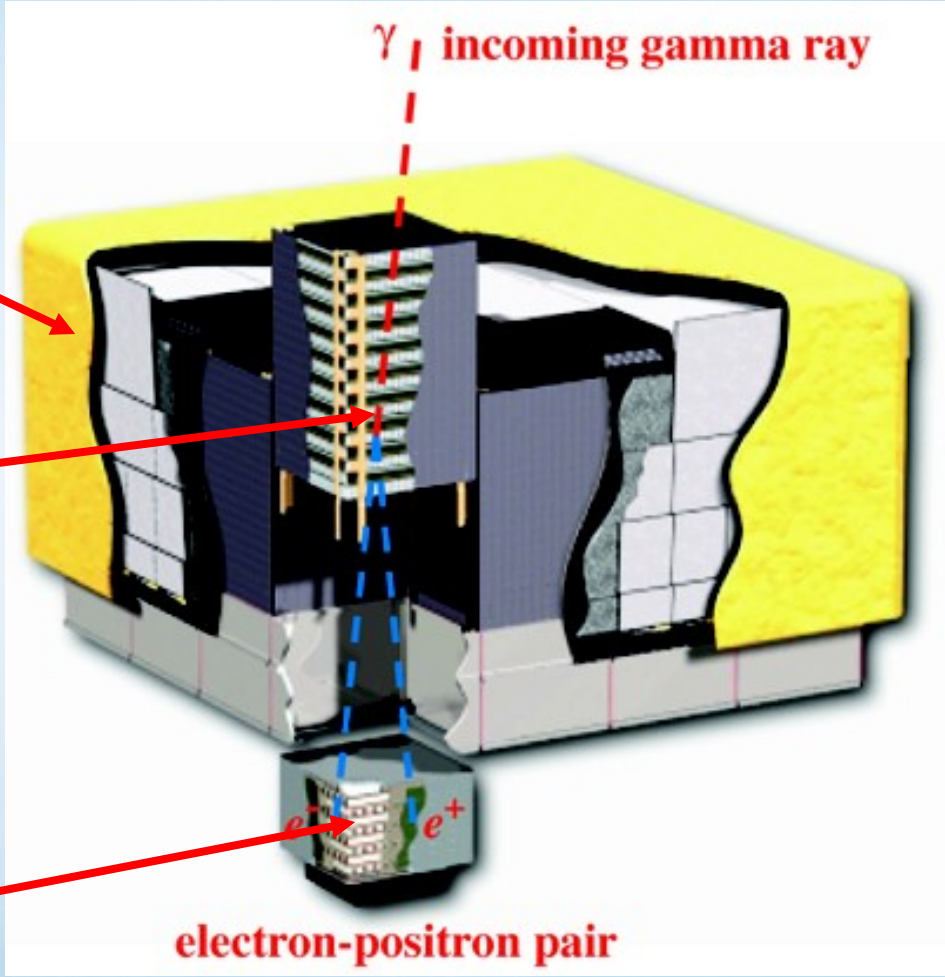
Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope

What is a Pair Conversion Telescope?



How does the LAT work?

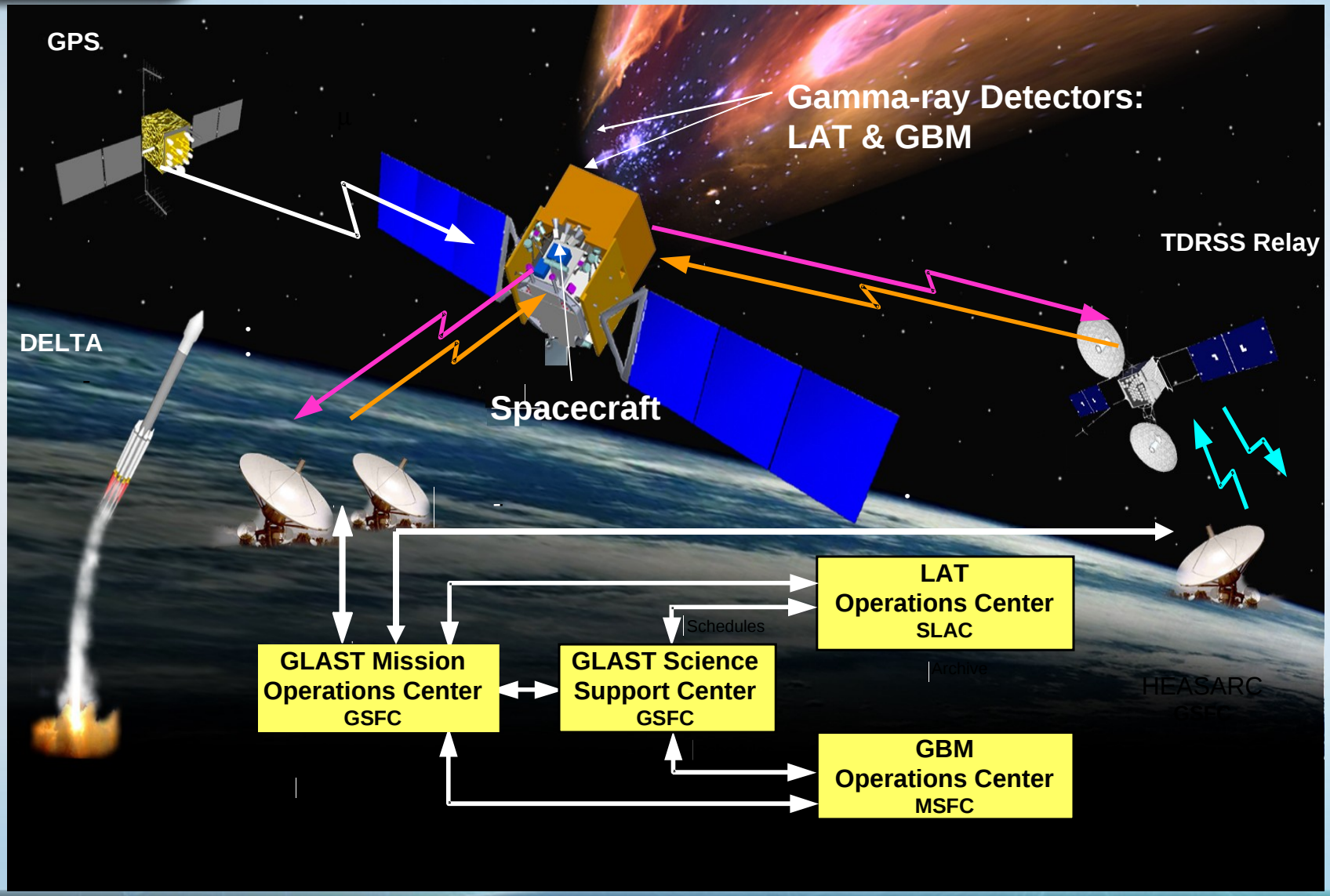
- Anticoincidence Detectors – screen out charged particles
- Tungsten converts gamma rays into e+ e- pairs
- Calorimeter measures total energy



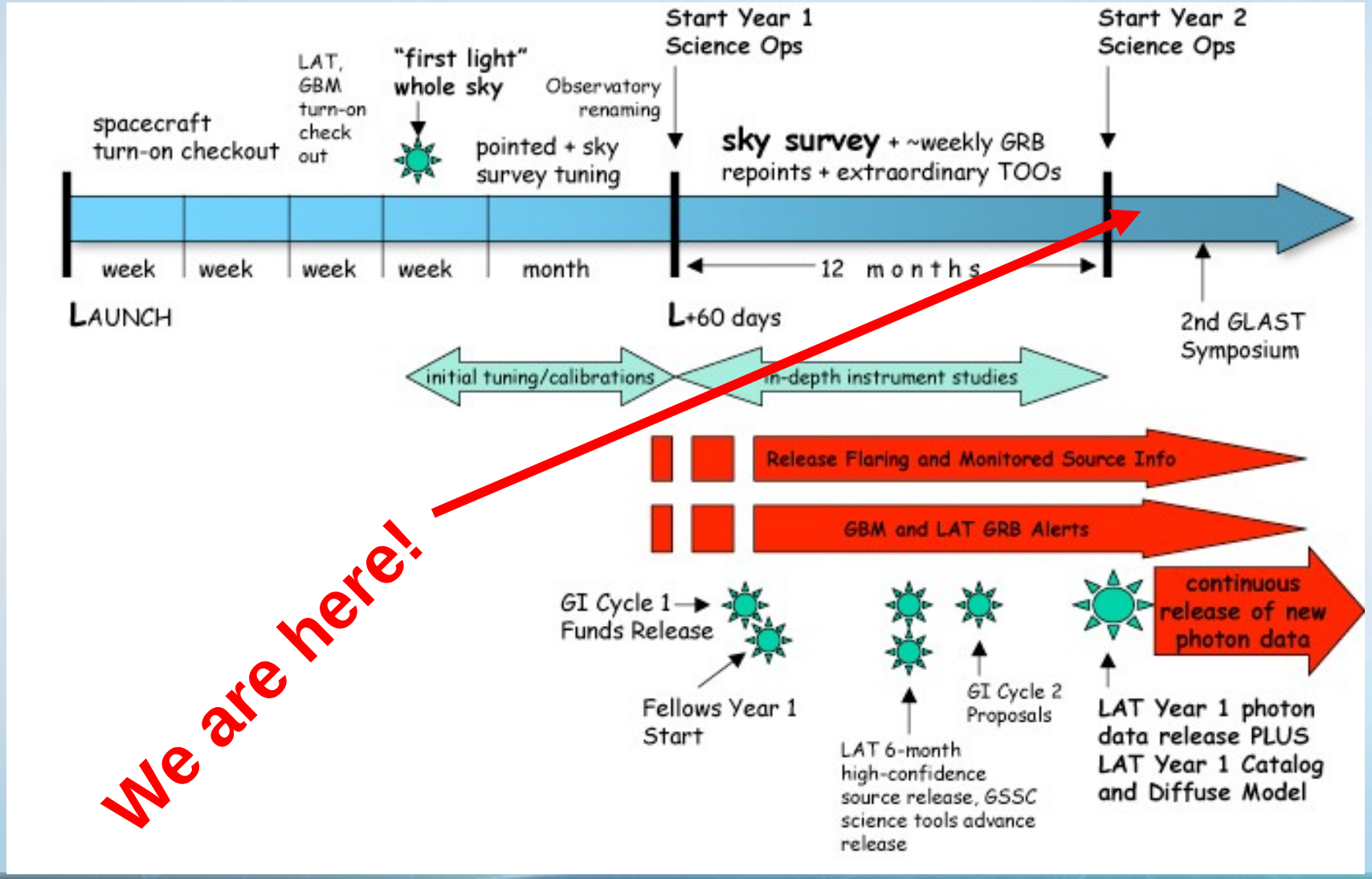
Launched!

- June 11, 2008
- Delta II Heavy (9 solid rocket boosters)
- Mass is 4300 kg
- 555 km circular orbit
- 1500 W total power
- 40 Mb/sec downlink

Mission Data Relay



Mission timeline

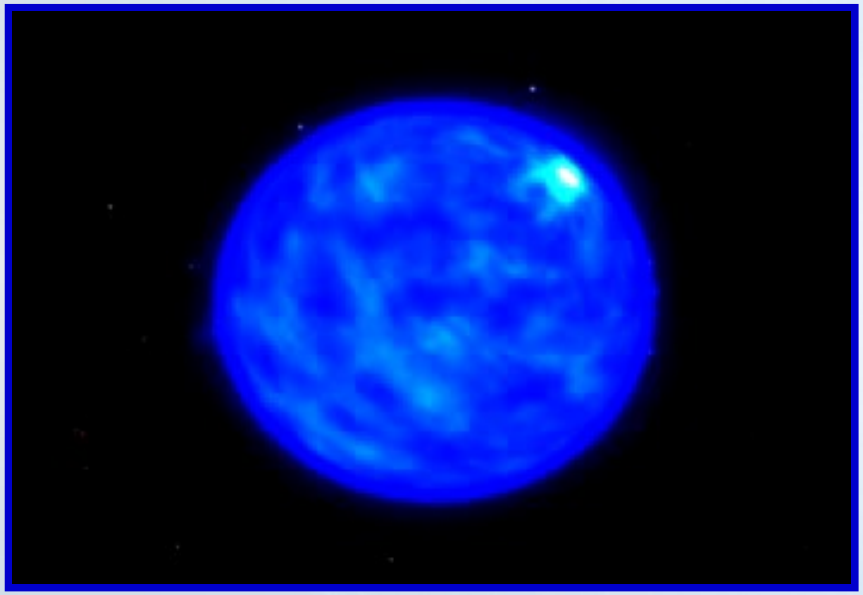


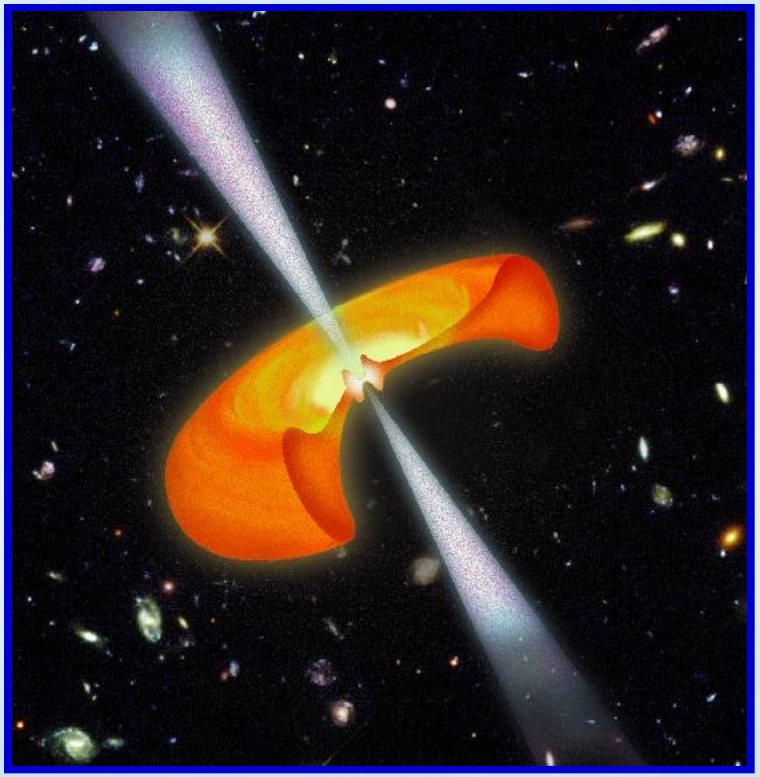
First Light Results

- We renamed the mission after Enrico Fermi, an Italian-American scientist on 8/26/08 when we announced our first results

Enrico Fermi
1901-1954
Nobel in 1938

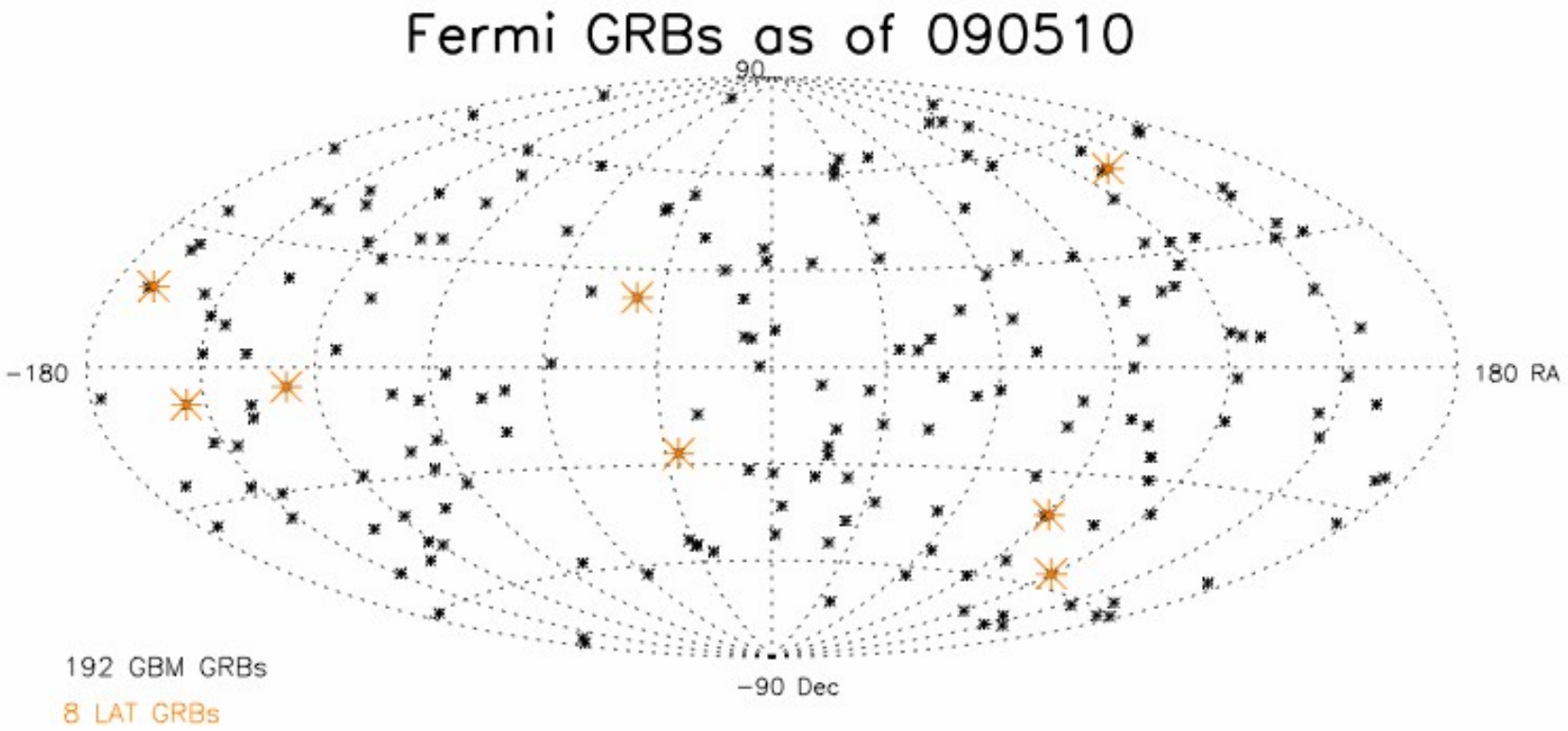
Gamma-ray Bursts from “Hypernovae”





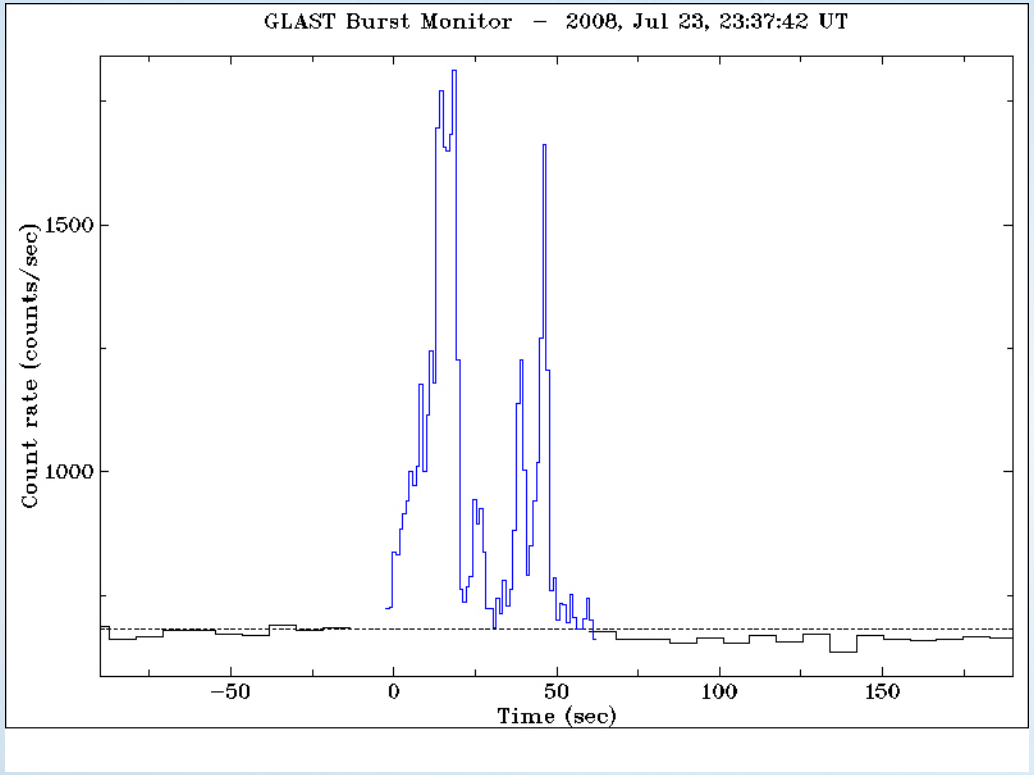
- A billion trillion times the power from the Sun

GBM Bursts in first 10 months



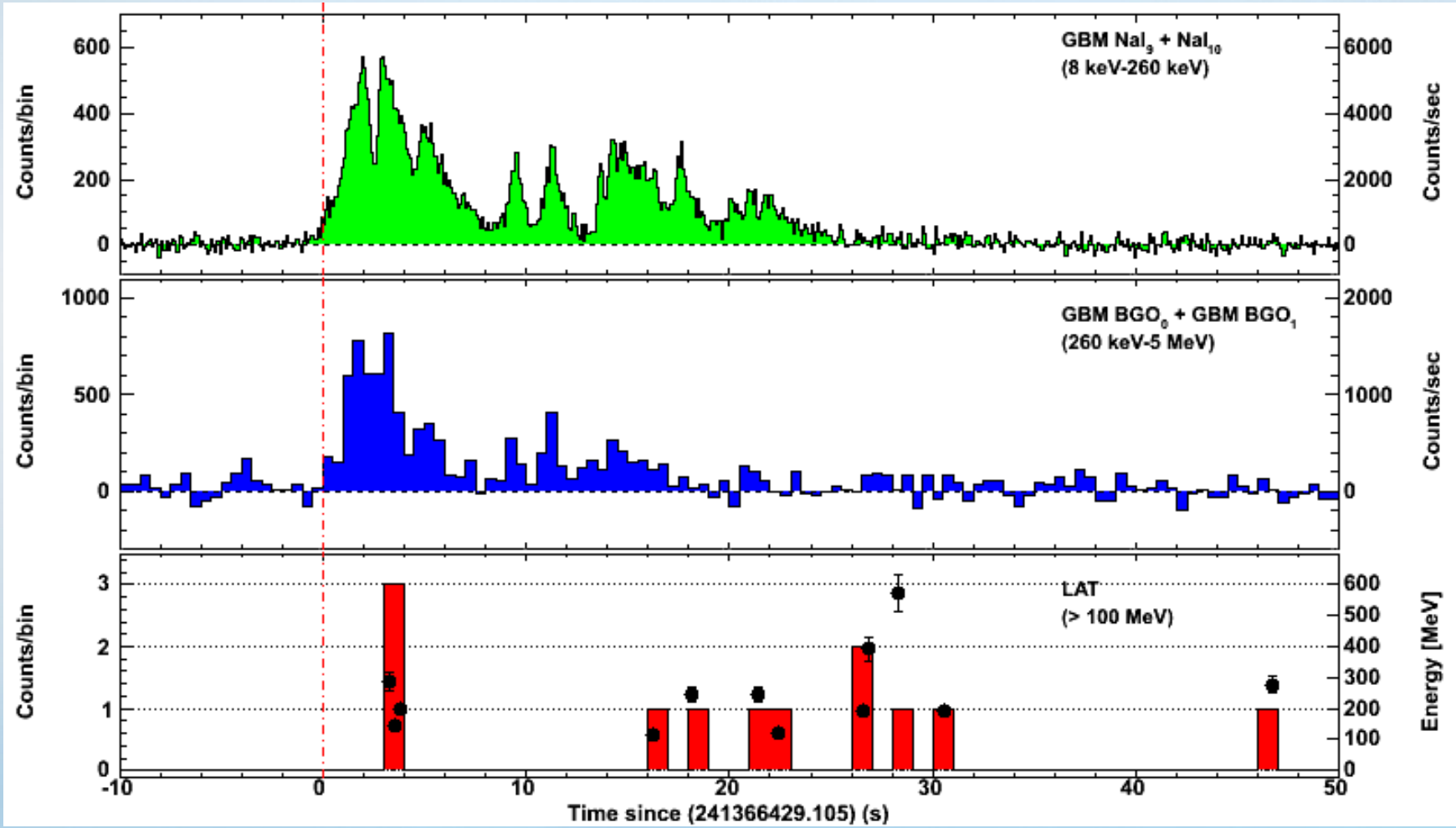
- About 4-5 bursts per week

Typical strong GRB seen by GBM



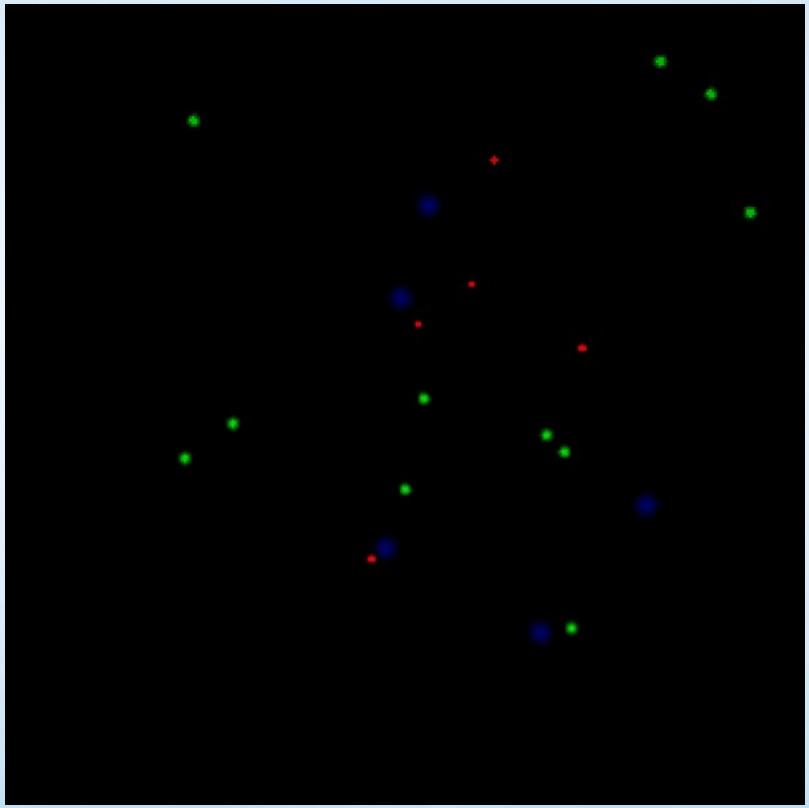
- 190+ GBM bursts seen to date
- Eight LAT-GBM bursts seen in first 10 months

GRB080825C: the 1st LAT GRB

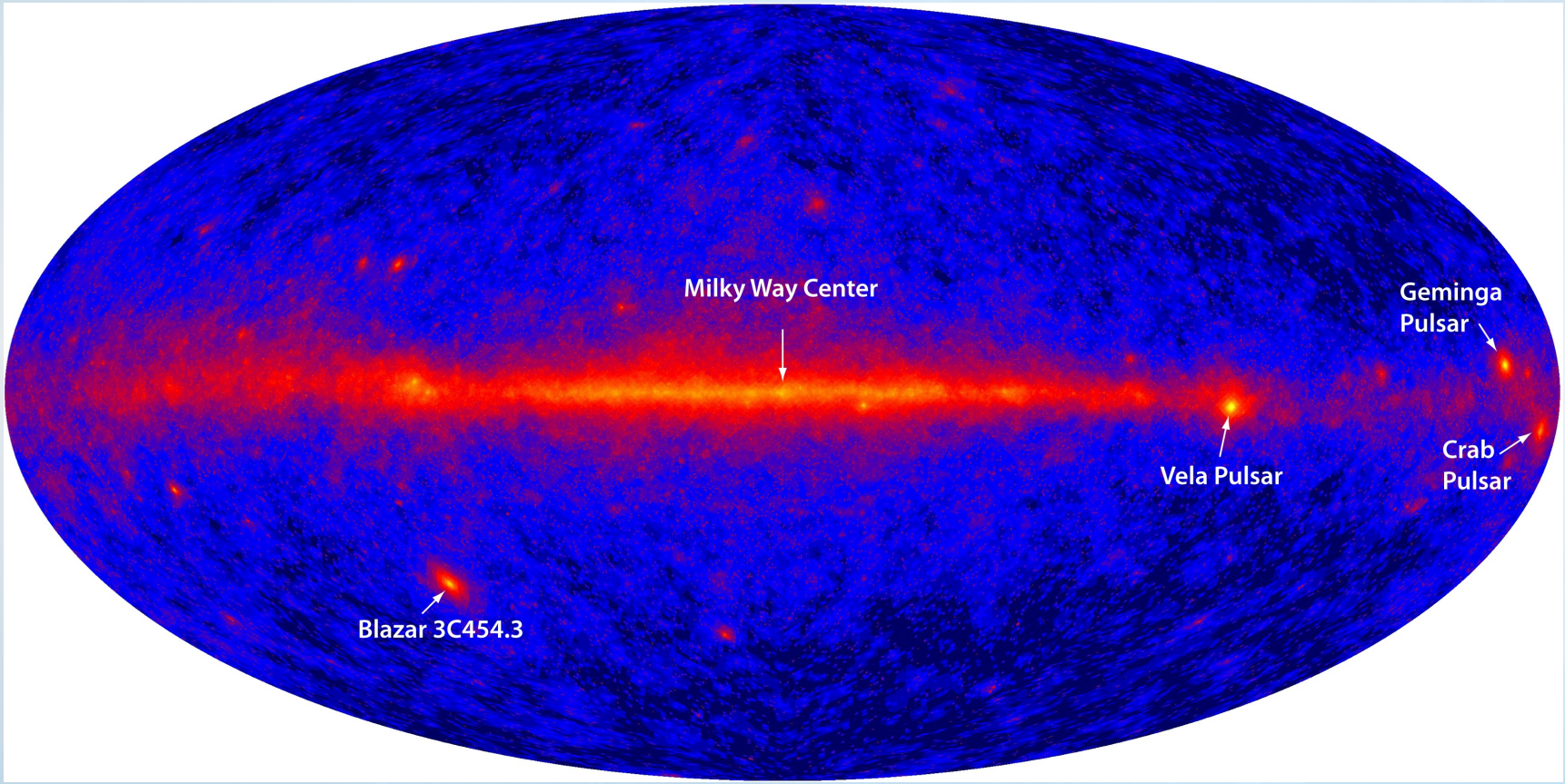


GRB080916C: most extreme GRB yet

- Greatest total energy, the fastest motions and the highest-energy initial emissions ever seen
- Studying the high-energy gamma rays tells us that the charged particles which made those gamma rays were moving at 99.9999% of light speed
- Observing the GRB using visible light tells us that it happened12.2 billion years ago

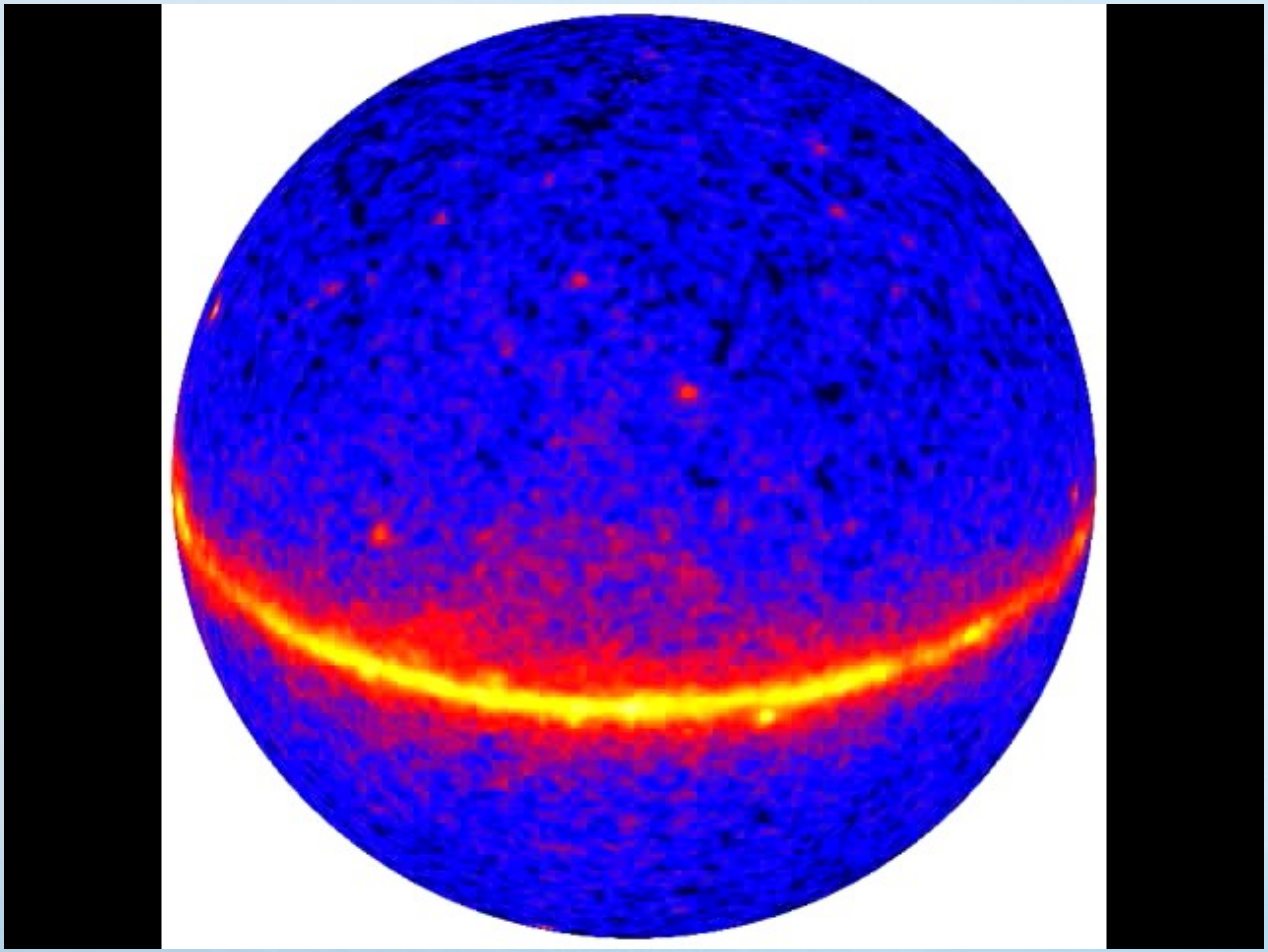


First Light LAT Skymap

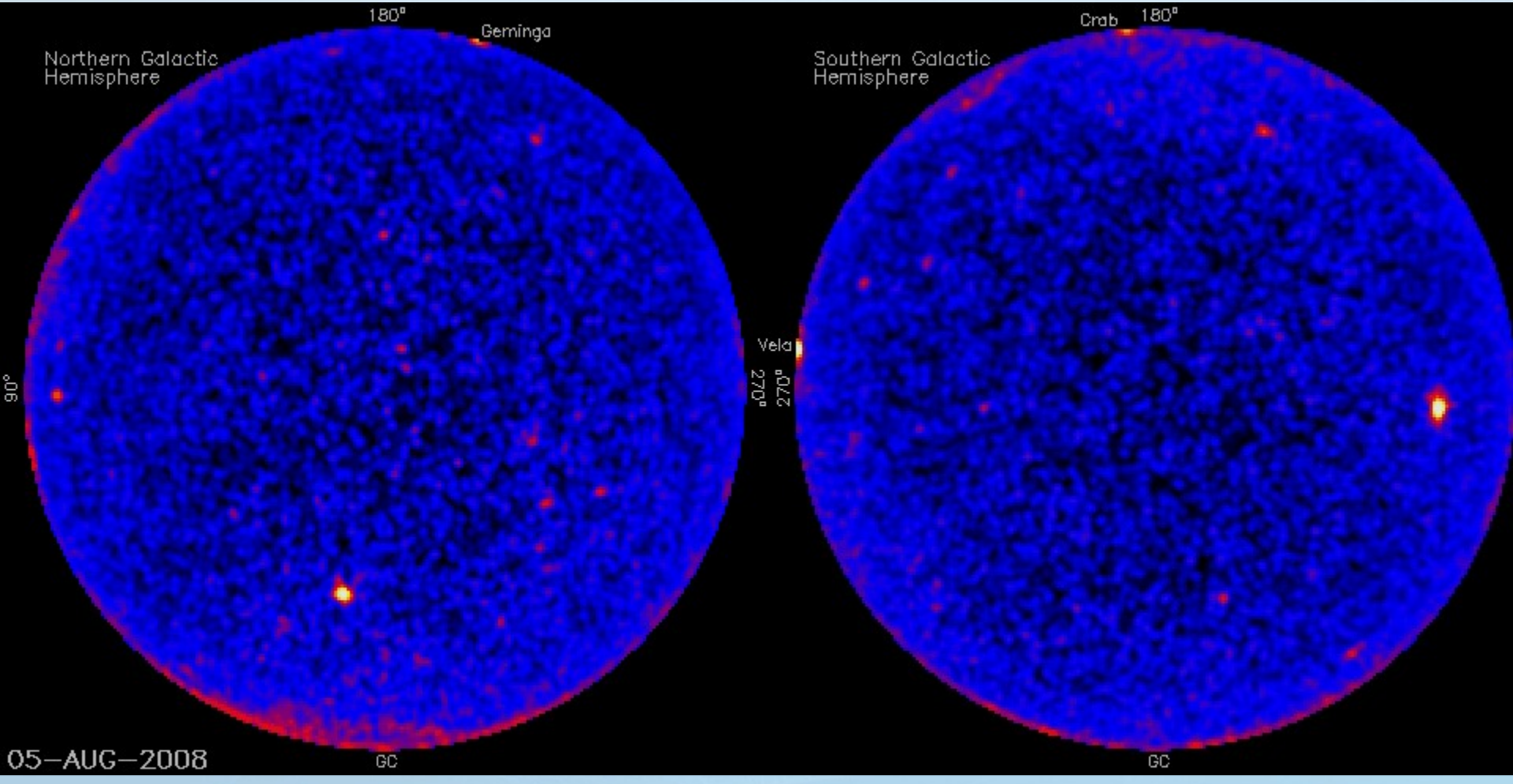


95 hours of LAT data = about 1 year of EGRET sensitivity

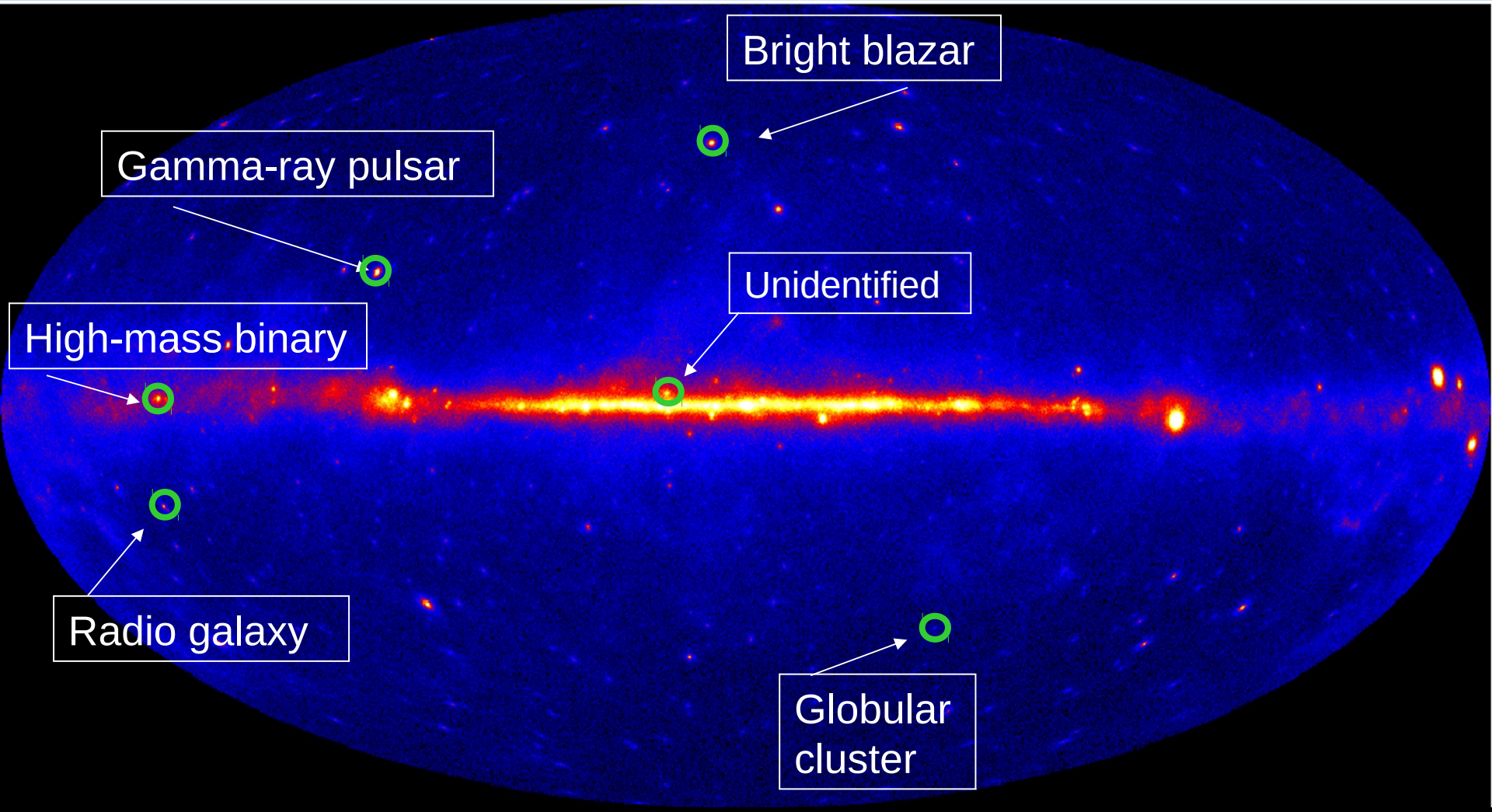
Orthographic projection



3 month skymap

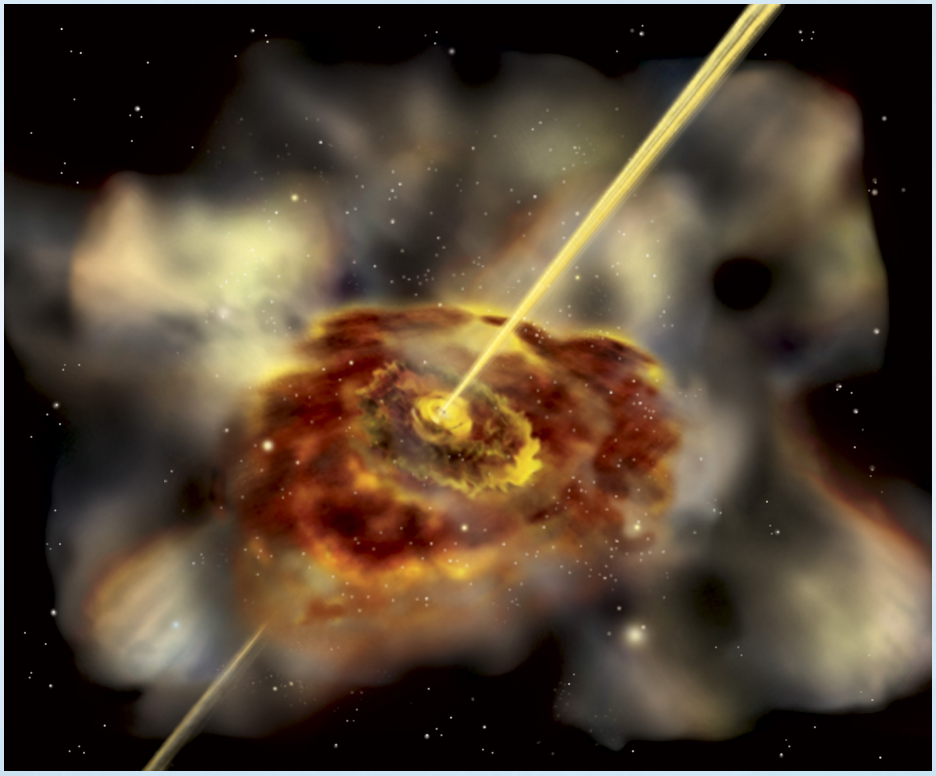


9 month skymap



Gamma-ray Jets from Active Galaxies

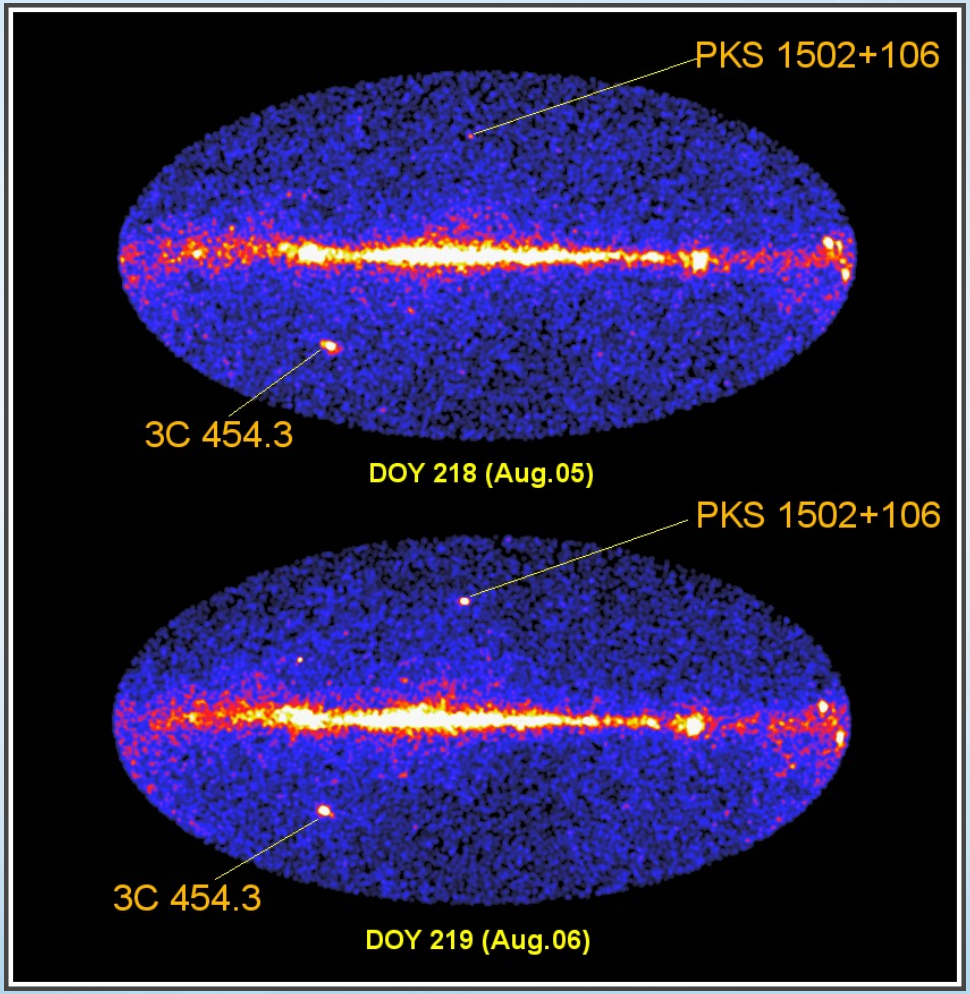
- Jets flare dramatically in gamma rays
- Galaxies that point their jets at us are called “blazars”
- How do the black holes send out jets?



Art by Aurore Simonnet

Monitoring Flares from "Blazars"

- Fermi scans the entire sky every 3 hours
- So blazar flares can be seen on relatively short time scales
- Coordinated campaigns with many ground-based telescopes are providing information about how the flares are occurring



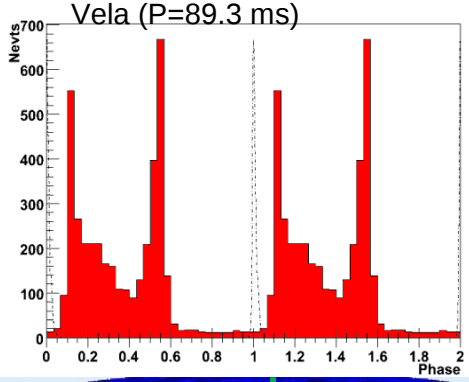
Global Telescope Network

- Students do ground-based visible-light observations using remote telescopes
- GRBs and flaring blazars
- Coordinated with Fermi and other satellite data
- http://gtn.sonoma.edu

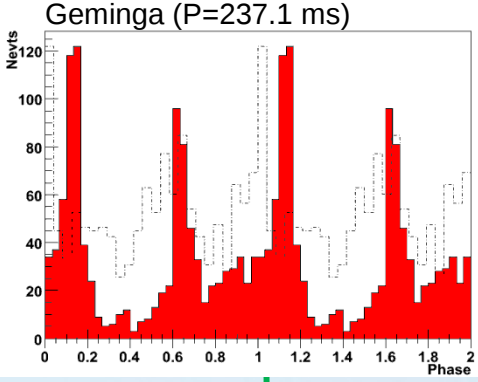
GORT at Pepperwood

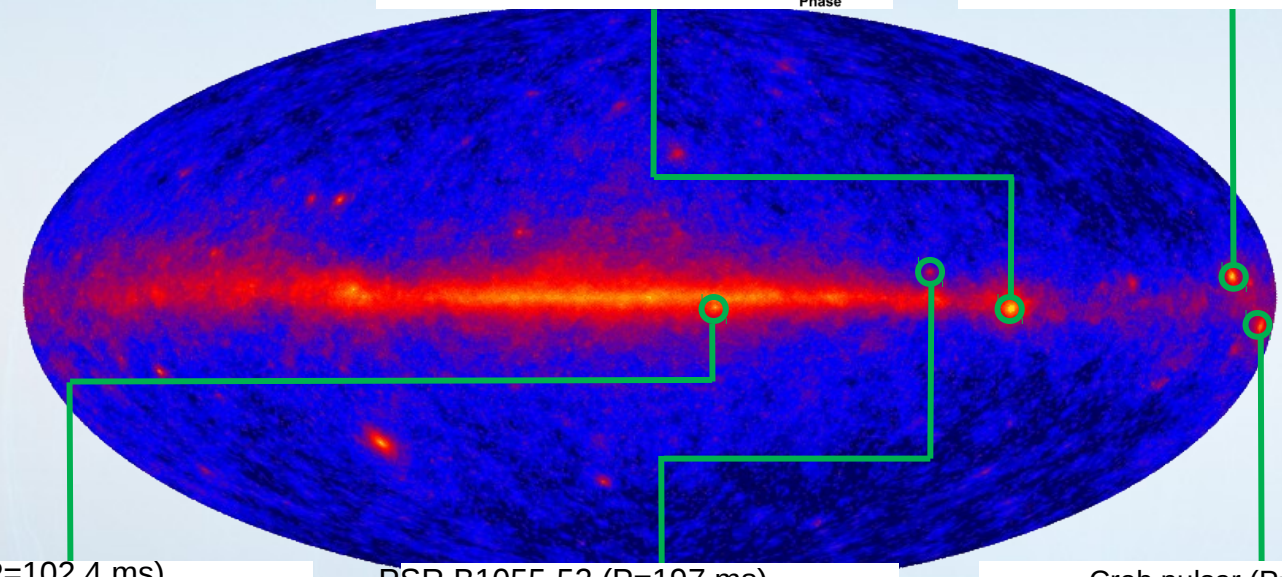
Fermi sees the EGRET pulsars….

Vela (P=89.3 ms)

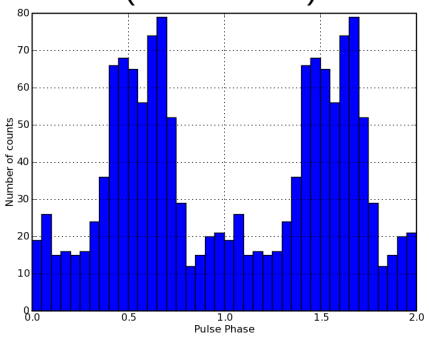


Geminga (P=237.1 ms)

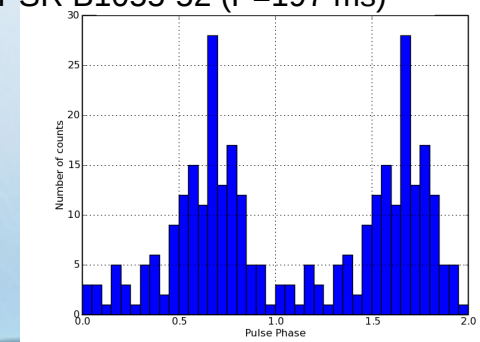




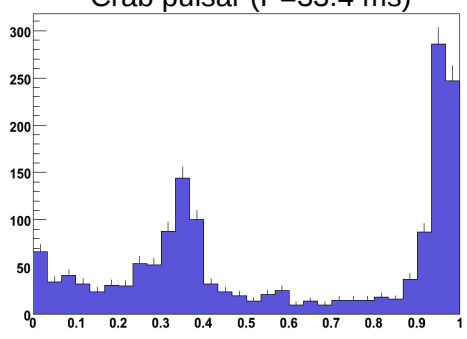
PSR B1706-44 (P=102.4 ms)



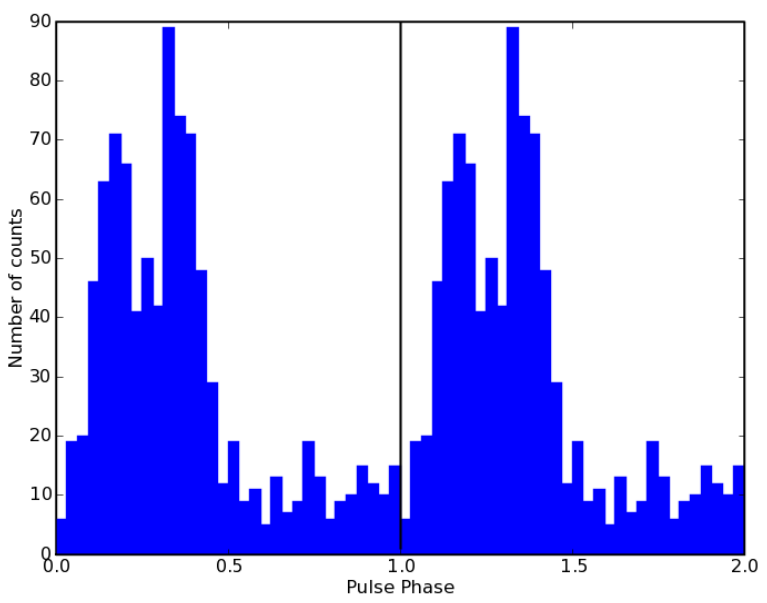
PSR B1055-52 (P=197 ms)



Crab pulsar (P=33.4 ms)

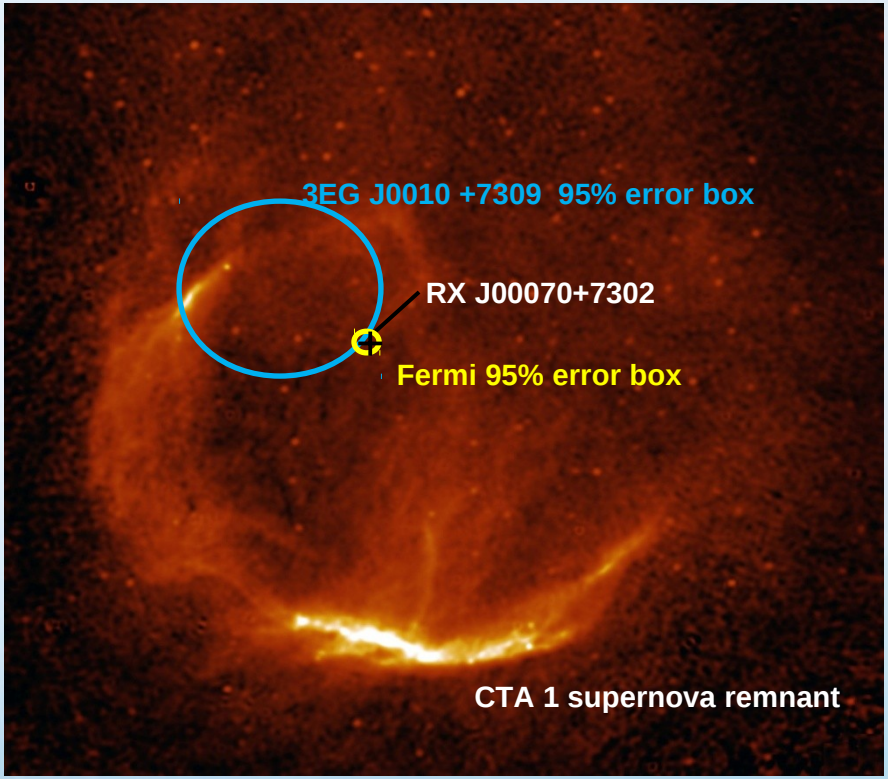


… discovers the 1st gamma-ray only pulsar in CTA1



P = 315.86 ms

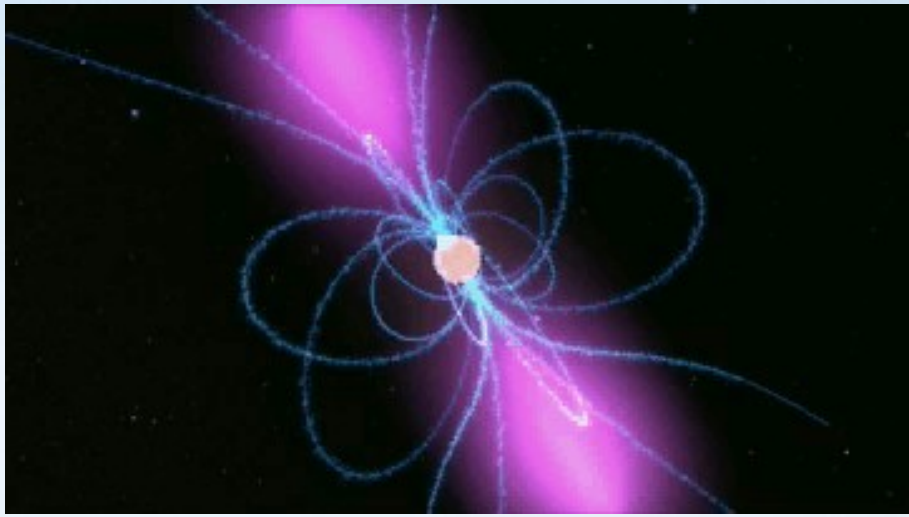
age ~1.4 x 10^4 yr



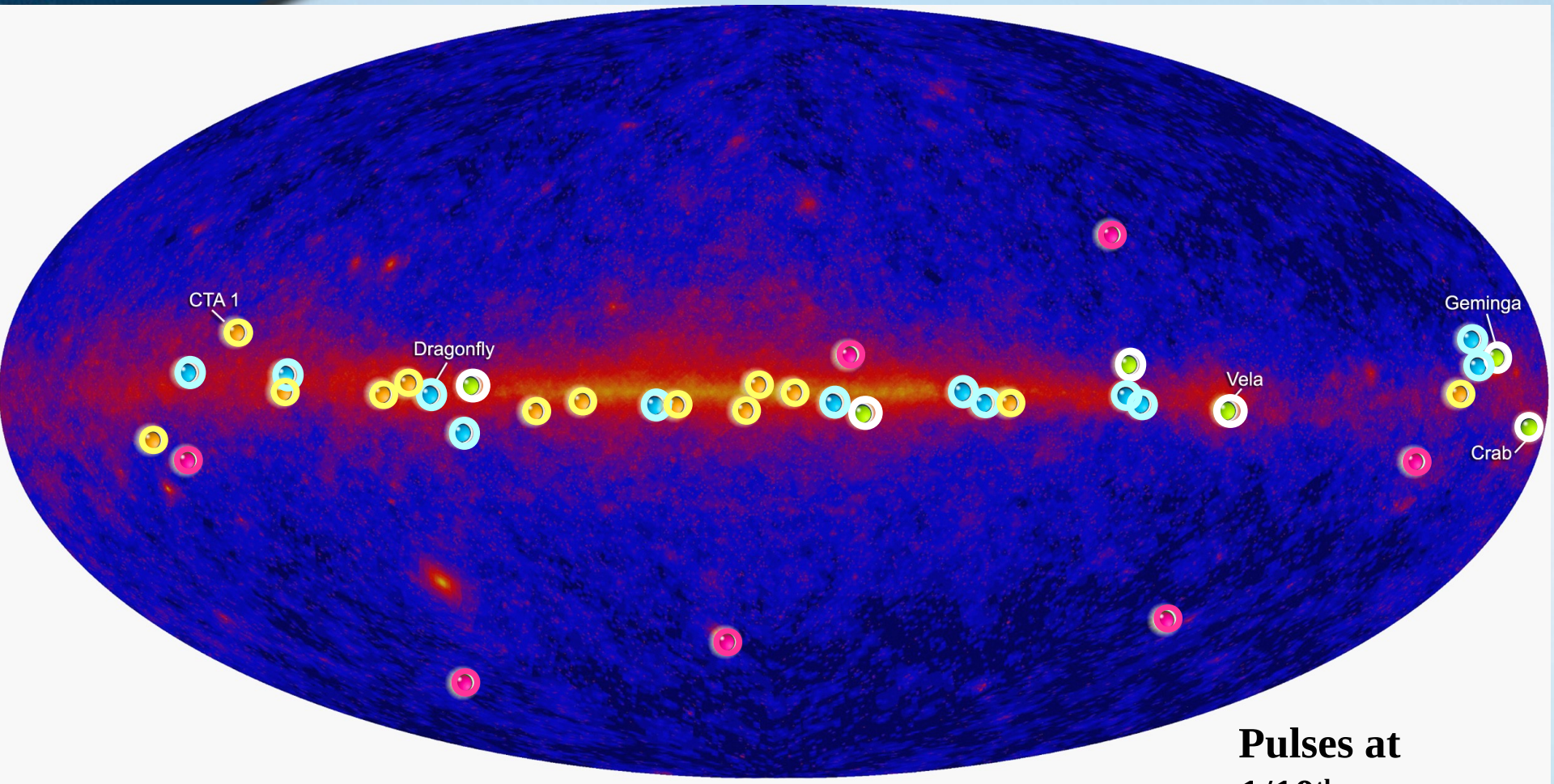
- Pulsar is not at center of SNR
- It's moving at 450 km/sec – kicked by the supernova explosion that created it

How do gamma ray pulsars work?

- Pulsars are not simply lighthouses anymore
- Radio beams are emitted from polar caps
- Gamma rays come from outer magnetosphere



The Pulsing Sky (Romani)



Fermi Pulsar Detections

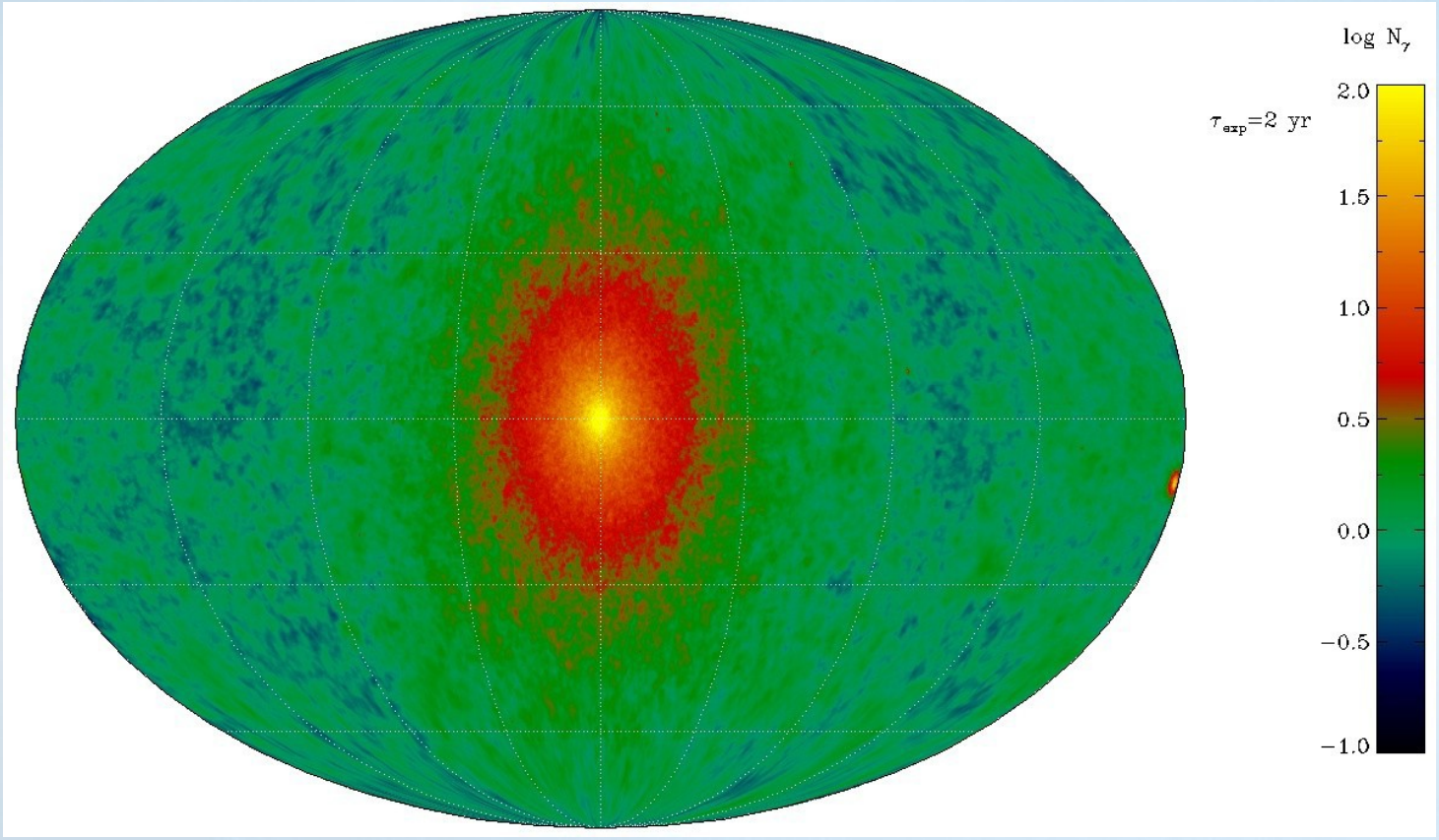
- New pulsars discovered in a blind search
- Millisecond radio pulsars
- Young radio pulsars
- Confirmed pulsars seen by Compton Observatory EGRET instrument

Pulses at 1/10th true rate

Searching for dark matter

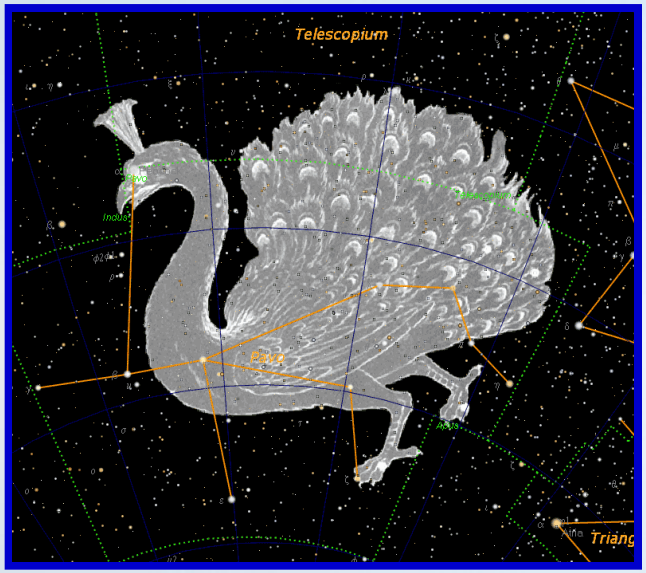
- Dark matter makes up 80% of the matter in the Universe
- The leading particle candidate for dark matter is theorized to self-annihilate, creating gamma-ray lines in the energy range 30 GeV - 10 TeV
- Fermi could see these lines up to 300 GeV (if they exist)
- More lines are expected near the center of our Galaxy

Dark Matter line detectability



2 years of simulated data – detectable galactic center halo from Kuhlen, Diamand and Madau 2007

Fly the Gamma-ray Skies



- Follow GRBs on the GRB Skymap site
- Join the Global Telescope Network

Conclusions

- Fermi has already gone far beyond the sensitivity of EGRET and is discovering new classes of high-energy gamma ray sources
- Fermi is opening wide a new window on the Universe – which may show us connections between the infinite and the infinitesimal
- Stay tuned – the best is yet to come!
- For more info: http://www.nasa.gov/fermi

For more information:

- http://fermi.sonoma.edu
- http://grb.sonoma.edu
- http://gtn.sonoma.edu

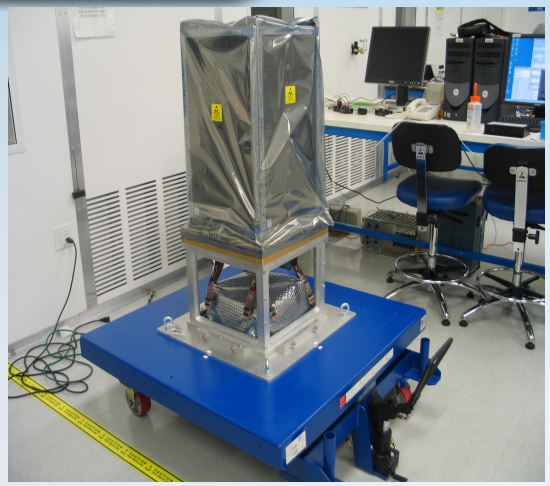
Also see my group's site:

http://epo.sonoma.edu

Photo Credit: Linnea Mullins

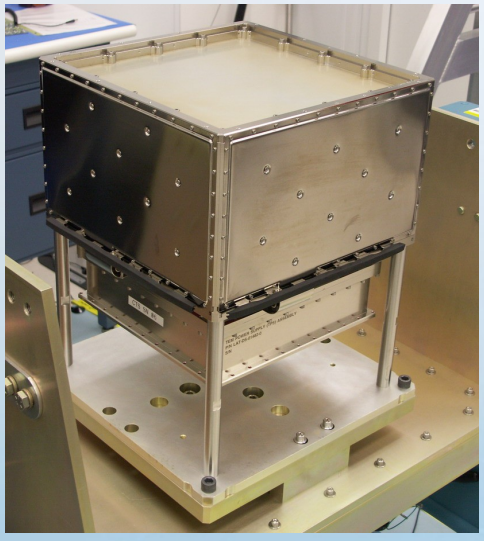
Backups Follow

LAT Hardware

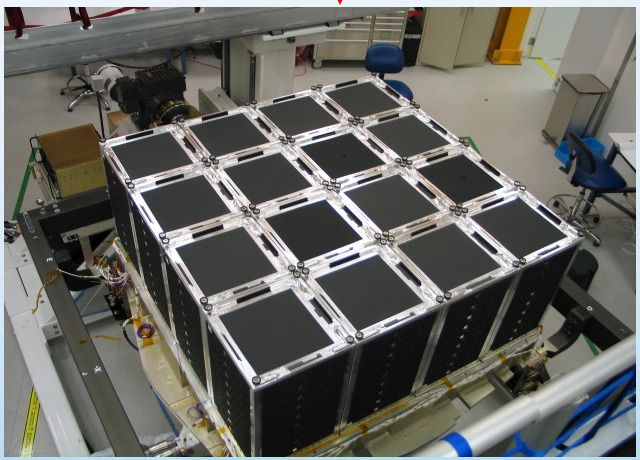


Trackers

Grid Structure



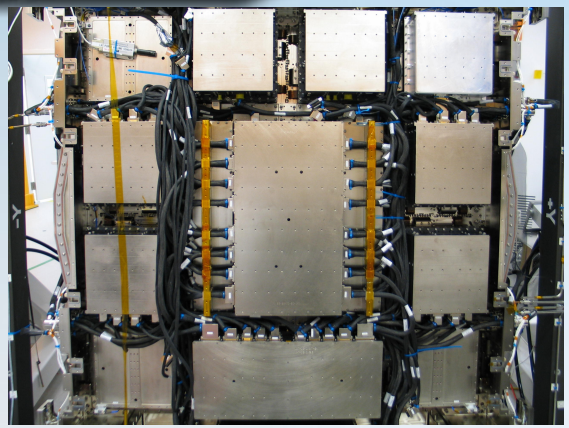
Calorimeters

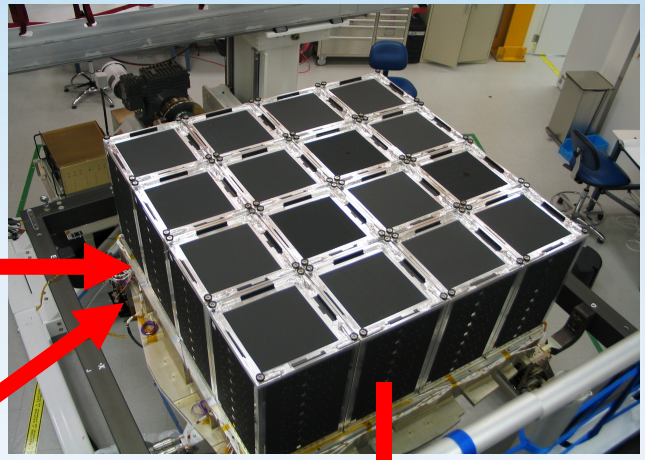


16 Towers

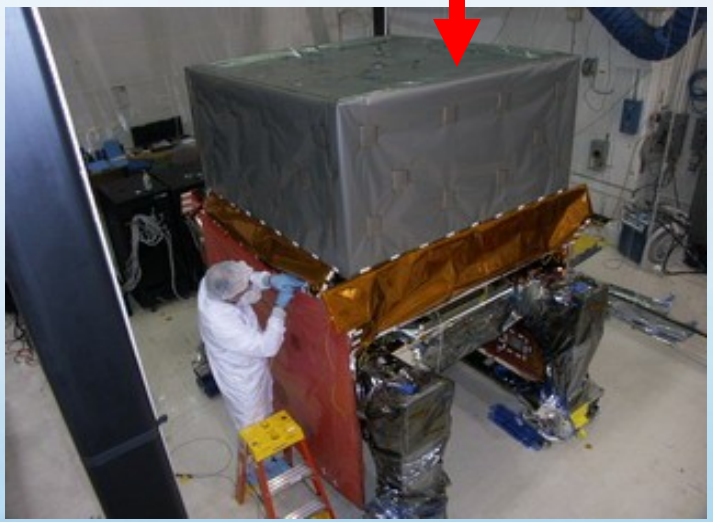
LAT Hardware

16 Towers





Global Electronics



Anticoincidence Detectors

Integrated LAT with radiators

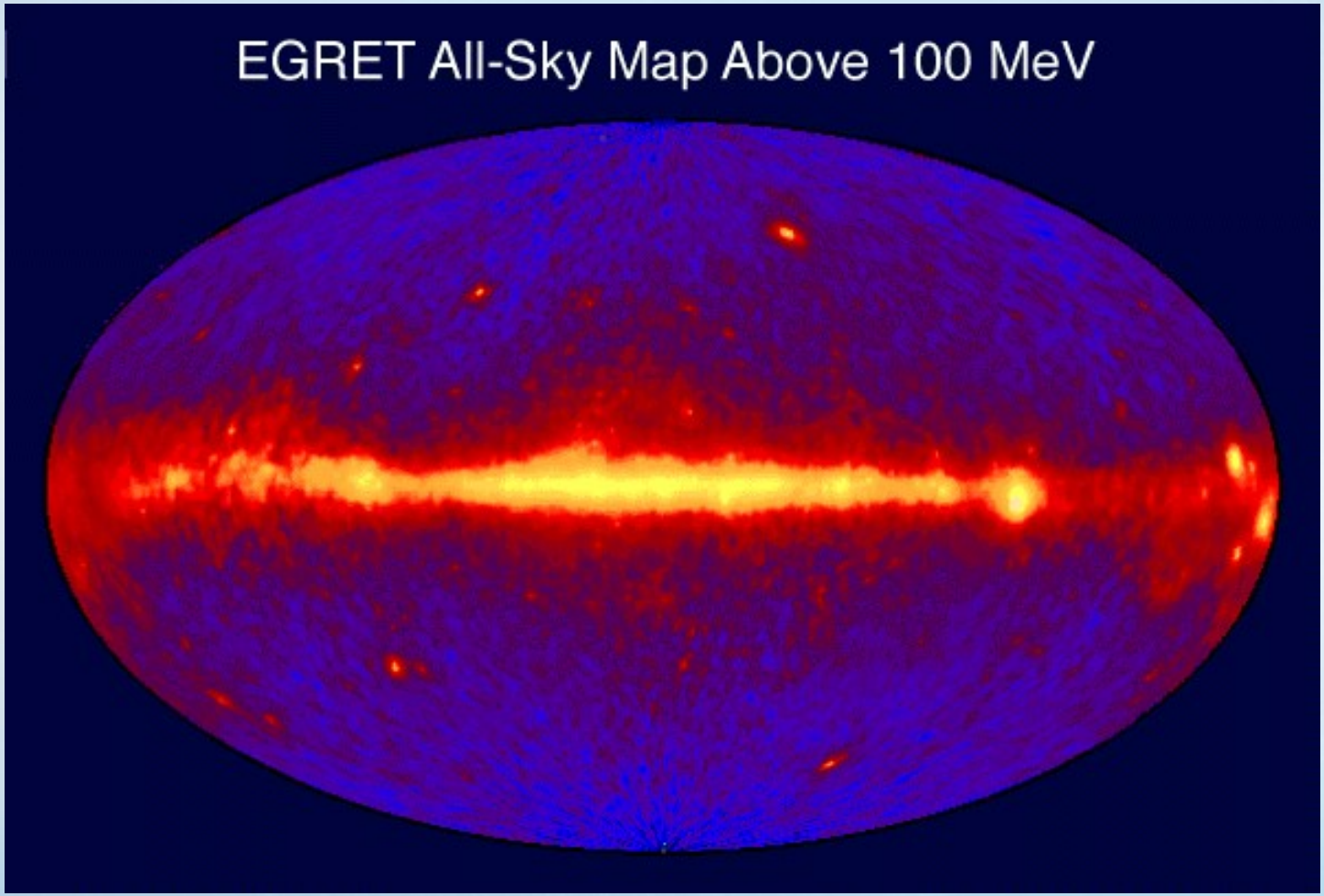
EGRET vs. Fermi LAT

	EGRET	Fermi LAT
Energy Range	20 MeV - 30 GeV	20 MeV - 300 GeV
Energy Resolution	10%	<10%
Effective Area	1500 cm^2	> 8000 cm^2
Field of View	0.5 sr	> 2 sr
Angular Resolution	5.8^o @ 100 MeV	< 3.5^o @ 100 MeV
		< 0.15^o > 10 GeV
Sensitivity	~ 10^{-7} cm^{-2} s^{-1}	<6 x 10^{-9} cm^{-2} s^{-1}
Source Location	5 - 30 arcmin	< 0.5 arcmin
Lifetime	1991 - 1997	2008 – 2013+

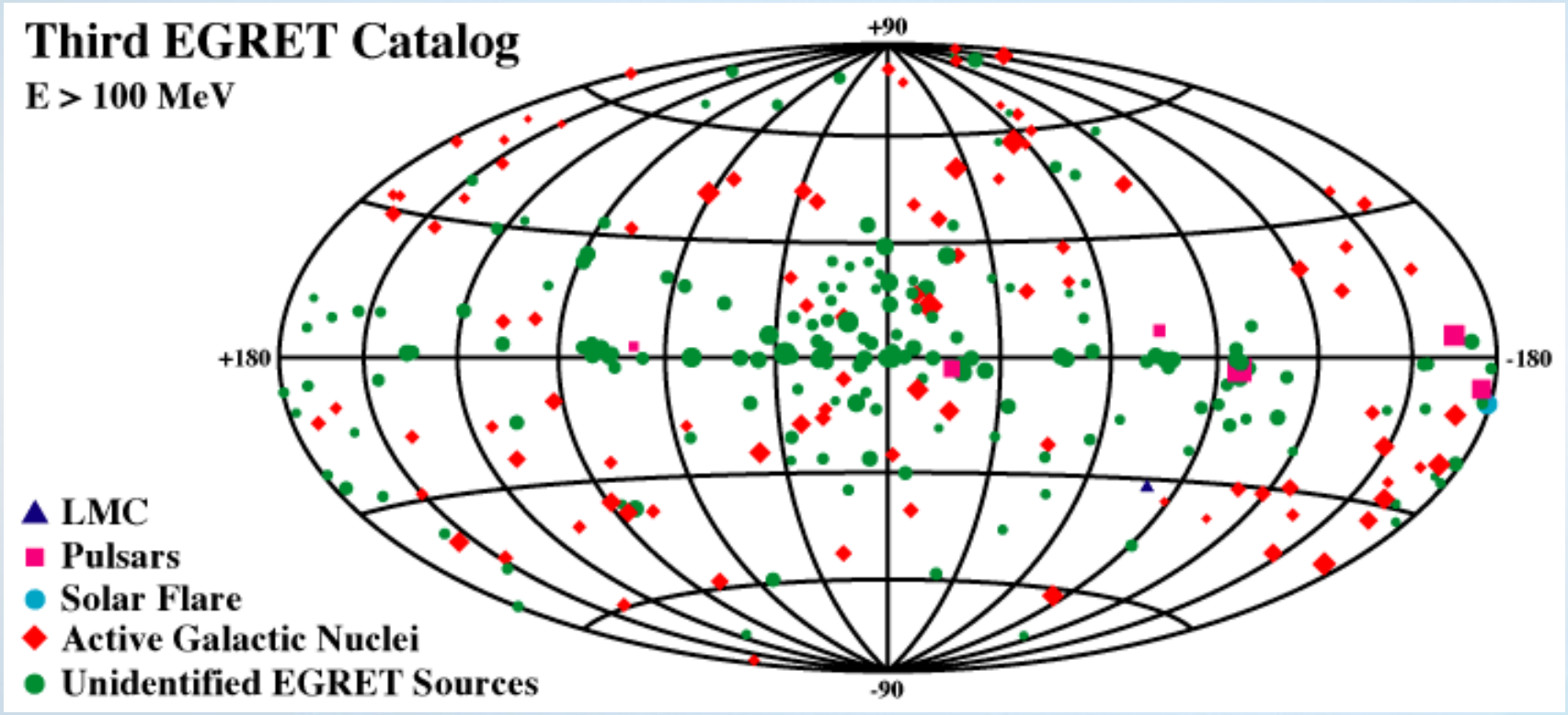
EGRET's Legacy

- Established blazars as largest class of extra-galactic γ-ray emitters
- Observed many blazar flares, some <1 day
- > 60% of ~270 sources are unidentified
- Measured extra-galactic γ-ray background
- Discovered gamma-rays from 4 pulsars
- Showed $E<10^{15}$ eV cosmic rays are galactic
- Detected solar flares and some γ-ray bursts at E>1 GeV

EGRET All-Sky Map



3rd EGRET Catalog



- LAT should detect thousands of sources

GRB Observations with Fermi

- **GBM**:
  - 160 GRBs so far (18% are short)
  - Detection rate: ~200-250 GRB/yr
  - A fair fraction are in LAT FoV
  - Automated repoint enabled
- **LAT detections**: (5 in 1st 8 months)
  - GRB080825C: >10 events above 100 MeV
  - GRB080916C:
  - >10 events above 1 GeV and >140 events above 100 MeV
  - GRB081024B: first short GRB with >1 GeV emission
  - 5 + 2 more possible detections

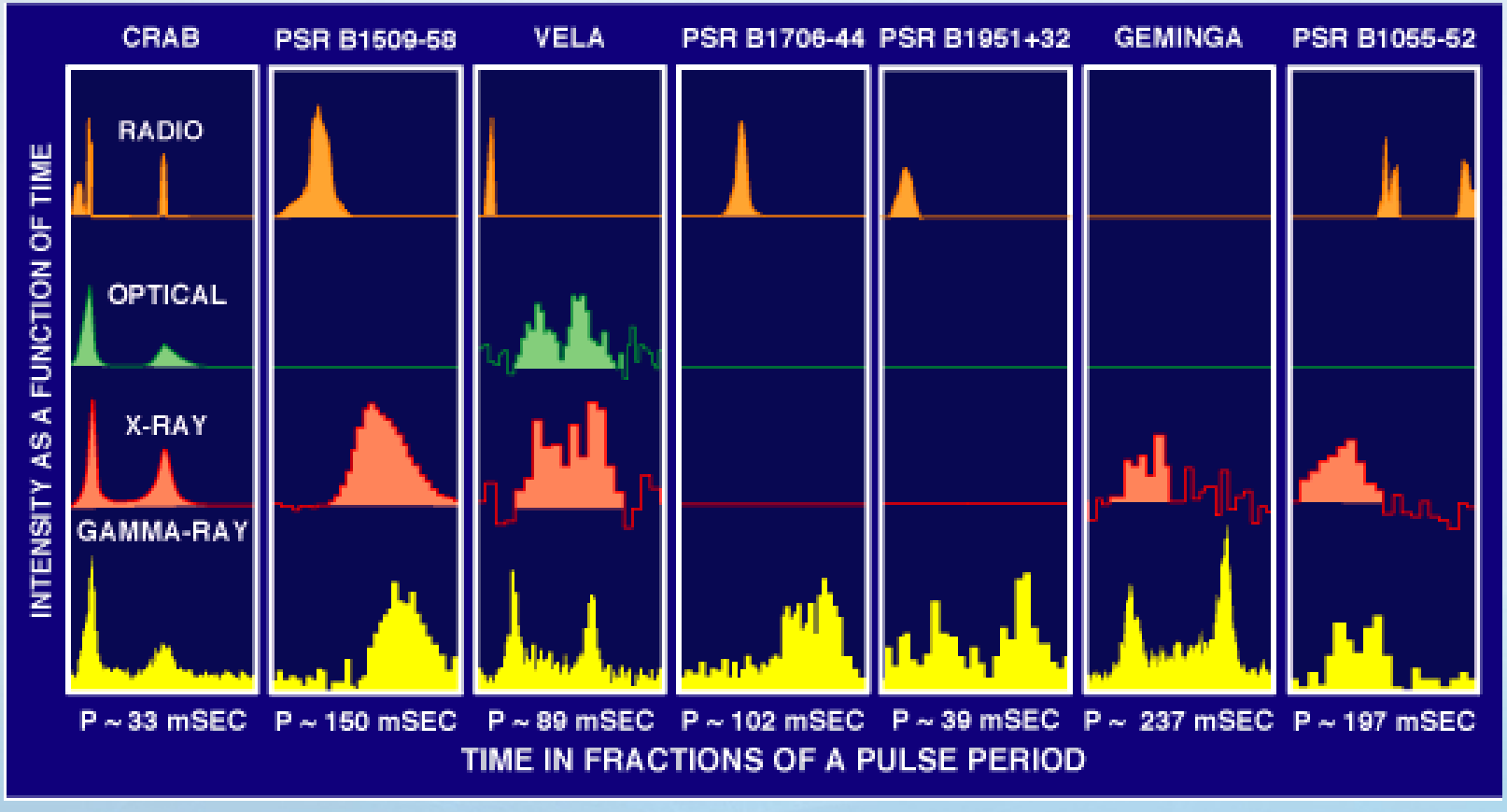
Unidentified Sources

- 170 of the 270 sources in the 3rd EGRET catalog have no counterparts at longer wavelengths
- Variable sources appear at both low and high galactic latitudes
- High-latitude sources appear to be both extra-galactic and galactic
- Steady medium latitude sources may be associated with Gould's belt (star forming region)

Possible Unidentified Sources

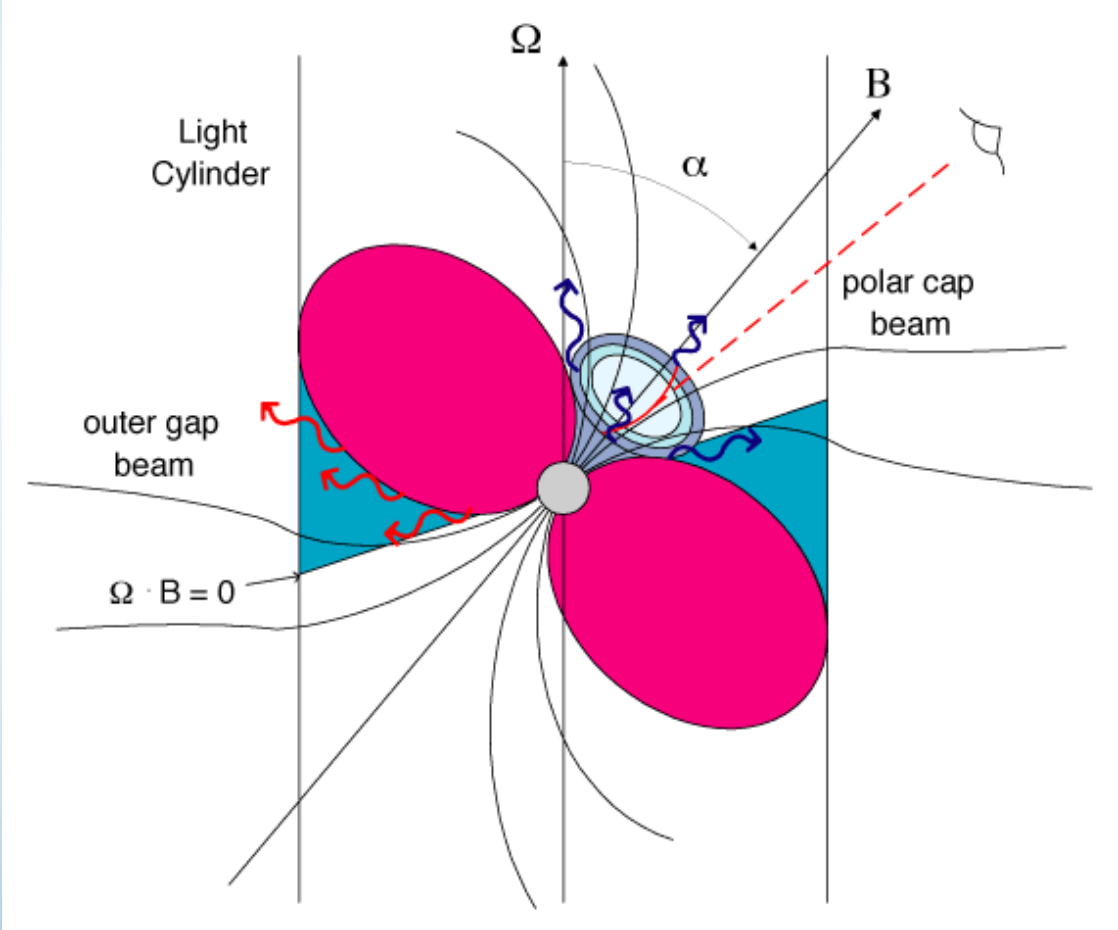
- Radio-quiet pulsars: Geminga-like objects can be found with direct pulsation searches
- Previously unknown blazars: flaring objects will have good positions, helping IDs
- Binary systems: shocked winds between companions will show time variability
- Microquasars: time variability, X/γ correlation
- Clusters of galaxies: steady, high-latitude sources should show shock spectra

EGRET pulsars



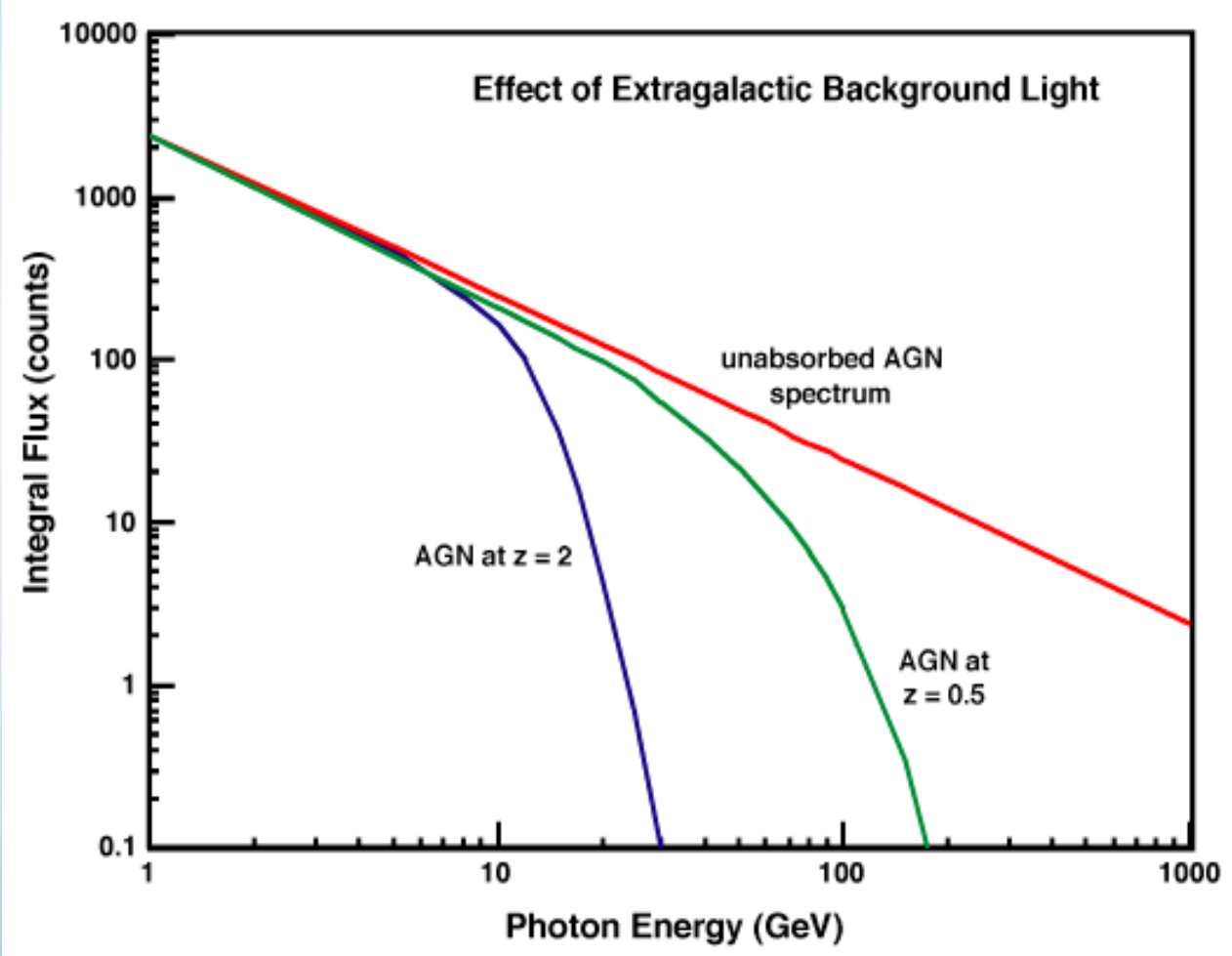
Outer gap vs. polar cap models

- Where are particles accelerated?
- How is particle beam energy converted into photons?
- What is shape of pulsar beam?
- How many pulsars are there? Birth rate?
- Where is most of the energy?

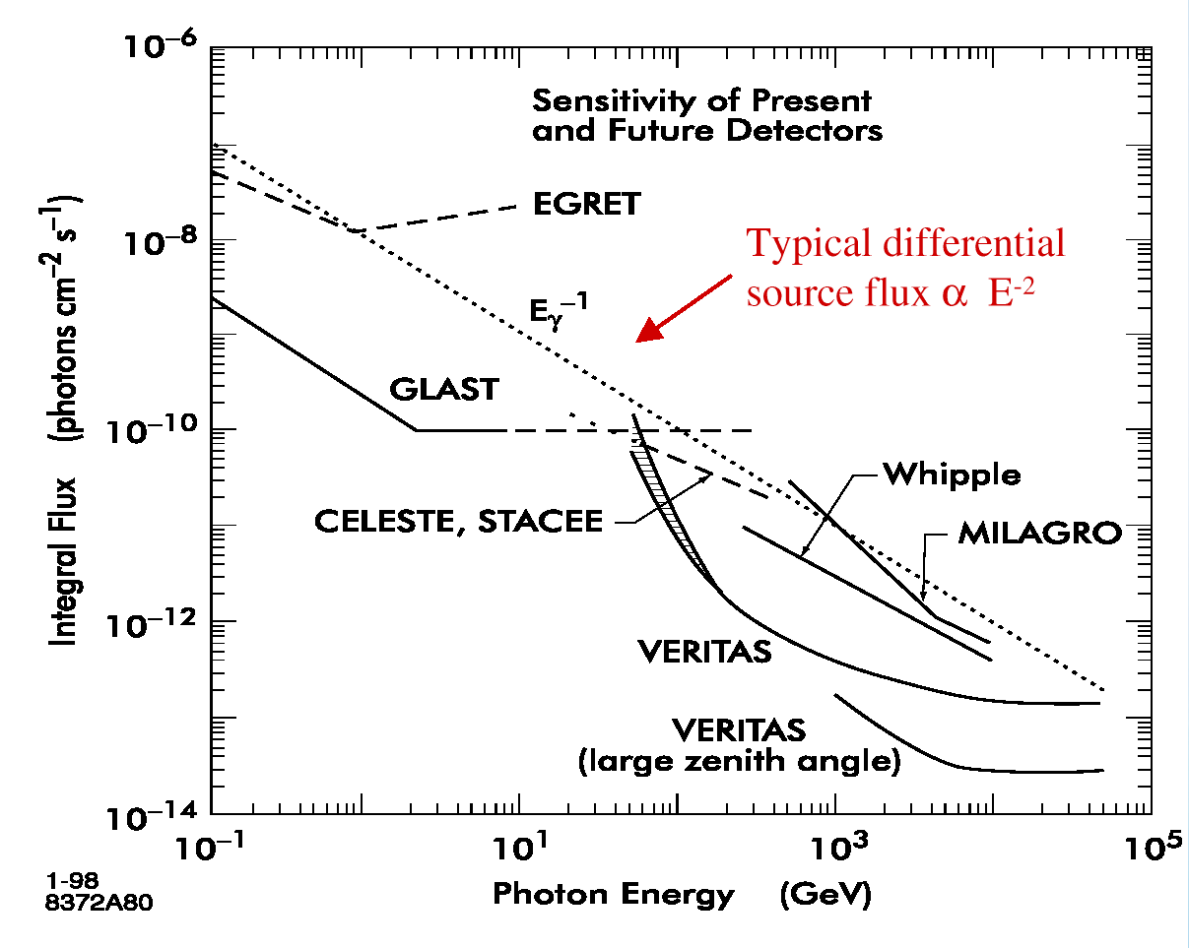


LAT studies EBL cutoff

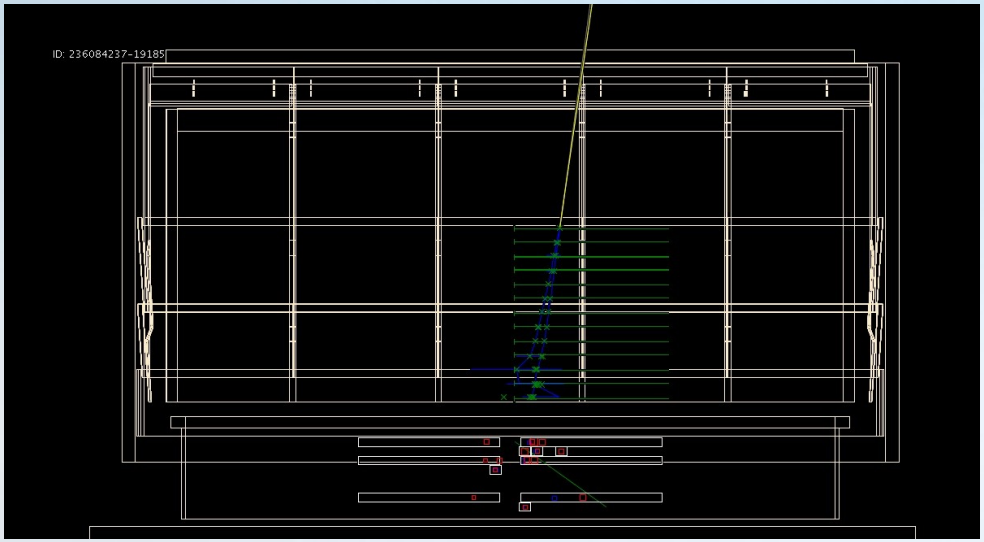
Probe history of star formation to z ~4 by determining spectral cutoff in AGN due to EBL

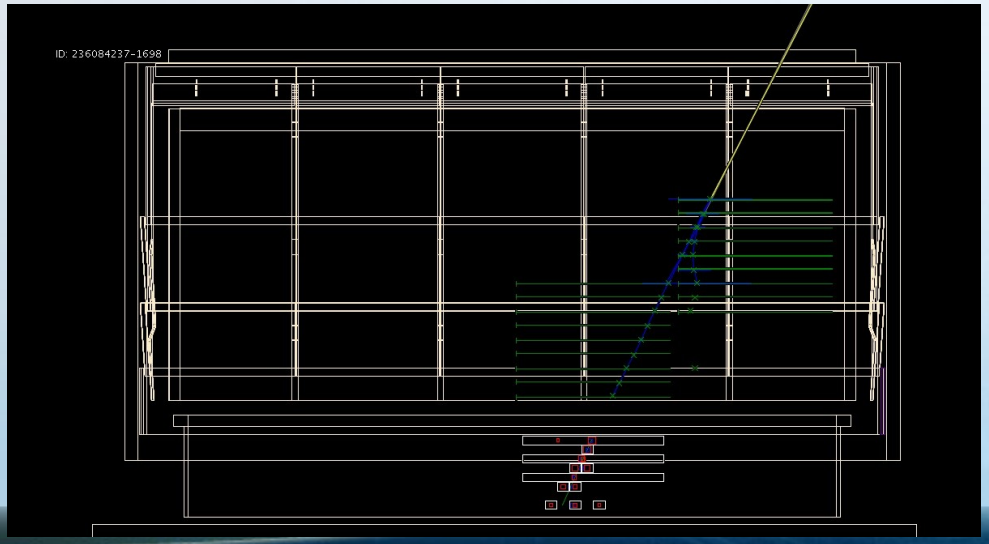


LAT vs. Ground-based HE Arrays



LAT Single GR Event Displays





green = charged particles

blue = reconstructed track

yellow = gamma-ray estimated direction

red = energy depositions in the calorimeter