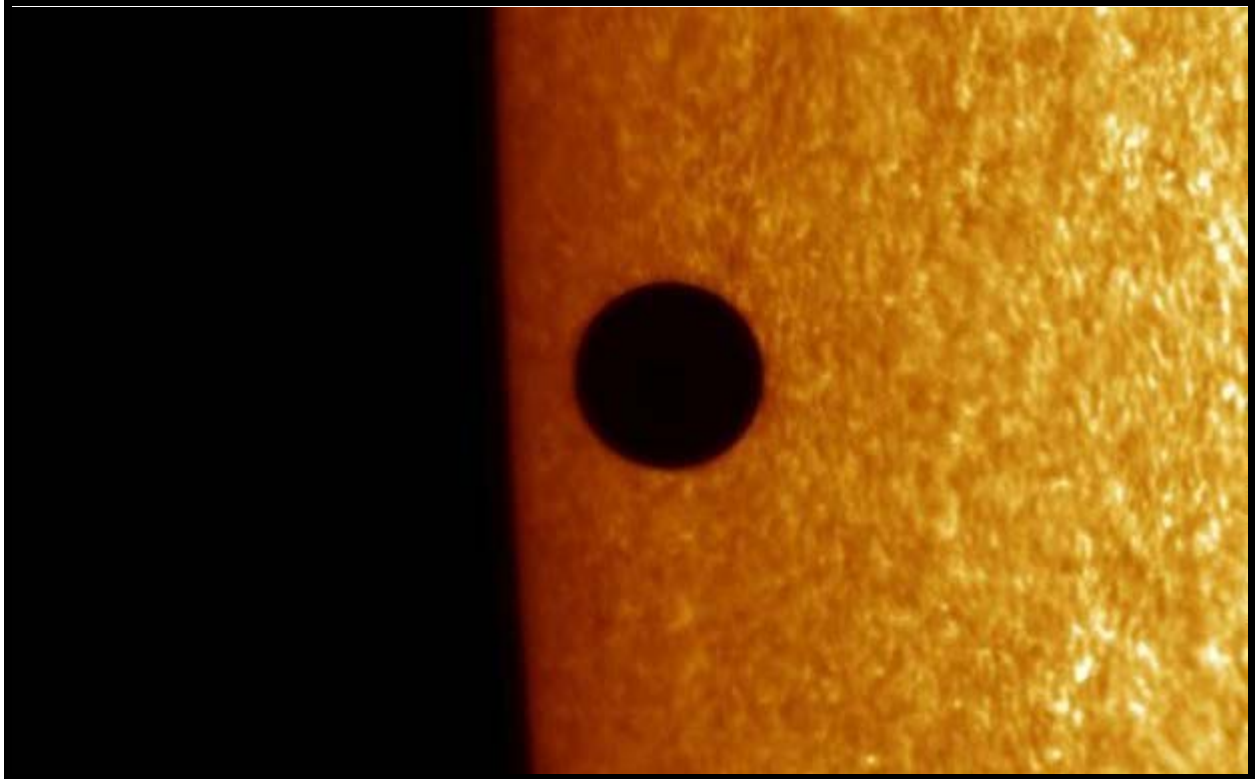
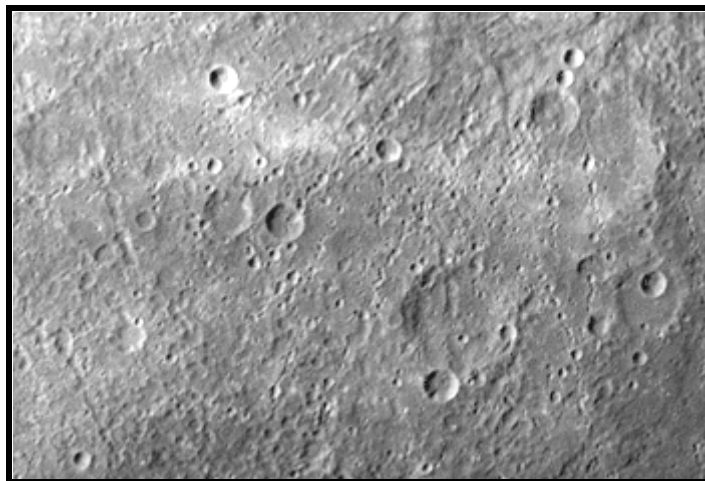


# MERCURY



The planet Mercury passes in front of our Sun in this Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences Solar Telescope photograph, 2003. Mercury, the closest planet to the Sun, has almost no atmosphere at all and is heavily cratered like our Moon. [*Comparison: Mercury's diameter is 3,032 miles and Earth's diameter is 12,756; surface gravity is 0.38 of Earth; surface atmospheric pressure is basically zero.*]



One in a series of close-up photographs by the NASA Mariner 10 spacecraft during flybys a few thousand miles from the surface of Mercury, 1974-75.

A stone meteorite specimen which research indicates is so lacking in oxygen that it may be from Mercury, or have formed as a *vulcanoid* within the orbit of Mercury, is part of the *Space Rocks* collection that you can hold.

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