

20 November



(Picture credits: *NASA*)

### *Swift launch anniversary (2004)*

**Space agency/country:** NASA  
**Mission:** *Swift*

NASA's Neil Gehrels *Swift* Observatory was launched on 20 November 2004. The launch vehicle was composed of a Delta 7320 rocket and two telescopes. To this day, it is the only satellite capable of locating energetic gamma-ray bursts with extreme accuracy. Gamma-rays are the most pure and strongest form of light in the Universe, typically originating right after a major event such as supernova explosions—death throes of massive stars—and merging neutron stars. To date, the observatory has collected data on more than one thousand gamma-ray bursts, detecting circa two events every week. The *Swift* mission was originally designed to last just two years.

#### **For more information:**

<https://www.nasa.gov/centers-and-facilities/goddard/nasas-swift-satellite-celebrates-15-years-of-multiwavelength-science/>  
<https://science.psu.edu/news/nasas-swift-satellite-marks-10-years-game-changing-astrophysics-mission-control-penn-state>