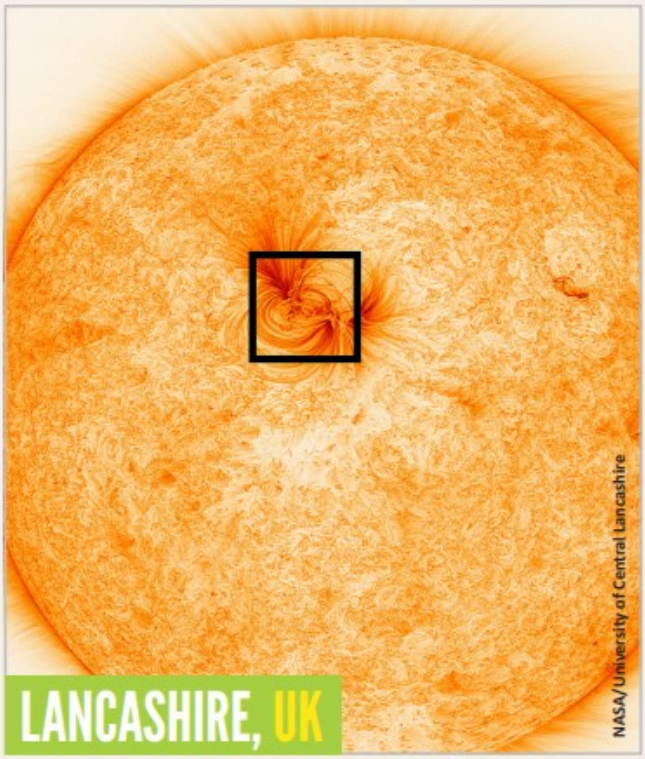


NASA/University of Central Lancashire

LANCASHIRE, UK

RESEARCHERS at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) have revealed detailed, high-resolution images of the sun.

They were taken by NASA's High-Resolution Coronal Imager telescope (or Hi-C for short) and show the sun's outer layer in detail for the first time. Fine magnetic threads filled with extremely hot, million-degree plasma can be seen in the stunning pictures.

THE HUNGRY GALAXY

THIS spiral galaxy, known as NGC 4651, contains what American space agency NASA calls "a violent secret".

A spiral galaxy is, as the name suggests, a swirling collection of stars and gas, just like our own Milky Way. Most galaxies are spiral, but some are known as elliptical and irregular. The middle of a spiral galaxy is thought to contain a super-massive black hole.

So what is this "violent secret"? NASA experts think NGC 4651 has consumed another smaller galaxy! It gobbled up its neighbour, though NASA isn't sure when.

The Hubble Space Telescope took the picture above, but it can be observed with a household telescope too, even though it's 35 million light years away!

ESA/Hubble & NASA, D Leonard

ACROSS

6) A system of millions of stars, together with gas and dust, held together by gravitational attraction (noun 6)

7) The ability of a microscope, camera or television to show things clearly and with a lot of detail (noun 10)

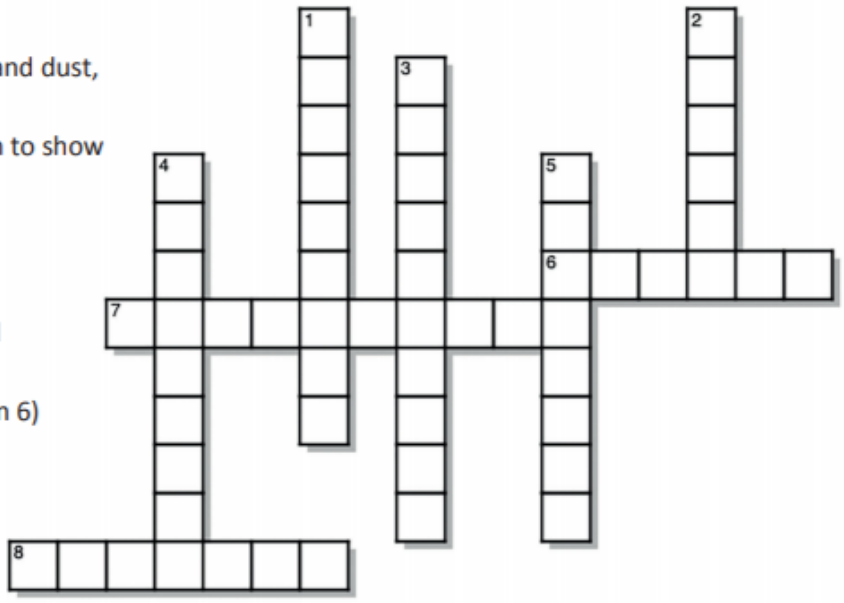
8) See 5 down

DOWN

1) Not according to usual rules or what is expected (adjective 9)

2) A very hot gas in the outer layer of the sun (noun 6)

3) Shaped like an elongated sphere (adjective 10)

4) An astronomical instrument that operates in space by remote control to observe distant planets and galaxies (noun 9)

5) And 8 across. Fine strands of plasma woven throughout the sun's atmosphere (plural noun 8,7)