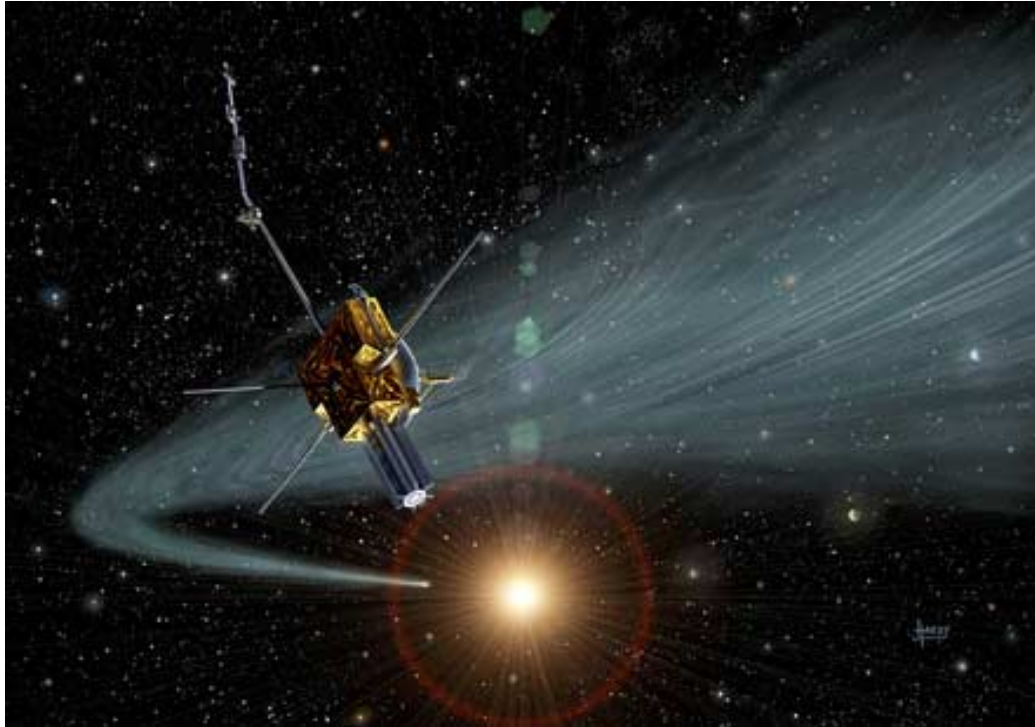
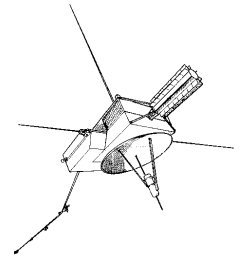




Ulysses Encounter with Comet Hyakutake



Ulysses unexpectedly encountered the tail of Comet Hyakutake on May 1, of 1996 at a time when the nucleus was close to the Sun, more than 3.5 AU away. This is the longest comet tail ever recorded. Artist's impression by David A. Hardy

During an unplanned rendezvous, the Ulysses spacecraft found itself gliding through the immense tail of Comet Hyakutake, revealing that comet tails may be much, much longer than previously believed, more than 3 times the distance from the Earth to the Sun. Observations revealed ions of cometary origin, and changes in magnetic field direction typical of cometary tails. Further information is at http://ulysses.jpl.nasa.gov/press/Ulysses_meets_comet_pr.txt