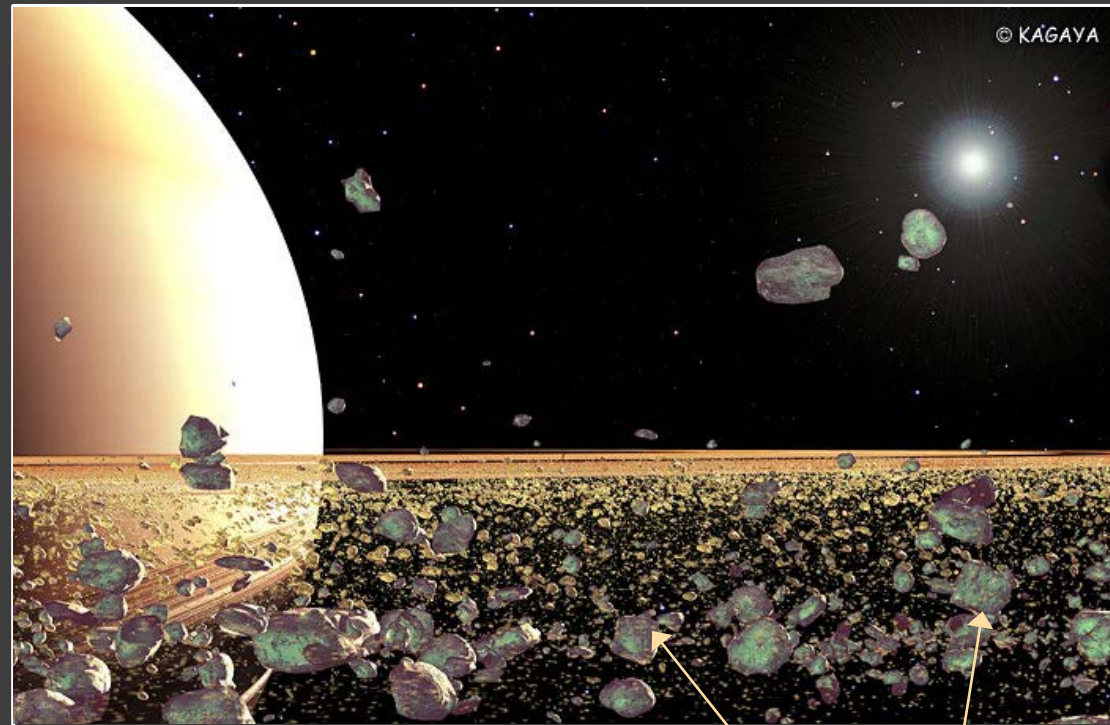


# A Surprisingly Young Region in Saturn's Rings

Chunks of solid ice in the middle of Saturn's A ring suggest an unexpectedly young ring region.

- Recent results from Cassini's infrared spectrometer found that particles in one section of Saturn's rings are much denser than the normal ring particles elsewhere.
- After equinox, when the sun shines edge-on to Saturn's rings, one section of the A-ring did not cool down as much as expected, providing a unique window into the interior of the ring particles.
- Perhaps a tiny moon broke apart only 100 million years ago and its solid, icy fragments are slowly spreading through the rings.

Saturn's rings may therefore be a mix of young and old material, providing clues to their formation and evolution.



Above: Model of Saturn's rings showing both small and large particles.

Below: Estimated location in A ring of denser particles.

