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STARDUST: FLIGHT STATUS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

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The NASA Discovery STARDUST Project, a comet particle sample return mission, has been in flight for over 1 year and during this time period has operated all flight instrumentation: the Max Planck Institute Cometary and Interstellar Dust Analyzer (CIDA), the University of Chicago Dust Flux Monitor Instrument (DFMI), and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory Imaging Camera. The Aerogel Collector is deployed, currently collecting interstellar dust particles. Two engineering subsystems, Attitude Control and Radio Navigation, are also operating and will provide information on dust particle size and distribution at comet Wild 2, the primary target for collecting cometary dust in 2004 for return to earth in 2006. The main belt asteroid, Annefrank, is a potential target of opportunity where a close flyby is possible over 1 year before Wild 2 encounter.

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