



As the first NASA spacecraft since Voyager to study a still more distant planet, New Horizons will reveal fascinating insights about Pluto and its moons. Residing at the outer reaches of the solar system within the Kuiper Belt, scientists know very little about this frigid environment and its residents. What are some of the things New Horizons will be looking to find out?

How many moons orbit Pluto?

Pluto has five moons we can see from Earth. Could there be more? Could there be many?

What does Pluto and its moons look like?

We'll find out soon. Multiple cameras aboard New Horizons will use various wavelengths to see what Pluto's surface looks like — in both color and black and white — and to help determine its composition. These cameras also will study Pluto's moons.

Does an ocean reside deep within Pluto?

Recent studies suggest Pluto could have a subsurface ocean. Nitrogen ice covers Pluto's surface, but what lies beneath? New Horizons will look for evidence of that possible ocean and for other signs of geologic activity, too.

Does Pluto have craters?

Very likely! Pluto resides in the Kuiper Belt, which is filled with potentially billions of small icy objects that can occasionally impact Pluto and its moons to make craters.

Does Pluto's moon Charon have an atmosphere?

Not that we have seen from Earth, but New Horizons will take a closer look.

Could Pluto have rings?

It's possible. On approach, and after it passes Pluto, New Horizons will search for rings and additional moons.

