

## SPACE SCOOP

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### Heads or Tails? 20 Decembrie 2011

It's no wonder that the galaxy in this new photo is nicknamed the Silver Coin Galaxy – it looks a giant coin that has been flipped to decide between Heads and Tails! The 'coin' also looks well polished and shiny, being one of the brightest galaxies in the night sky.

This type of galaxy is called a Spiral Galaxy because of its shape: it has long 'arms' of stars and gas that wind around the centre. Our own Galaxy, which is called the Milky Way, is also a Spiral Galaxy.

There are several different shapes that galaxies can have. Some galaxies have particularly unusual shapes and it can be difficult to decide what group they belong to. But this is important work, as it helps astronomers to understand how the galaxies were created.

That's why astronomers launched a website called *Galaxy Zoo*, to ask people around the world to help identify the shapes of the many, many galaxies captured in space photos. And you can help too! Simply go to [www.galaxyzoo.org](http://www.galaxyzoo.org) and follow the simple instructions.

There are lots of other websites where scientists ask the public for help with their work. And anyone who takes part is called a Citizen Scientist!

### ▲ COOL FACT!

More than 250,000 people from around the world have taken part in *Galaxy Zoo* so far!