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A hard look at local Seyfert 2 galaxies with NuSTAR

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Current measurements show that the observed fraction of Compton-thick (CT) active galactic nuclei (AGN) is smaller than the expected values needed to explain the cosmic X-ray background. Thanks to its unprecedented sensitivity covering the 3 - 79 keV band, NuSTAR is playing a key role in identifying the missing fraction of these sources and determining their properties. In this talk, I will present the first results of the "NuSTAR Obscured Seyferts Survey"aiming to study an optically-selected volume-limited sample of 22 Seyfert-2 galaxies that were identified in the CfA Redshift Survey. This NuSTAR legacy survey will allow us to accurately measure the obscuring column densities, Eddington fractions and other fundamental properties of these sources. This would be accomplished by using physically motivated spectral models to fit the X-ray spectra of these obscured sources, which will additionally provide better insights on the geometry of the obscuring material. I will introduce the sample, describe the various spectral models employed in this work, and discuss the physical implications of our results. I will also discuss how future high-resolution X-ray observatories such as XRISM and Athena will improve our understanding of CT AGN in the soft X-rays.

Topic

Active Galactic Nuclei: accretion physics and evolution across cosmic time

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