

# ANTARES

## CLASS SURVEYOR



Exploration and scientific study have been two of the most oft-emphasized goals of the Federation and its Starfleet since its inception. In the early decades of the 23rd century, such goals were not always easy to achieve. On one hand technological progress, especially in the areas of sensor and computer systems, imposed artificial limits on these ambitions, while on the other, astropolitical realities dictated that the fleet's shipbuilding be concentrated in other arenas.

To its credit, Starfleet Command managed to keep the *Constitution* class Heavy Cruiser free and clear of most of the drama of these early years and even undertook a comprehensive refit of the gargantuan (and elderly) *Yorktown* class Battleship which managed to edge out *Constitution* in the scientific arena, with more laboratories and greater sensor range. Even the most casual observer could tell that turning large Cruisers and Patrol Combatants into 'floating laboratories' as they were, wasn't all that practical. No, it was a symptom of apathy, a Starfleet trying to get by by doing more with less.

Addressing this was the *Cahuya* (SV 745) class. In essence, it was what you would get if you removed all extraneous features from a starship like *Constitution* and distilled it down until the exploratory and scientific features were all that was left. With modest defensive systems, common *PB-18* series FTL propulsion and a maximum effective sensor range of 3.7 light years, Starfleet Command had no qualms about deploying these ships in deep space.

Unlike many larger capital ships that featured comparatively open system architectures and were somewhat easy to upgrade, *Cahuya* and other Surveyors to that point were more locked down. Given that the highly specialized sensors changed very little, if at all, over the course of time, it was felt that there was no need to take the time and incorporate such an architecture. Constructing these then with a closed system cut

down on construction times and allowed Starfleet to field 50 examples by 2234. What the ASDB failed to anticipate though, was the massive revolution in computing technology brought about when duotronics supplanted monotonics. Bringing a quantum leap in raw processing power, faster processing times and a sharp increase in accuracy to the table, the potential benefits were beyond anything anyone in the Admiralty or the scientific community could have foreseen.

It was a given that duotronic computer systems would find their way into the fleet's premier classes and indeed, the suite of upgrades that served as the basis for *Constitution's* 'Bonhomme Richard' subclass went on to do the same for upgrade programs of other major ship classes. These were capital ships and other ships of the line though. Undertaking such an effort for a dedicated class with a comparatively narrow focus was another matter. Fortunately, it was one for which Starfleet had the time to spend. The principal issue facing the ASDB though was one of adaptability. If Starfleet was going to devote the energy and resources to field an entirely new ship class for a dedicated purpose, they wanted to make sure that vital systems could be switched out as technology progressed.

With duotronics, that wouldn't be a serious problem. The leap in sophistication over monotonics was so great that software currently written and in use only took advantage of a mere fraction of the processing power afforded by the new technology meant that software had to be specially written and systems had to be specially designed to take fuller advantage of it.

One class this had already been done for was *Akula*. Designed to fuse the capabilities of a traditional Destroyer and Scout into one and creating a highly potent surveillance, scouting and early warning tool, long-range multi-spectral sensor pallets, communications arrays and electronic warfare equipment gave it a unique reach. As

with *Cahuya*, Starfleet Command wanted this new surveyor to be able to venture farther for longer with no outside support. With that in mind, *Akula*'s unique systems configuration was used as a baseline.

Abandoning the blocky, utilitarian design used on *Cahuya* and other older vessels, the ASDB came up with one that was clean and contemporary. Codenamed *Antares*, it was a trim 145 meters in length, displacing 200,300 metric tons. The secondary hull section was a low-profile affair, aesthetically similar to that of *Constitution*. The saucer was mounted directly onto the upper bow joining the lower two decks of the saucer with the upper two of the engineering section. Unifying both was a half-cylindrical section running from the bridge module all the way aft. Here, in place of *Akula*'s electronic warfare systems, were housed the majority of the ship's sensors, including sophisticated gravimetric and exographic sensor pallets. Special custom software programming backed by more dynamic power distribution improved upon *Akula*'s maximum sensor range, giving *Antares* a maximum detection range of 4.8 light years (vs 4.3 for *Akula* and 3.27 for *Constitution*).

Another major mission-specific consideration involved laboratory space. With the elimination of extraneous factors such as cargo space, weapons stores and other staples found on larger Frigates and Cruisers, the majority of the saucer's internal volume was occupied by laboratories--25 in total, eclipsing the number included on *Yorktown*, *Constitution* and *Pyotr Velikiy*. With this in mind, the majority of the complement was naturally made up by the 75 science personnel. They, along with the 24 officers and crew were quartered above the laboratories, on Decks 3 and 4 in the saucer. Featuring Cruiser-grade amenities including a comprehensive medical bay, spacious mess hall, officer & crew lounges among others, *Antares* was well suited to undertaking long, strenuous missions.

Enhancing its self-sufficiency, *Antares* also benefitted from Destroyer-level defensive and offensive systems. 3 Type VI Phaser Banks were installed at typical saucer/primary hull locations along with 1 2nd Class Torpedo Launcher, relocated from its typical location within the bridge module (deck 3) to a position just below the ventral sensor dome. Together with *Akula*'s deflector shield system and the improved sensors (providing valuable early warning capabilities), these ships had all the capabilities to both avoid a fight and endure one if need be.

Hangar space also opened up other intriguing avenues. Positioned at the aft end, on the underside of the secondary hull, there was sufficient space to embark up to 4 Class F standard shuttles or 2 Class G long range shuttles in a split-deck (2 + 2/1 + 1) arrangement. Given the variety of environments these surveyors were likely to visit, it was expected that they would drive the development of more specialized small craft in the future.

*Antares*' design was finalized in late 2249, but owing to wartime constraints, serial production didn't begin until late 2250, 3 months following the Battle of Kolm-An. Starfleet Command elected to order an initial production lot of 50. In the interests of further advancing the fields of exploration and scientific study, *Cahuya* class ships were

de-militarized and sold off to civilian concerns on a 1:1 basis as *Antares* class ships entered service.

With the frontier and borderspace systems secured by a legion of Destroyers and other similarly-sized vessels under Starfleet's defense realignment together with the deployment of larger *Constitution* and *Pyotr Velikiy* class Cruisers on similar exploratory missions, Starfleet had no qualms about deploying *Antares* on deep space assignments (as opposed to *Cahuya*, which they did in prewar years).

Though colonization in the lawless (and somewhat volatile) 'Triangle' region has been going on for decades and Starfleet had established a pair of research stations, a concerted effort to better understand the unique region hadn't been mounted up to that point. Data collected by the *Canopus* (SV 2039) wasn't particularly notable, but intelligence gathered on and random encounters with increasingly aggressive and brazen Orion pirates was cause for concern. Of greater scientific interest, were two regions known as the Taurus Reach and the Badlands. Both were discovered around the same time in the early 2260's.

The former was a large region of unexplored space outside the Federation's official borders. It would gain a greater measure of importance following the discovery of an artificial created meta-genome. Once the potential of this genome became clear to Starfleet Command, a highly-classified effort was begun to study it. At the forefront of this effort was the construction of a massive *Watchtower* class/J-Type Space Station in the region. Giving cover to the effort was the sanctioning of colonization, mining and other such activities by the Federation Council. Naturally, before long, colonial transports, freighters and science vessels such as *Antares* began investigating the area. Despite the highly-charged political undercurrents, the *Proxima* (SV 2027), *Mercury* (SV 2029) and *Asimov* (SV 2024) all completed multiple surveys as did the *Gemini* (SV 2023), following the destruction of Starbase 47 in 2268.

The latter on the other hand was an equally large, yet vastly more vexing region to study. First encountered by the USS *Yorkshire* (FF 2715) in 2263, it contained 2 stars, 17 planets, 43 moons (three of which were class-M) and an asteroid belt. Covering 84 parsecs (or 243 light years), it would've seemed to be an area ripe for study. However, befitting its name, the multitude of intense plasma storms and unpredictable gravitational anomalies made such study extremely dangerous. Among the handful of other vessels Starfleet attempted to explore the region with, the *Armstrong* (SV 2022) and *Tereshkova* (SV 2028) logged the most time in the area, both being used as test platforms for experimental system upgrades that would hopefully permit extended exploration of the region's interior.

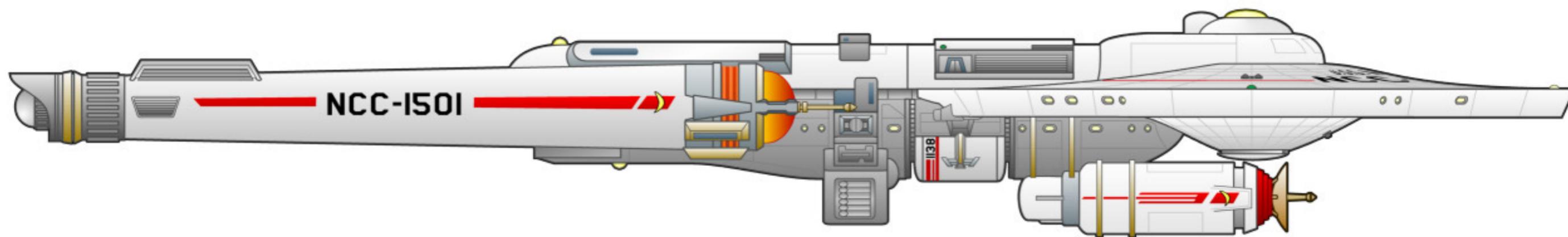
Though these upgrades inched the needle of progress forward ever so slightly, the Badlands would continue to bedevil Starfleet vessels for the next few decades. That point notwithstanding, *Antares* wielded outsized influence on the fleet's future development. Not only did it spawn a separate Corvette class (*Procyon*/CO 1550), but weighed heavily on the minds of those responsible for the *Tikopai* (CH 1800), *Constellation* (CA 1974) and *Phobos* (FF 2786) classes.

With the advent of the Linear Warp era in the late 2260's, the fleet underwent a wholesale and wide-ranging shift. Vessels with specialized mission profiles received replacements that were either smaller, larger as the middle of the size bracket became occupied by a new family of utilitarian, 'do-everything' Frigates. In *Antares'* case, she was lucky enough to receive both smaller and larger replacements

Her primary replacements, ones which inspired the most excitement among her crews were *Tikopai* and *Constellation*. Large, prestigious and featuring creature comforts that were starbase-like by comparison, they were perhaps the ultimate illustration of the growing importance of the Cruiser category to Starfleet overall. On the opposite end of the spectrum was *Oberth* (ST 630). Belonging to the 'Class II' family of vessels that attempted to replace a number of specialized classes with ones based on a common

spaceframe, it was moderately capable, but was a clear example of bureaucratic 'cost-cutting' or 'bean-counting'.

The only direct replacement *Antares* would receive then, came in the form of *Okinawa* (CV 150), a linear-warp upgrade of its *Procyon* offshoot, beginning in 2271. As with *Cahuya*, Starfleet embarked on a gradual process of de-militarizing *Antares* hulls and donating them to civilian concerns as larger *Tikopai* class replacements entered service. The last example, *Oppenheimer* (SV 2079) was stricken from the vessel registry in July 2276.



**Class** Antares  
**Classification** Surveyor

**Service** 2250-2276  
**Number Active** 0

**Length** 222m  
**Beam** 104m  
**Height** 33m

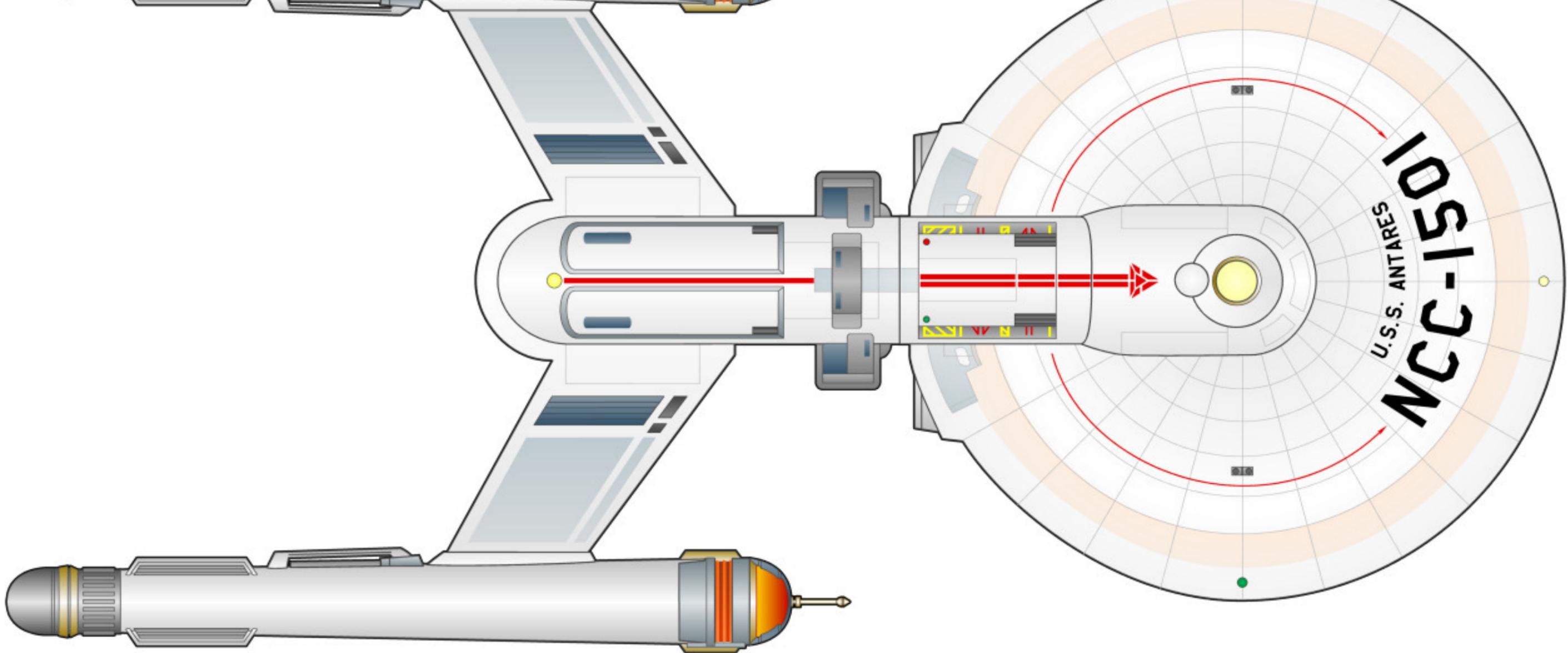
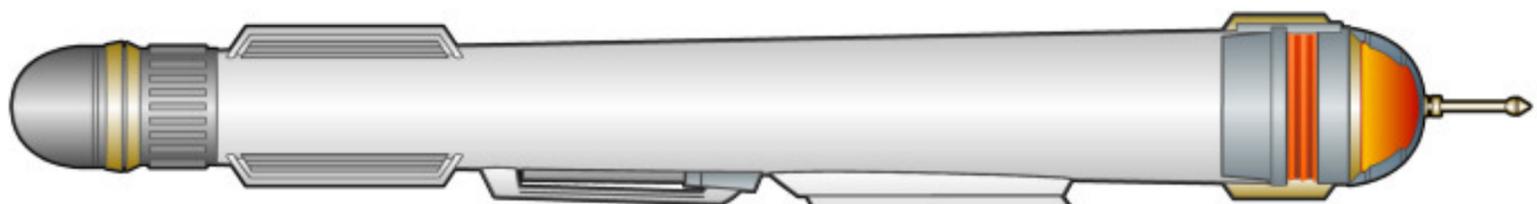
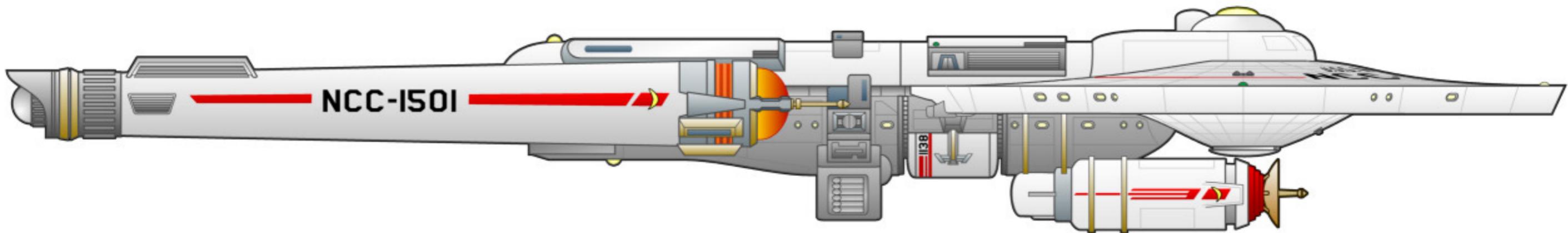
**Decks** 9

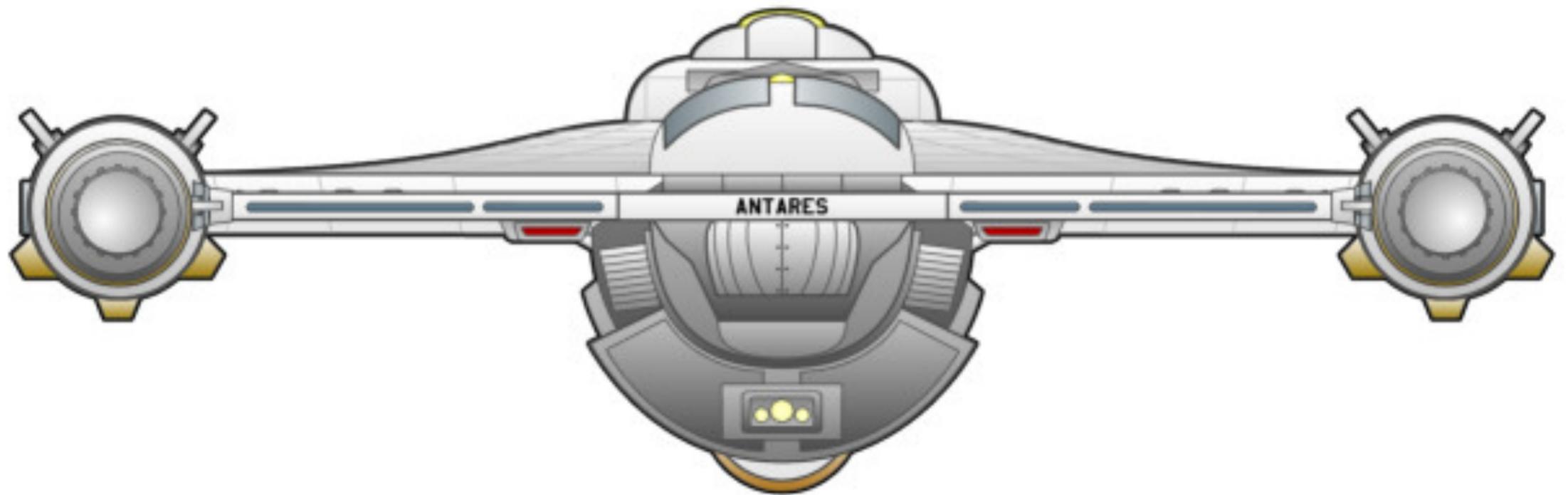
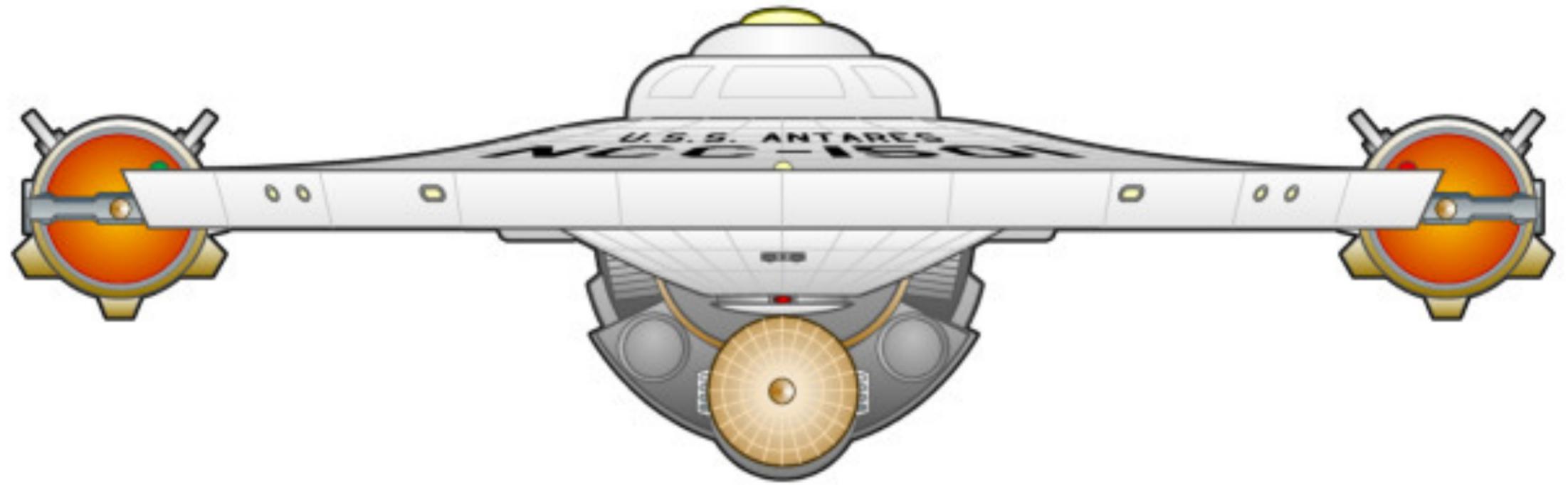
**Mass** 135,400 metric tons

**Compliment** 99

**Armament** 3 Type VI Phaser Banks  
 1 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Torpedo Launcher

**Defense Systems** Standard Deflector Shield System  
 total capacity 325,900 terajoules (2261-71)  
 Standard Monotanium Double Hull





# Editor's Annotations

This *Antares* comes from Brian Pimenta by way of Bjo Trimble's *Star Trek Concordance*. I wanted to say it was one of the earliest 'fanon' designs out there, but it didn't show up until the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published in 1995, so I'm not sure if it was something from way back when that happened to finally pop up in this subsequent edition, or if it was something more recent that was slipped in with the revised material.

Either way, the design was refined by Kristian "Reverend" Trigwell in his usual clean, austere manner. I first spotted the basic design and a TMP-era upgrade over at the Advanced Starship Design Bureau ([link](#)) and it was that upgraded version that sent me on a hunt for some more complete schematics. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any, but upon finding a message board thread detailing his work, I did find this old **TOS**-era schematic (as presented at the ASDB, this *Antares* was intended to be a 'Phase II' type design, launched in 2269 so as not to conflict with the *Antares* seen in "Charlie X").

Initially, as with certain other designs, I didn't really have a strong desire to do this at first. After going back and reading some more and pondering it a bit however, I changed my tune. I've written elsewhere how the post-war years (the 2250's and 60's) were somewhat of a 'golden age' for exploration and expansion so with all the new discoveries being made and all the new ship classes introduced, *Antares* makes sense – plus, I had a strong desire to get away from weaving tales of combat and the like into so many other histories. It wasn't described in the *Hobbyist's Guide*..... either, but *Procyon* on the other hand was. So my mention of exploration in/around the notorious 'Triangle' region (from FASA lore) will be a good segue whenever I decide to get around to writing that class.

# Bibliography

Logo/Schematics—Kristian “Reverend” Trigwell ([Gallery @ Star Trek Minutiae](#) ; [Antares @ the ASDB](#))

Design—Brian Pimenta