



EXOPLANETS NOW

The field of researching planets around other stars (extra-solar planets or exoplanets) is exploding. Planets around other stars were first confirmed in the middle of the 1990s, and since then most of those planets have been "Hot Jupiters" - Jupiter-sized planets orbiting very close to their stars. Now NASA has a mission, Kepler, searching for Earth-like exoplanets. Kepler is focused on a specific region of the sky, in the constellation Cygnus, and will take 4 years to complete its mission. Already it has found over 700 candidates and has confirmed five.

As of June 29, 2010, the current exoplanet counts are:

DETECTED EXOPLANETS

DISCOVERED BY KEPLER

464

5

Exoplanet Encyclopedia: http://exoplanet.eu/

Kepler: http://kepler.nasa.gov/

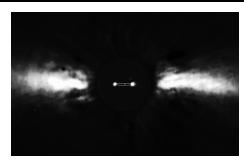
STRANGE PLANETS

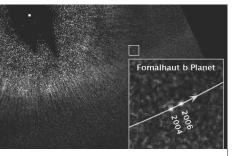


A new feature show is open in the Willard Smith Planetarium!
Astronomers have found hundreds of planets lurking light years from our solar system! In the planetarium show Strange Planets, our alien

friend Gort has lost his starmap and needs your help to find his extrasolar home. 40 minutes - ages 4 and up.

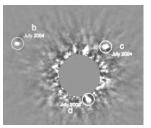
PHOTOS OF EXOPLANETS





first three "direct" photographs of planets around other stars. In all of them the star is blocked out. The first is a picture of the star beta Pictoris, and its planet moving from one side to the other. The second is Fomalhaut b. taken by

These are the



Hubble, a planet around the bright star Fomalhaut. The third is HR8799 b, c, and d - three planets around the star HR8799, detected using the Gemini Observatory in Hawaii.

PUZZLE

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

In 1974 Frank Drake sent this message into space from Arecibo Observatory - the largest radio telescope in the world.

It was beamed towards the golbular cluster M13 (see the front of this map) and won't arrive there for 50,000 years.

What do you think the parts of this message mean?



Astronomy Resources

Our Address: pacificsciencecenter.org/planetarium

Sky Updates: stardate.org

Night Sky Notes and Sky Calendar: www.pa.msu.edu/abrams/

Astronomy Questions Answered: AlicesAstroInfo.com

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNTIES

University of Washington Observatory: www.astro.washington.edu/groups/outreach/tjo/

Seattle-Area Astronomy Events: www.seattleastro.org **The Willard Smith Planetarium** is now booking private shows for your special occasion. (206) 443-3611.

PHASES OF THE MOON

