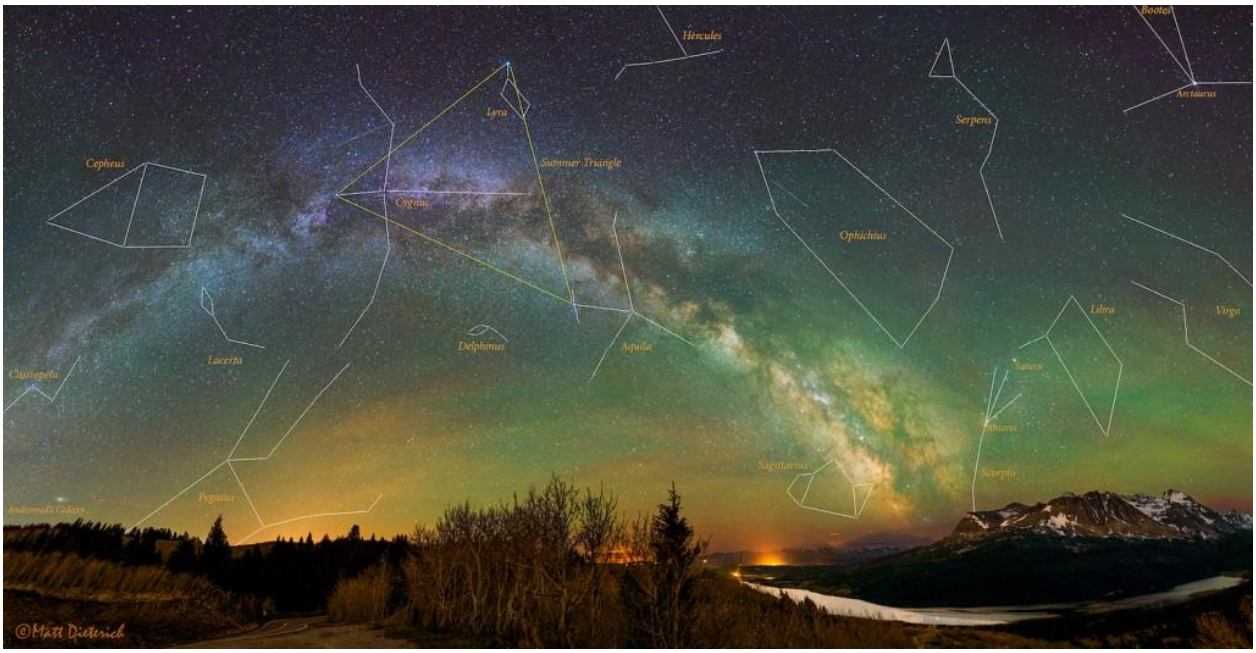
What's Up in the Night Sky for APRIL



Presented by

NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

What's Up: April 2025 Skywatching Tips from NASA
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3lR-CwgD5o

The Secrets of the Universe

Night Sky Events in April 2025 You Shouldn't Miss | Meteor Shower | Full Pink Moon
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUMklzW6c0I

Facts Worth Sharing

Over 100 new moons have recently been discovered orbiting Saturn. This brings the total to 274 moons. The amount is more than the total number of known moons around all the other planets combined. The ringed planet has nearly three times as many known moons as the next most moon-adorned planet Jupiter, which has 95.

For decades, astronomers have probed the space around Barnard's Star which is about 6 light years from Earth in search of exoplanets. It is a small star – about 15 percent the mass of our sun. As our cosmic neighbor—the nearest single-star system to our sun—it's been a tempting place to look. In 1963, Dutch scientist Peter van de Kamp claimed to have discovered the first exoplanet orbiting the red dwarf star, but the discovery was later found to be an error related to disturbances in his telescope. The search continued over several years and in October 2024, astronomers revealed the existence of a single tiny, rocky planet orbiting the star. And now, another study has found evidence of four. The new results were published last week in *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams return to Earth after 9 months stuck in space

March 18, 2025 by MARCIA DUNN

This image taken from video provided by SpaceX shows NASA's Butch Wilmore being helped after exiting the SpaceX capsule, Tuesday, March 18, 2025. (SpaceX via AP)

This image taken from video provided by SpaceX shows NASA's Suni Williams being helped after exiting the SpaceX capsule, Tuesday, March 18, 2025. (SpaceX via AP)

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Stuck in space no more, NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams returned to Earth on Tuesday, hitching a different ride home to close out a saga that began with a bungled test flight more than nine months ago. Click the link to read more: https://rb.gy/pp002z

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China opens 2028 Mars sample return mission to international cooperation

March 12, 2025 by Andrew Jones

A crescent of the northern hemisphere of Mars taken by Tianwen-1's medium-resolution camera in March 2021. Credit: CNSA/PEC

HELSINKI — China is inviting interested parties to submit proposals to join the country's pioneering Mars sample return mission, due to launch in late 2028.

The China National Space Administration (CNSA) published an announcement of opportunities March 11, officially opening the Tianwen-3 Mars mission to international cooperation.

Tianwen-3 aims to collect samples from Mars and, for the first time ever, deliver them to Earth. The primary scientific goal is the detection of potential biosignatures and answering a fundamental question: has life ever existed on Mars? For more information click the link: https://rb.gy/2qizqn

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Astronomy in Media

Recently the above link was shared with me to put on the LINKS page. It's very comprehensive and well done. Every aspect of space and astronomy combines to form the backbone of sci-fi, influencing this genre's narratives, aesthetics, and impact on us as an audience. It unveils how space exploration has impacted the media, showcases famous astronauts and astronomers, and breaks down some of the best movies and TV shows. Click the link: **https://www.centiastrospace.com/links-1 Then click on: Astronomy in Media**

What is the moon's true origin story?

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 by Robb Frederick

New research by Darren Williams, a professor of astronomy and astrophysics at Penn State Behrend, pictured here, and Michael Zugger, a senior research engineer at the Applied Research Lab at Penn State, offers a new possibility for how the moon formed: a binary-exchange capture as two objects passed near a much-younger Earth. Credit: Penn State Behrend /

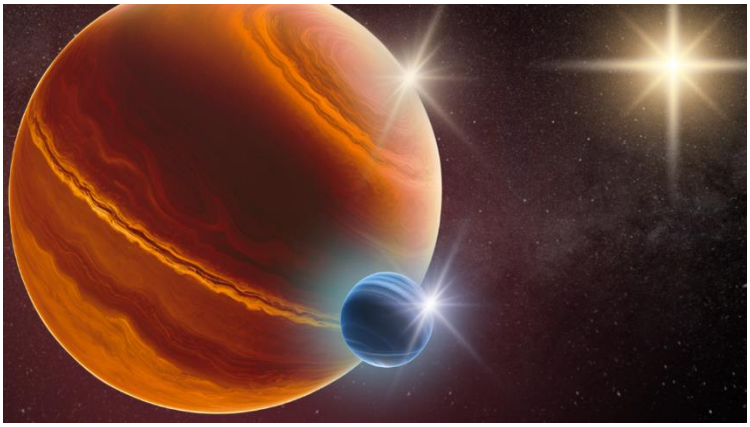
ERIE, Pa. — Over six missions to the moon, from 1969 to 1972, Apollo astronauts collected more than 800 pounds of lunar rock and soil. Chemical and isotopic analysis of that material showed that it was similar to the rock and soil on Earth: calcium-rich, basaltic and dating to about 60 million years after the solar system formed.

Using that data, the planetary scientists who gathered at the Kona Conference in Hawaii in 1984 came to the consensus that the moon formed from debris after a collision on the young Earth.

But that might not be the moon's true origin story, according to two Penn State researchers. To find out more about this research click this link: https://rb.gy/txzv5p

Large alien planets may be born in chaos, NASA's retired exoplanet-hunter finds

March 19, 2025 by Robert Lea



A illustration shows an exoplanet in orbit around its star. (Image credit: Robert Lea (created with Canva))

Scientists have used data from NASA's retired planet-hunting space telescope 'Kepler' to discover that small and large worlds have very different upbringings. The team found that larger planets on non-circular orbits are more likely to have grown in more turbulent home systems.

To reach this conclusion, the team studied the orbits of thousands of extrasolar planets, or "exoplanets." The team, consisting of researchers from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), measured the orbits of exoplanets ranging in mass from that of Jupiter to that of Mars. To read more click: https://rb.gy/pcy6lx

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