

ORIGINS



Where are the Aliens?

1 x 60



International

Origins: Where are the Aliens?

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Who would have predicted that a hot spot left over from the Big Bang would eventually lead to the Earth, the cosmos—and to us? NOVA covers all the exciting steps in between on *Origins: Where are the Aliens?*, a one-hour film on the beginnings of Earth, life, and the universe.

Hosting the series is astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, Director of the Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History and one of the world's most popular lecturers on astronomy.

Origins: Where Are the Aliens? explores the latest news in the search for extraterrestrial life and asks, Given that our universe is broadly compatible to life, where is everybody?

Though scientists have been scanning the skies for radio traffic from E.T.s, they have not yet found any signals. That's not to say there aren't alien civilizations or that simpler life forms such as bacteria don't exist beyond Earth. But so far, nothing has turned up.

As far as Hollywood is concerned, aliens have turned up, and it's interesting to compare our popular conception of advanced E.T.s with what is biologically possible. Biologist and author Jack Cohen points out that, contrary to the movies, aliens probably wouldn't be even remotely humanoid. Nor would they be colossal bugs or grapefruit sized parasites living within us.

Where Are the Aliens? examines where rudimentary life might be hiding out in our solar system. And Tyson catches up with one of astronomy's most exciting recent breakthroughs: the discovery of the first planets to be found outside our solar system. Detecting more than one hundred of these brand new planets over the last few years, astronomers have developed an ingenious technique worthy of Sherlock Holmes for deducing whether or not they might be suitable for life.

"The history of exploration of our own world and the universe beyond has been full of surprises," says Tyson. "There's nothing special about our Sun; there doesn't seem to be anything magical about our solar system or our planet. And the chemicals of life are abundant in the universe. "Are we alone?," he asks. "Are we rare? Are we common? We still don't know. But we will."

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CREDITS

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