Planetfinding

Alien Asteroids?

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Jet Propulsion Laboratory
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, California

Alien Asteroids?

The Spitzer Space Telescope found warm dust around a faint, nearby star called HD 69830, possible evidence of asteroids smashing together in an asteroid belt. This artist's rendering shows a massive asteroid belt in orbit around a star the same age and size of our Sun. The view is from outside the asteroid belt, where planets such as the one in the foreground might reside. Compared to our own solar system's asteroid belt, this one is larger and closer to its star. Our asteroid belt circles between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. For more information and images, see: http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu

Credit NASA/JPL-Caltech/T. Pyle (Spitzer Science Center).

www.nasa.gov

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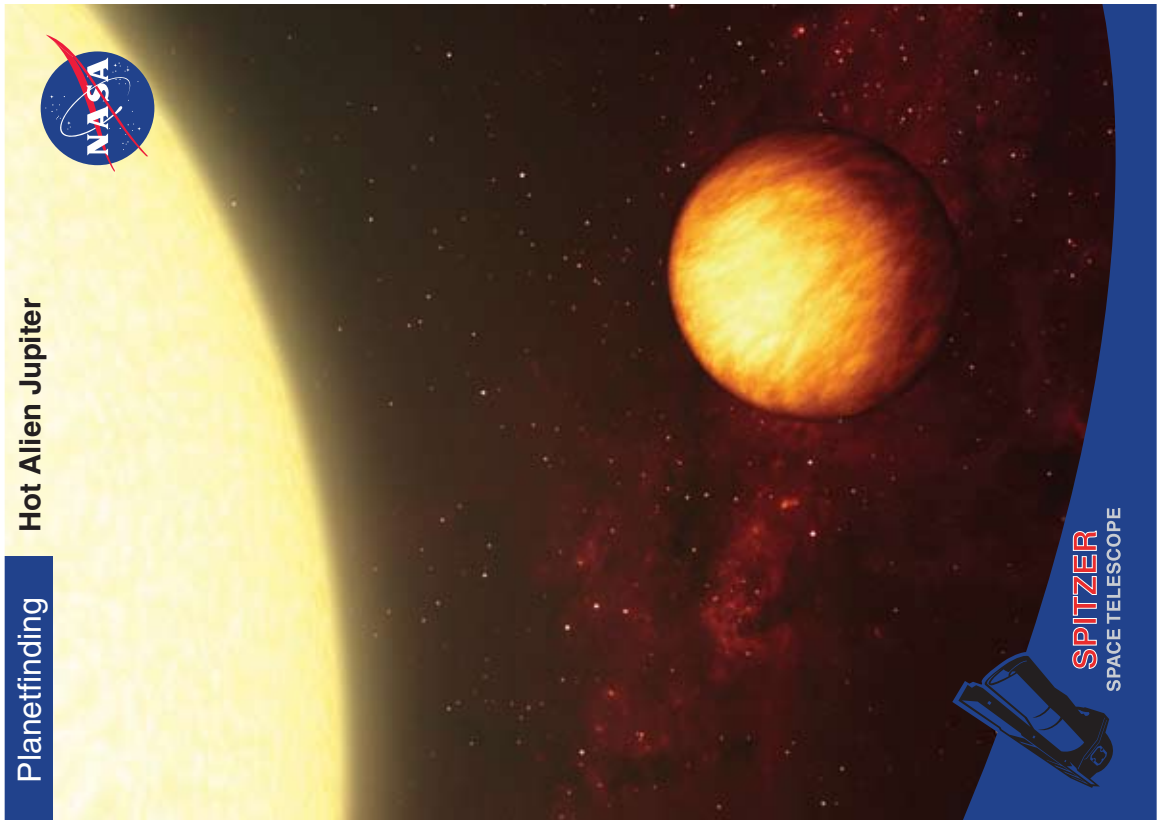
To:



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To:

Hot Alien Jupiter

This artist's concept of a Jupiter-like planet may be similar to one the Spitzer Space Telescope observed using its heat-seeking infrared eyes. The planet, Upsilon Andromedae b, orbits its star once every 4.6 days at one-sixth the distance that our innermost planet, tiny Mercury, orbits the Sun. Unlike our Jupiter with its 10-hour rotation period, this strange gas giant always keeps the same side toward the star. So the side facing the star is hot as molten lava, and the other side could be cold as ice. For more information and images, see: http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu

Credit NASA/JPL-Caltech/R. Hurt (Spitzer Science Center).

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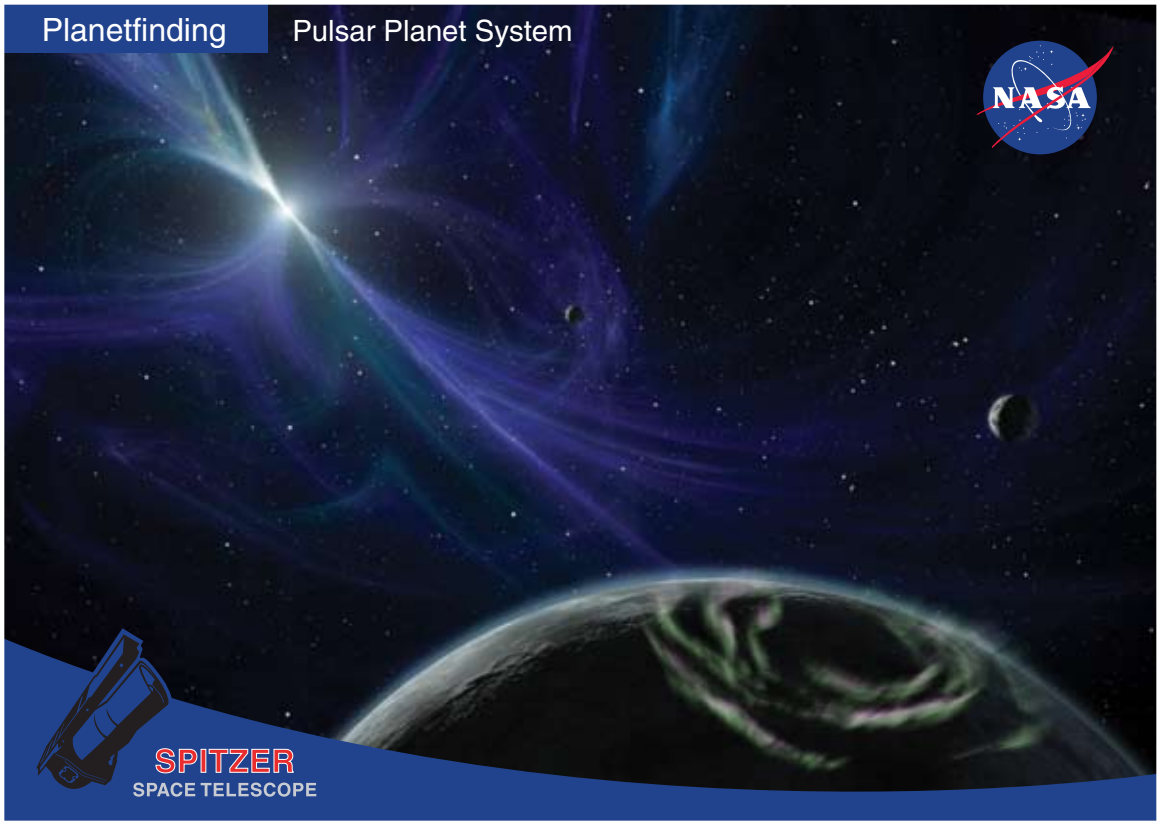
Pulsar Planet System



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Pulsar Planet System

Pulsars are rapidly rotating neutron stars, which are the collapsed cores of exploded massive stars. This artist's concept depicts the pulsar planet system discovered by Aleksandar Wolszcan in 1992 using the Arecibo radio telescope in Puerto Rico. This system may be a second generation of planets, the first having been destroyed when the star exploded. The Spitzer Space telescope has discovered a dusty disk around a pulsar that might represent the beginnings of a similarly "reborn" planet system. For more information and images, see: http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu

Credit NASA/JPL-Caltech/R. Hurt (Spitzer Science Center).

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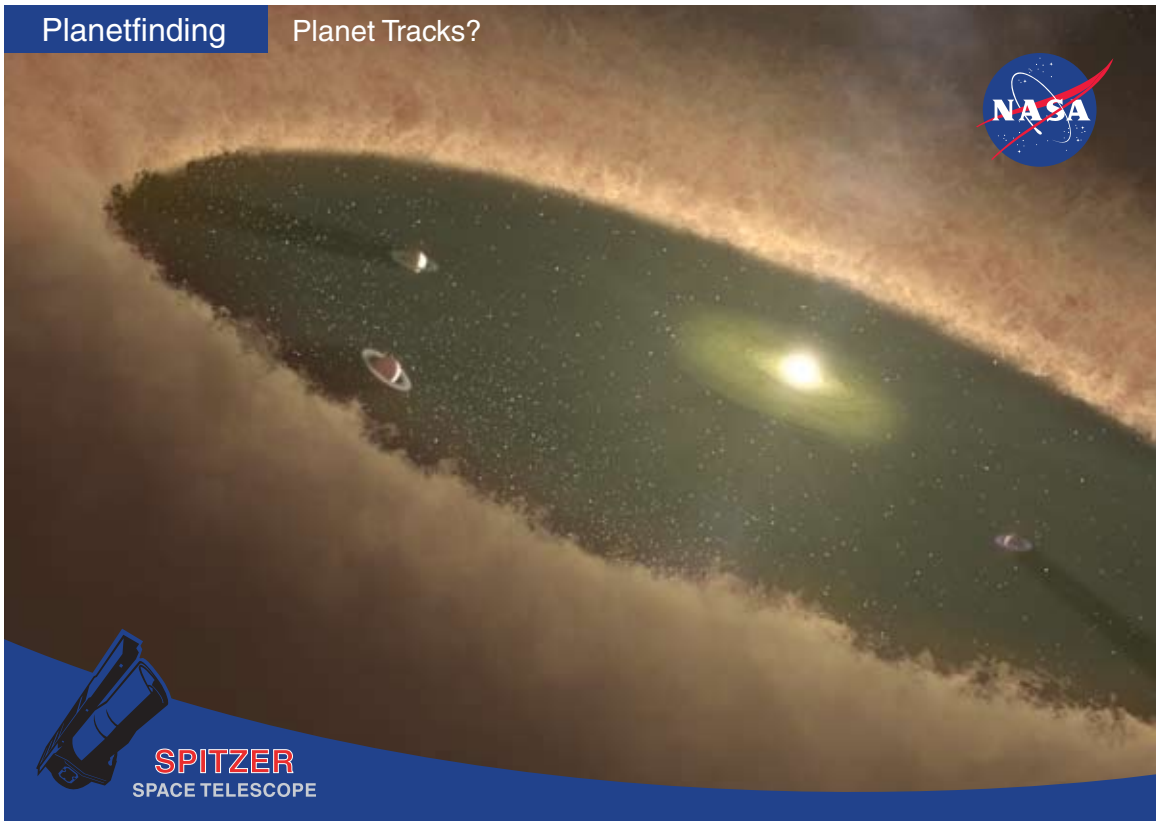
Planetfinding

Planet Tracks?



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Planet Tracks?

The Spitzer Space Telescope has revealed a gap in a planet-forming disk surrounding a young star. This artist's concept credits the disk gap to planet formation. The young star at the center pulls in material from an inner disk of dust and gas. The gap between this inner disk and the thick outer disk may be occupied by developing gas giant planets. The gap would span orbits equivalent to those of Jupiter and Saturn. Note that the sizes of the planets in this illustration are exaggerated. The thick outer disk could coalesce into asteroids, comets and possibly more planets. For more information and images, see: http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu

Credit NASA/JPL-Caltech/T. Pyle (Spitzer Science Center).

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