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## Book Review: Exoplanets : Hidden Worlds and the Quest for Extraterrestrial Life

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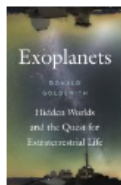
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# Exoplanets : hidden worlds and the quest for extraterrestrial life



Goldsmith, Donald. Harvard, 2018

254p bibl index, 9780674976900 \$24.95, 9780674988897

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Exoplanets, planets orbiting stars other than the sun, are arguably the hottest topic in astronomy today. More than 4,000 are known, and the list grows almost daily as observations are collected and interpreted. In this wonderfully engaging book, Goldsmith, an accomplished astronomer, chronicles this revolution in planetary science from humankind's early ruminations about life elsewhere in the cosmos to the first discovery of exoplanets and the techniques in common use today. Along the way, readers learn quite a bit about how science in general works. What emerges as a main theme is how much the menagerie of exoplanets differs from Earth's solar system—and how this completely changes traditional thinking about where life may evolve. Who would have expected dozens of "super-Jupiter" planets in orbits smaller than Mercury's, multiple planet systems orbiting in mere days around cool stars 1,000 times fainter than the sun, "Tatooine-like" planets orbiting binary suns—the list of surprises continues to grow. This comprehensive yet very comprehensible book will surely leave readers eager to see what the next few years of discovery and new instruments, such as the James Webb Space Telescope, bring.

**Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All readers.

**Reviewer:** T. D. Oswalt, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

**Recommendation:** Highly recommended

**Readership Level:** All Readership Levels

**Interdisciplinary Subjects:**

**Subject:** [Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy](#)

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