

# Billions of planets with Earth-like mass in Milky Way: study

Agence France-Presse

PARIS — The Milky Way is home to far more planets than previously thought, boosting the odds that at least one of them may harbour life, according to a study released Wednesday.

Not long ago, astronomers counted the number of "exoplanets" detected outside our own solar system in the teens, then in the hundreds. Today, the tally stands at more than 700.

But the new study, published in *Nature*, provides evidence that there are more planets than stars in our own stellar neighbourhood.

"We used to think that Earth might be unique in our galaxy," said Daniel Kubas, a professor at the Institute of Astrophysics in Paris, and co-leader of the study.

"Now it seems that there are literally billions of planets with masses similar to Earth orbiting stars in the Milky Way."

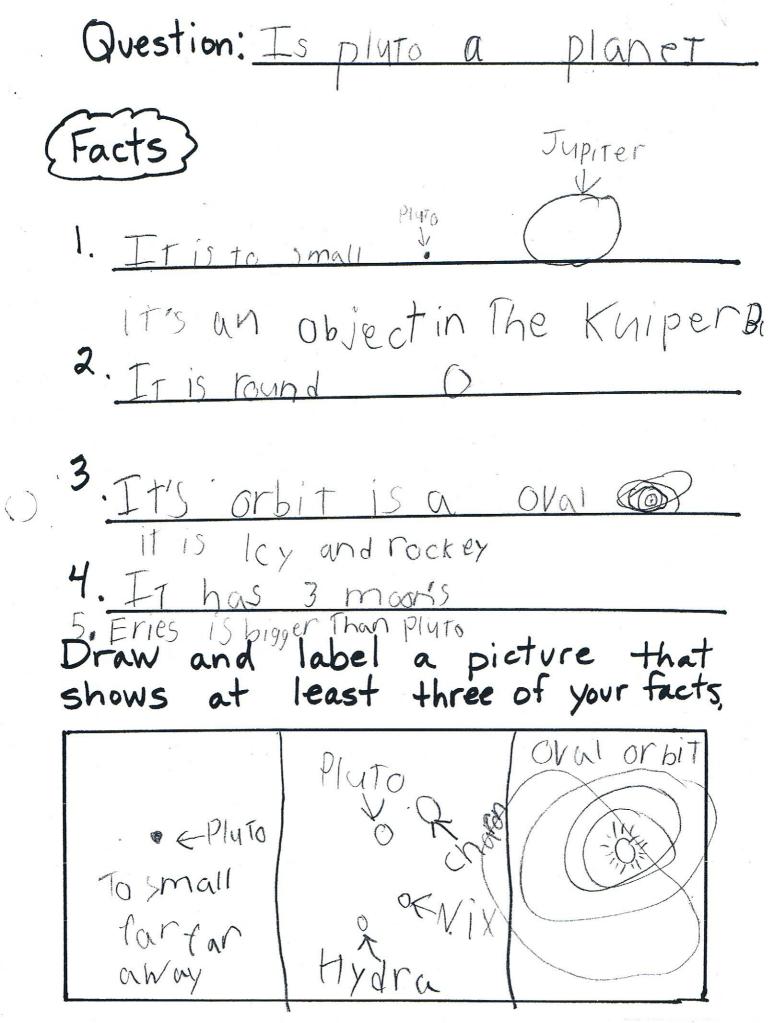
An international team of astronomers led by Kubas and colleague Arnaud Cassan used a method called gravitational microlensing, which looks at how the combined gravitational fields of a host star and the planet itself act like a lens, magnifying the light of another star in the background.

The survey picked up on planets between 75 million and 1.5 billion kilometres from their stars — a range equivalent in the solar system to Venus at one end and Saturn at the other — with masses at least five times greater than Earth.

Name: Travis

### What? - So What?

What? Facts from the text	So What? What are you thinking?
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	other planets
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## Knew-New Connections

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## Knew-New Connections

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Why does Saturn have so many rings and how do they stay?

### How did Saturn get its rings?

We think that a small moon got too close to Saturn and was torn apart by Saturn's gravity. It is also possible that an asteroid passing by Saturn hit into one of the moons.

### How many rings are there in Saturn?

When we look at Saturn's rings from Earth, they appear to have various bands. They have been given names: A, B, C, D, E, E, and G (there are seven bands). But the rings are actually made up of zillions of bits of rock, some as big as boulders but most tiny like sand. They are all in orbit around Saturn, like a horde of tiny moons.

### Why does Saturn have so many rings?

Saturn's rings are made up of zillions of rocks. A few are as big as cars but most are small as sand. They all circle Saturn like zillions of little moons. So they look like rings but actually they are lots of tiny moons!

Are Saturn's rings made up of huge chunks of rocks and ice or small chunks of ice?

Saturn's rings are made up mostly of ice with a little rocky stuff mixed in. The chunks are mostly small around a little rocky around the latest with a few bioos "itebase"."

Okay, small is relative the chunks are much smaller than a moon but big enough that you wouldn't want to have one smack into your spaceship!

http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/saturn

Question: Does Jupiter have The bigg

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