

TRAPPIST-1 planets likely to have water

The TRAPPIST-1 star, an ultra-cool dwarf, has seven Earth-size planets orbiting it.

The Earth-sized planets orbiting the ultracool TRAPPIST-1 dwarf star 40 light-years away may have substantial amounts of water and could be habitable, scientists say.

An international team of astronomers used the NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope to estimate whether there might be water on the seven planets orbiting in the nearby TRAPPIST-1 planetary system. The results suggest that the outer planets of the system might still harbour substantial amounts of water.

This includes the three planets within the habitable zone of the star, lending further weight to the possibility that they may indeed be habitable. In February this year, astronomers had announced the discovery of seven Earth-sized planets orbiting the ultracool dwarf star TRAPPIST-1, 40 light-years away.

Following up on the discovery, scientists used the Space Telescope Imaging Spectrograph (STIS) on the Hubble telescope to study the amount of ultraviolet radiation received by the individual planets of the system.

A study of nearly 300 people living in different parts of India found that nine single-base variants (single-nucleotide polymorphisms or SNPs) account

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