

WHAT ARE MONSTER GALAXIES?

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They are thought to be the ancestors of the huge elliptical galaxies in today's universe and pave the way to understanding the formation and evolution of such galaxies. A unique characteristic of monster galaxies (or starburst galaxies as they are also called) is that they form stars at a startling pace —1,000 times higher than the star formation in our galaxy. On investigating one called COSMOS-AzTEC-1, an international team of astronomers has recently found that clouds throughout the galaxy are very unstable, which is unusual. The gas in COSMOS-AzTEC-1 will be completely consumed in 100 million years, which is 10 times faster than in other star forming galaxies. The findings have been published in *Nature*.

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