Space Chat Podcast 6th November, 2026

Topics:

• Scientists build whole-Earth simulation to help find life on other planets

It's a dizzyingly busy time for scientists searching for life on distant planets. To date, astronomers have catalogued more than 6,000 planets beyond our solar system and are searching the atmospheres of the most promising worlds for chemicals that might be byproducts of life. Astrobiologists are particularly interested in atmospheres like Earth's that trap enough heat to support liquid water on the planet's surface, which scientists consider the key factor in determining whether a planet can support life as we know it.

https://phys.org/news/2026-11-scientists-earth-simulation-life-planets.html

• Stars make oxygen for small galaxies, but they lose most of it

Scientists examining data collected by NASA's Hubble Space Telescope have found that dozens of small galaxies contain far less oxygen than their stars are estimated to have produced. The researchers, including a Rutgers astrophysicist, studied 37 dwarf galaxies, which are much smaller than the Milky Way and considered to be nearby, within 22 million light-years of Earth. The results were published in The Astrophysical Journal.

https://phys.org/news/2026-11-stars-oxygen-small-galaxies.html

• Overlooked material in Ryugu and meteorites may explain how water spared ancient chemistry.

Asteroid Ryugu and some carbonaceous meteorites, are known as chemically "primitive" materials because they preserve the chemical composition of the early solar system remarkably well. Yet these rocks also reacted extensively with water after they formed, transforming many of their original minerals into new ones.

https://phys.org/news/2026-11-overlooked-material-ryugu-meteorites-ancient.html