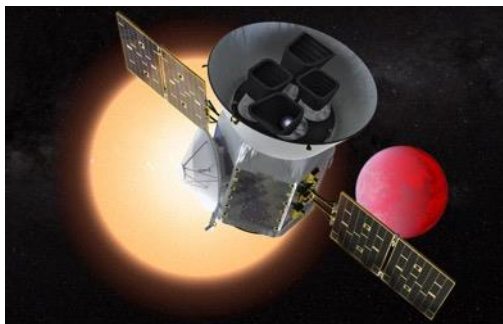


85 Possible Planets

Astronomers from the University of Warwick have discovered 85 possible planets with temperatures potentially cool enough to sustain life. Of the potential exoplanets (an exoplanet is any planet beyond our solar system), 25 were previously found by independent research teams. However, 60 are new discoveries found using data gathered by NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS). TESS is designed to discover and monitor thousands of exoplanets and other objects in orbit around the brightest dwarf stars in the sky, by recording changes in light. The observed dips in the brightness of stars are called transits and show that objects, such as exoplanets, are passing in front of them. Scientists think that the new exoplanets are similar in size to Saturn, the second largest planet in our solar system. Saturn is over nine times wider than Earth! Professor Daniel Bayliss, of the University of Warwick said, 'It's very exciting to find these planets, and to know that many of them may be in the right temperature zone to sustain life. Encompassing the collaborative spirit of



Pictured Left: NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite. **Source:** NASA_TESS @NASA_TESS X page.



the TESS mission, we have also made our discoveries public so that astronomers across the globe can study these unique exoplanets in more detail. We hope this will drive further research into these fascinating exoplanets.'

Do you think it would be exciting to discover planets that could be lived on outside of our solar system?

World's First Magma Observatory

The Krafla Magma Testbed (KMT), in a remote area of Iceland, has been announced as the world's first magma observatory. KMT's website said the research facility, open to all, will have access to a magma chamber (an underground reservoir of molten rock). Scientists plan to drill down to the magma chamber, so that they can observe and experiment on the magma to see how it behaves and reacts whilst underground. This will give them a greater understanding of magma, volcanoes and help to improve volcano prediction. The world's first tunnel to a magma chamber also has the potential to unleash unlimited energy, using geothermal power. Geothermal energy is the heat produced deep in the Earth's core. It is a clean, renewable resource that can be used for heat and electricity. Two boreholes will be drilled, one will give scientists their first direct measurements of magma and the second could help to supercharge geothermal power, giving access to tons of green



Pictured: Magma flow. **Source:** Canva.

energy. 'What we know about magma comes from interpreting activity measured at the surface, the geology of fossil magma chambers, and laboratory experiments. The Krafla drilling project will provide direct samples and observations, helping the world to read signs of volcanic unrest better,' explained John Eichelberger, a volcanologist (a geologist, who focuses on understanding volcanoes) at the University of Alaska.

Do you know the difference between lava and magma?

It's all about location - magma is molten rock that is trapped underground, it becomes lava when it erupts to the surface and keeps flowing like a liquid!



Pictured: Krafla volcano, Iceland. **Source:** Krafla Magma Testbed - KMT Facebook page.

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

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Giant Tortoises Airlifted Home

136 Giant Galápagos Tortoises have been returned to their natural habitat by conservationists. The Galápagos National Park Directorate, working with the Galápagos Conservancy, successfully transported the young tortoises by helicopter! Flying was determined to be the safest and least impactful way to transfer the endangered animals. The other option being multiple expeditions, involving a journey by sea followed by each tortoise being carried on a person's shoulders for several kilometres over lava fields and challenging terrain. The reptiles, which are all between 5 and 9 years old, were airlifted from Arnaldo Tupiza Chamaidan Breeding and Rearing Centre to the Cinco Cerros area on Isabela Island's Cerro Azul volcano. They have been hatched and brought up at the centre by park rangers, who have ensured they are healthy, microchipped for identification and prepared for release. These most famous residents of the Galápagos Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, are herbivores (meaning they mainly eat plants) and their reintroduction to their native habitat will help maintain ecosystem stability. Dr Jorge Carrión, the Director of Conservation at the Galapagos Conservancy, described their repatriation as, 'a crucial milestone in



Pictured: Galápagos tortoises being airlifted and released on the island. **Source:** Galápagos Conservancy Facebook page.

our conservation mission in Galápagos.' They are the largest living species of tortoise, have an average lifespan of over 100 years, can grow as large as 1.8 metres long and weigh over 400 kilograms! **Did you know that the word 'Galápagos' comes from an old Spanish word for tortoises?** **Do you know any other interesting facts about the islands?**

Last week's topic:

Will self-driving vehicles change our lives?



I think self-driving cars will change our lives in a good way as they prevent those who drive recklessly from driving reckless and because of their amazing sensors and technology, they will be safe.

Jack

They're good because older people who can no longer drive can use them to be transported.

Sam

No because what would happen if the car malfunctions or doesn't stop when it should.

River

Let us know what you think about this week's news?

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