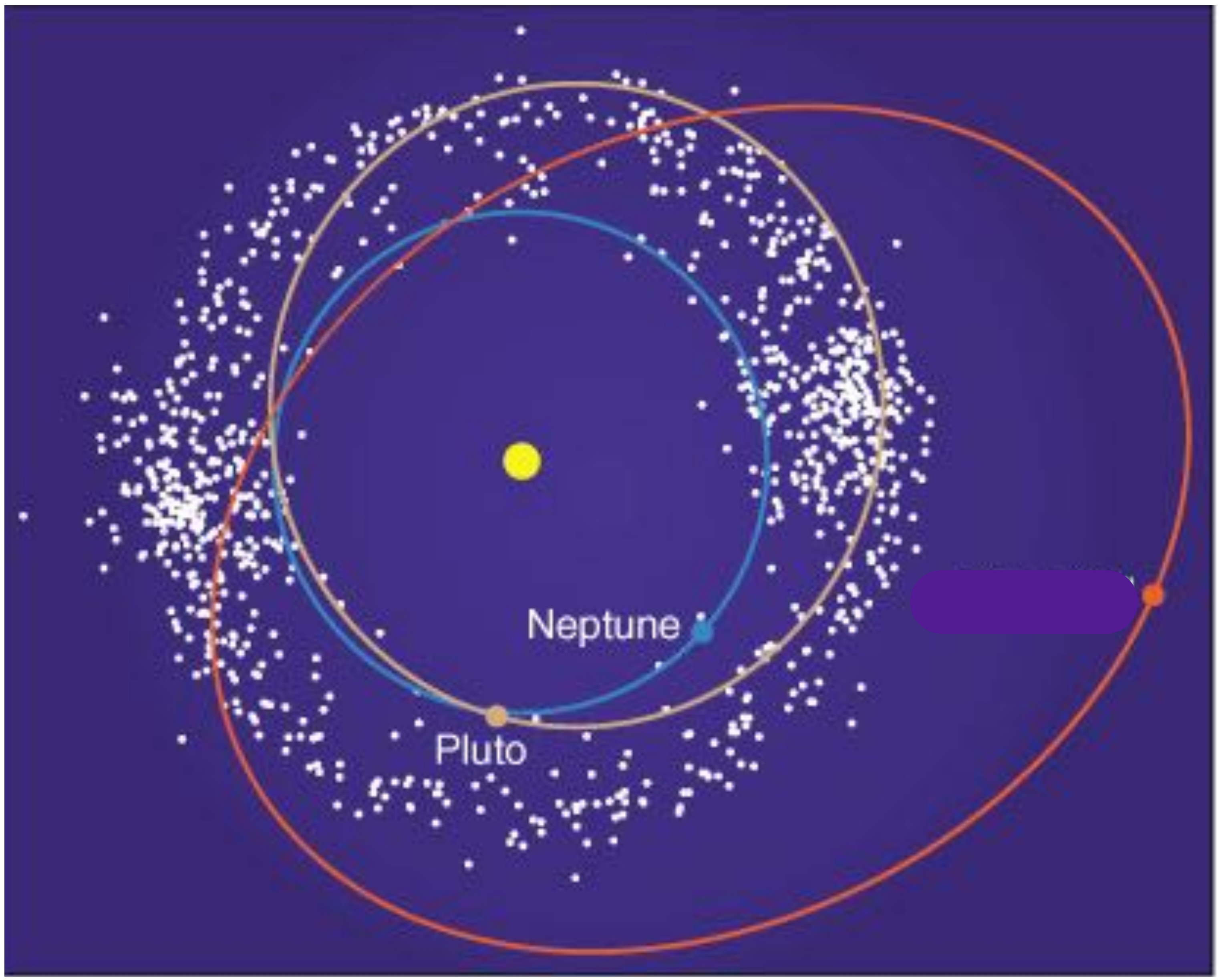
- Today
  - Kuiper belt
    - Pluto
    - Other KBOs
  - Extrasolar Planets

Kuiper Belt



- disk of objects beyond the orbit of Neptune
- Like more distant, icy version of asteroid belt
- Many small objects; some large ones (like Pluto)

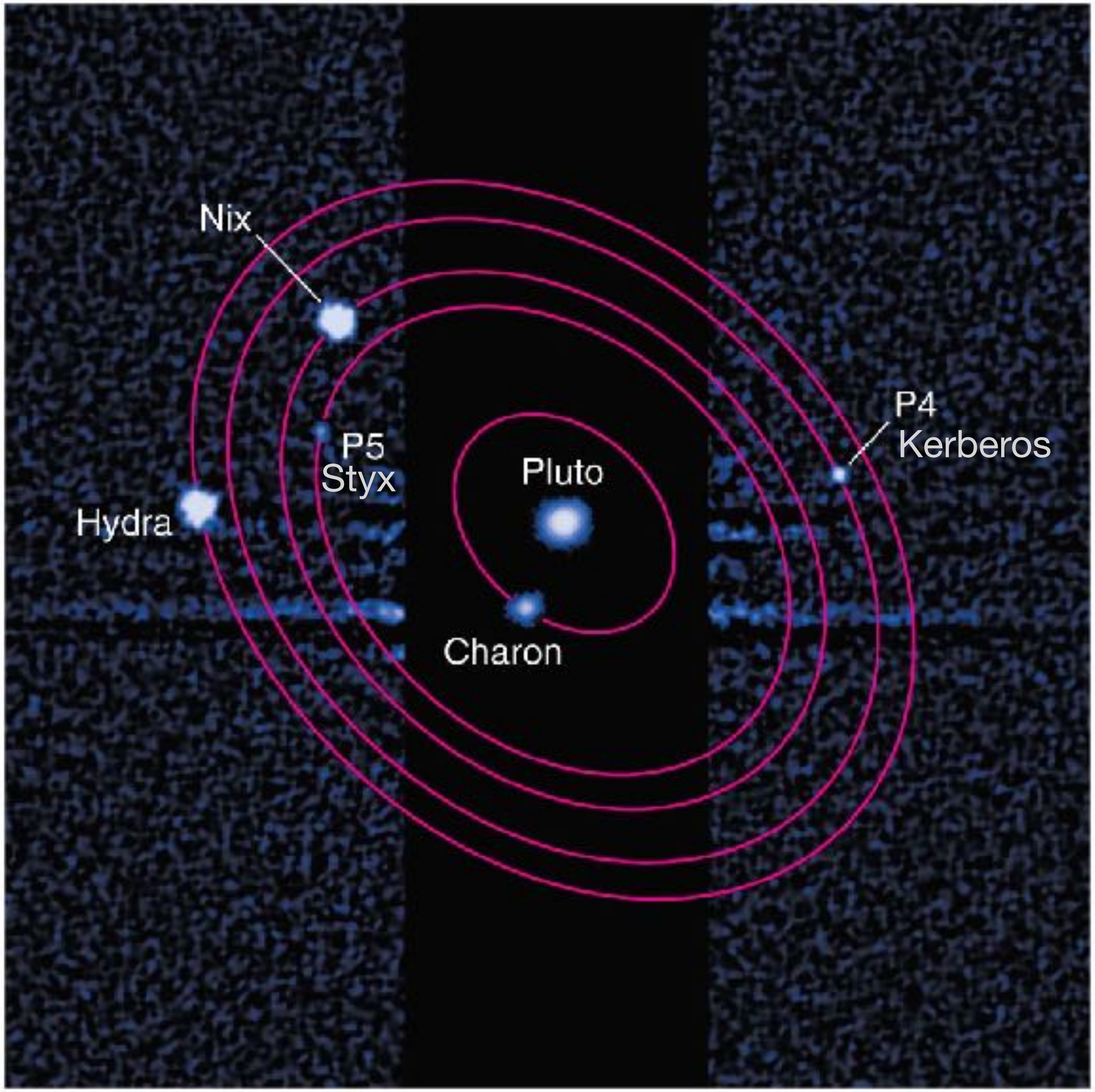
Other Icy Bodies

- There are many icy objects like Pluto on elliptical, inclined orbits beyond Neptune.
- The largest ones are comparable in size to Earth’s Moon.
- Similar in composition to Jovian moons; made of ice+rock

What is Pluto like?

- Its largest moon Charon is nearly as large as Pluto itself.
  - Tidally locked: perpetually face each other.
- Pluto is very cold: 40 K (-388 F).
- Pluto has a thin nitrogen atmosphere that refreezes onto the surface as Pluto’s orbit takes it farther from the Sun.

Hubble's View of Pluto and Its Moons



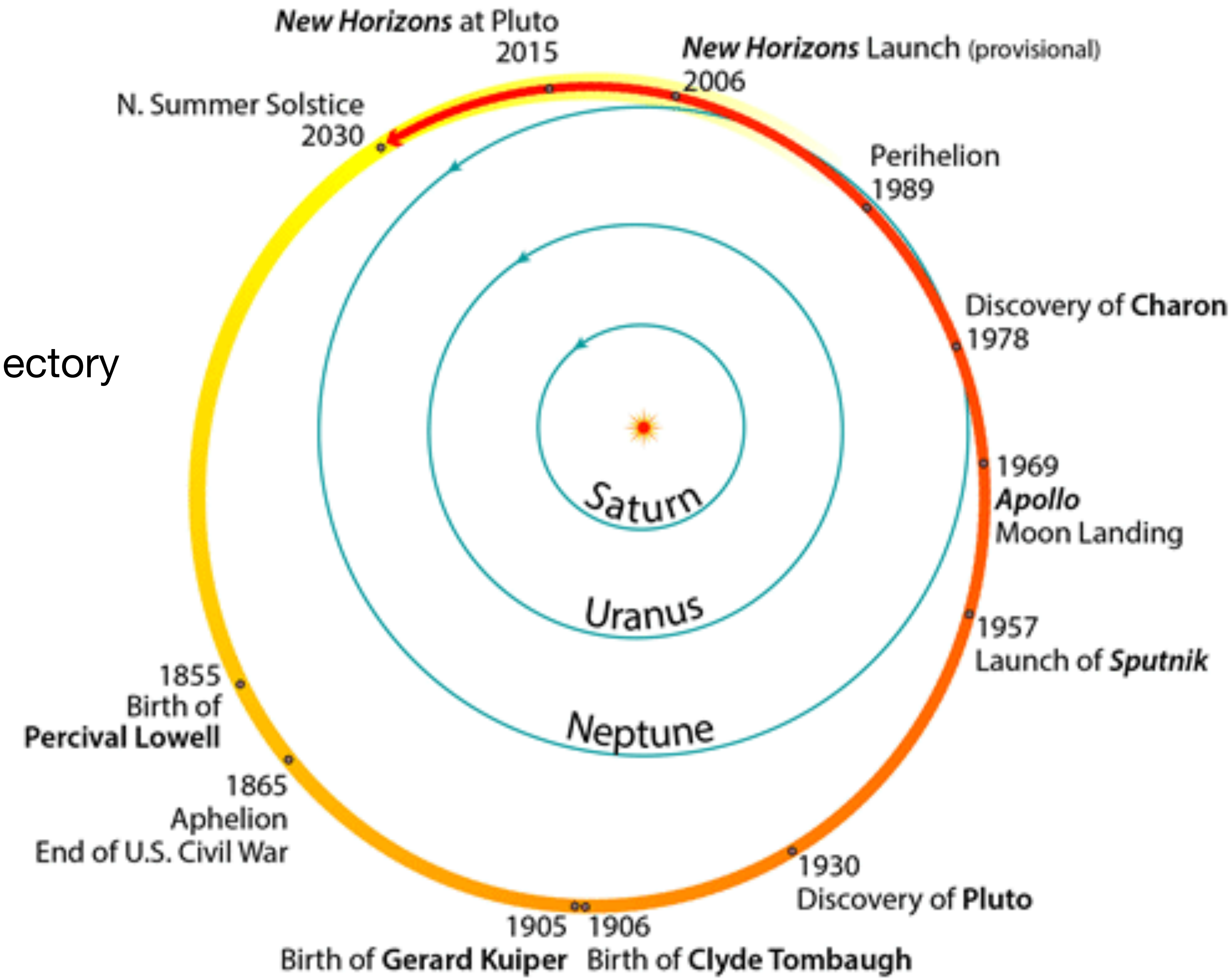
a This Hubble Space Telescope photo shows Pluto and its five known moons, along with orbital paths for the moons. Horizontal stripes are scattered light from Charon and Pluto in the long exposure.

plutosmoonsorbits.mp4

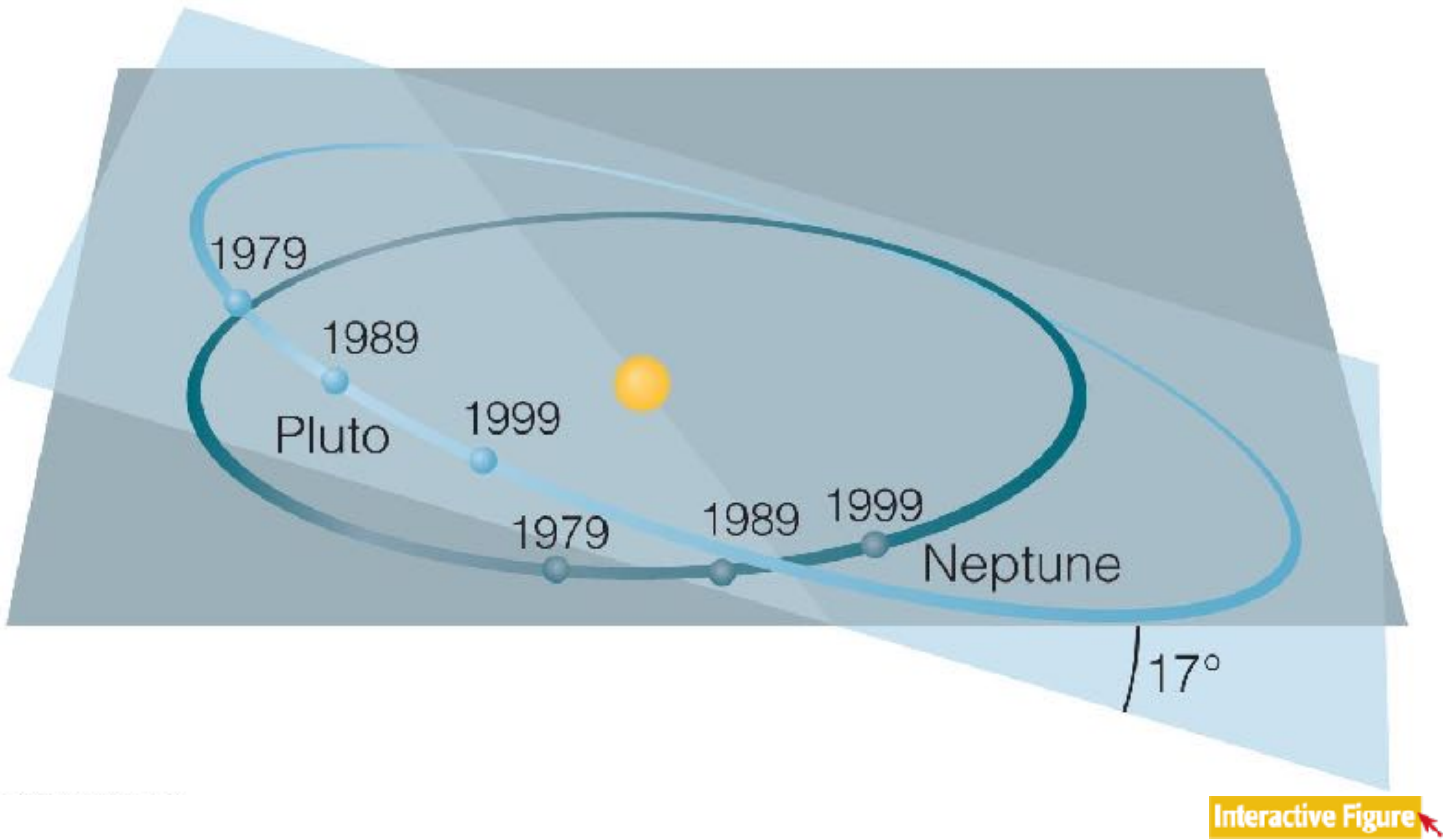
What is Pluto like?

- Summer ending (perihelion in 1989)

Pluto Orbit &
New Horizons trajectory



Pluto's Orbit



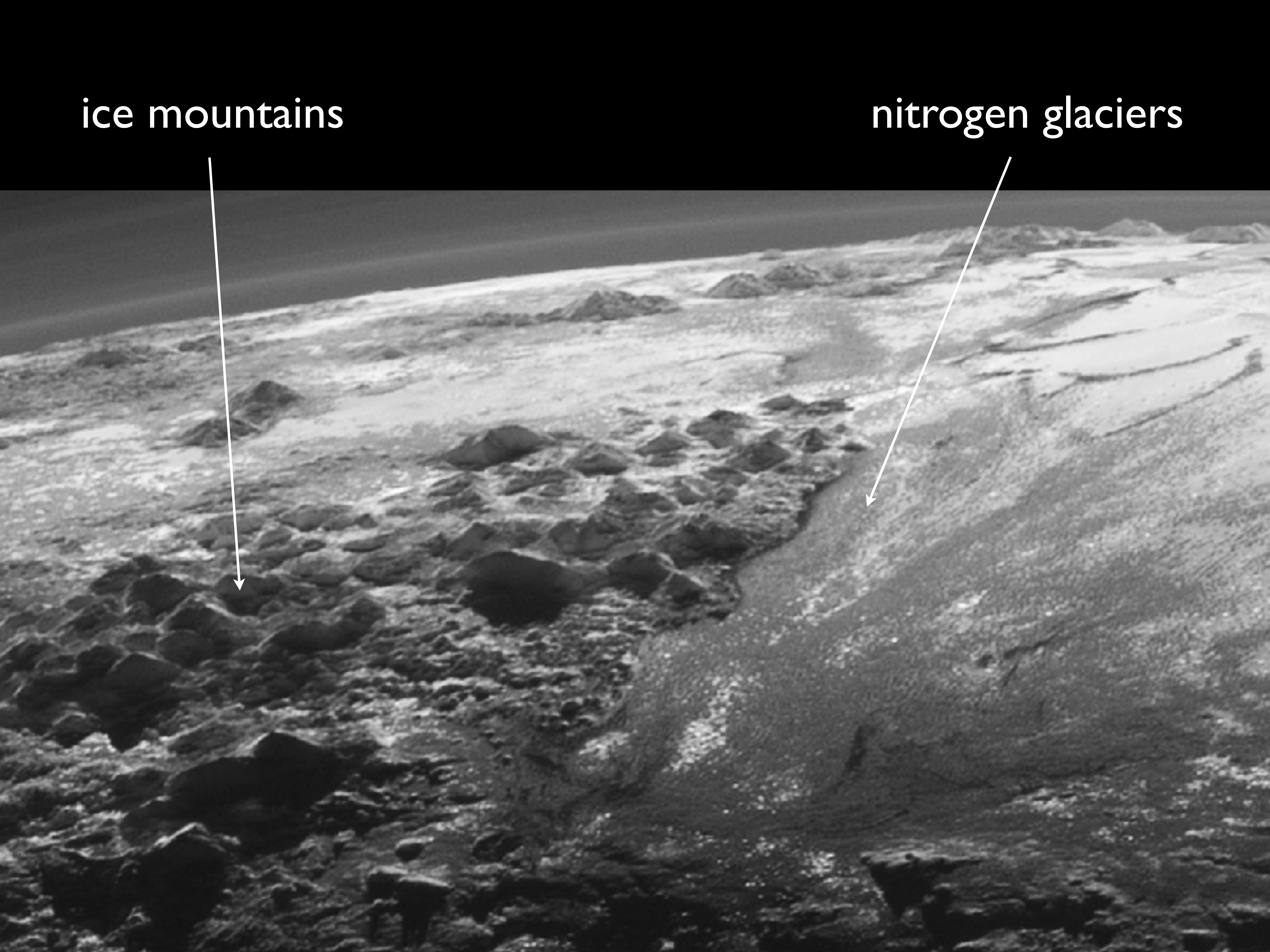
- Pluto will never hit Neptune, even though their orbits cross, because of their 3:2 orbital resonance.
- Neptune orbits three times during the time Pluto orbits twice.

Pluto as seen by New Horizons

What is Pluto like?

- Ice mountains.
- Nitrogen glaciers & ice cap.
- Water/Ice/brine cryovolcanoes.
  - Surprisingly young surface
  - Nitrogen atmosphere both refreezing onto surface
  - and evaporating into space

Note: nitrogen ice is slightly more dense than water ice,
so ice mountains literally float on glaciers made of air.

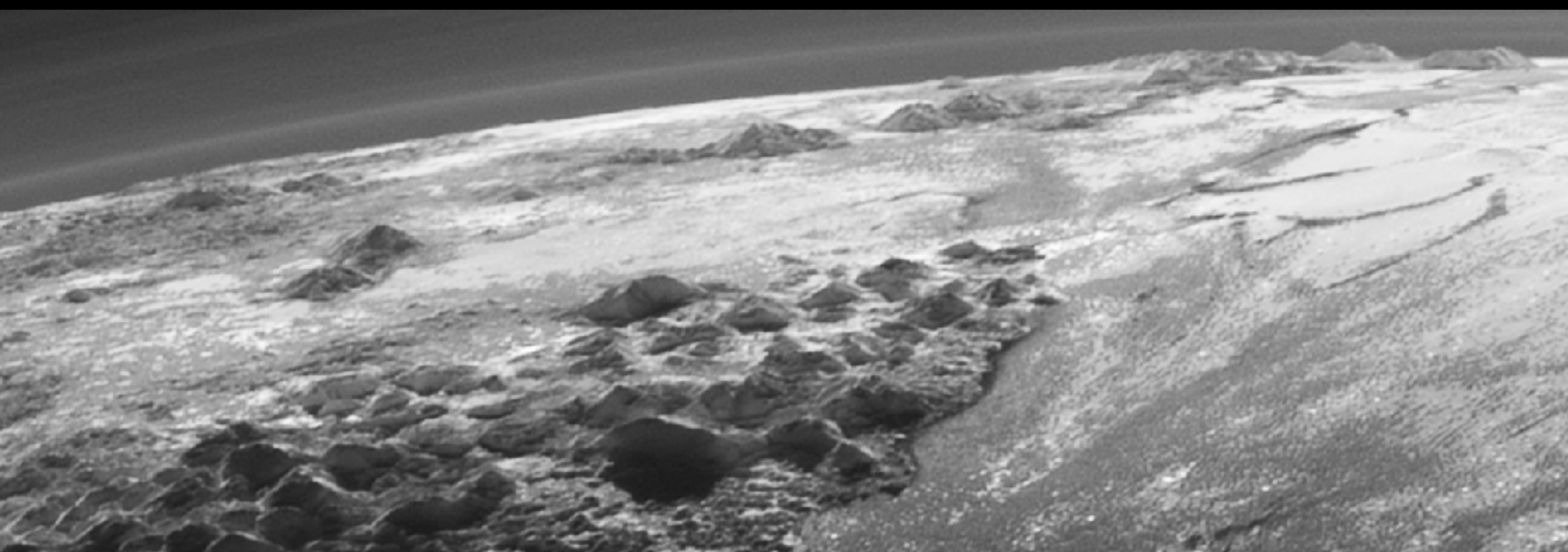

ice mountains
nitrogen glaciers

Nitrogen ice on Pluto flowing like water ice on earth

Competing hypotheses for Sputnik Planitia

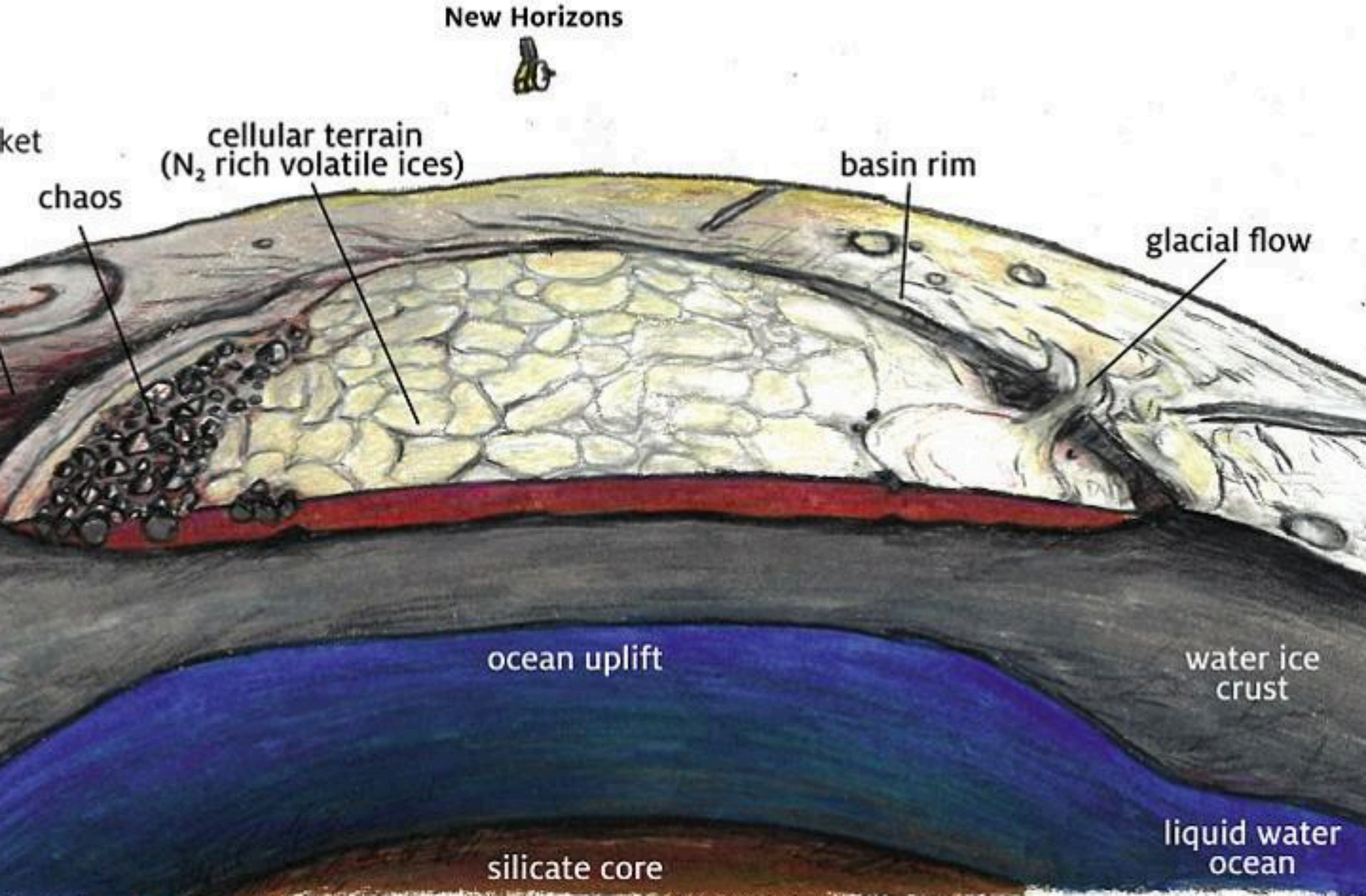
- Impact basin filling in with nitrogen ice in thin spot of crust over upwelling subsurface ocean

- Ice cap at coldest latitude (30° on Pluto!) whose weight presses down on water ice to compress & sink basin

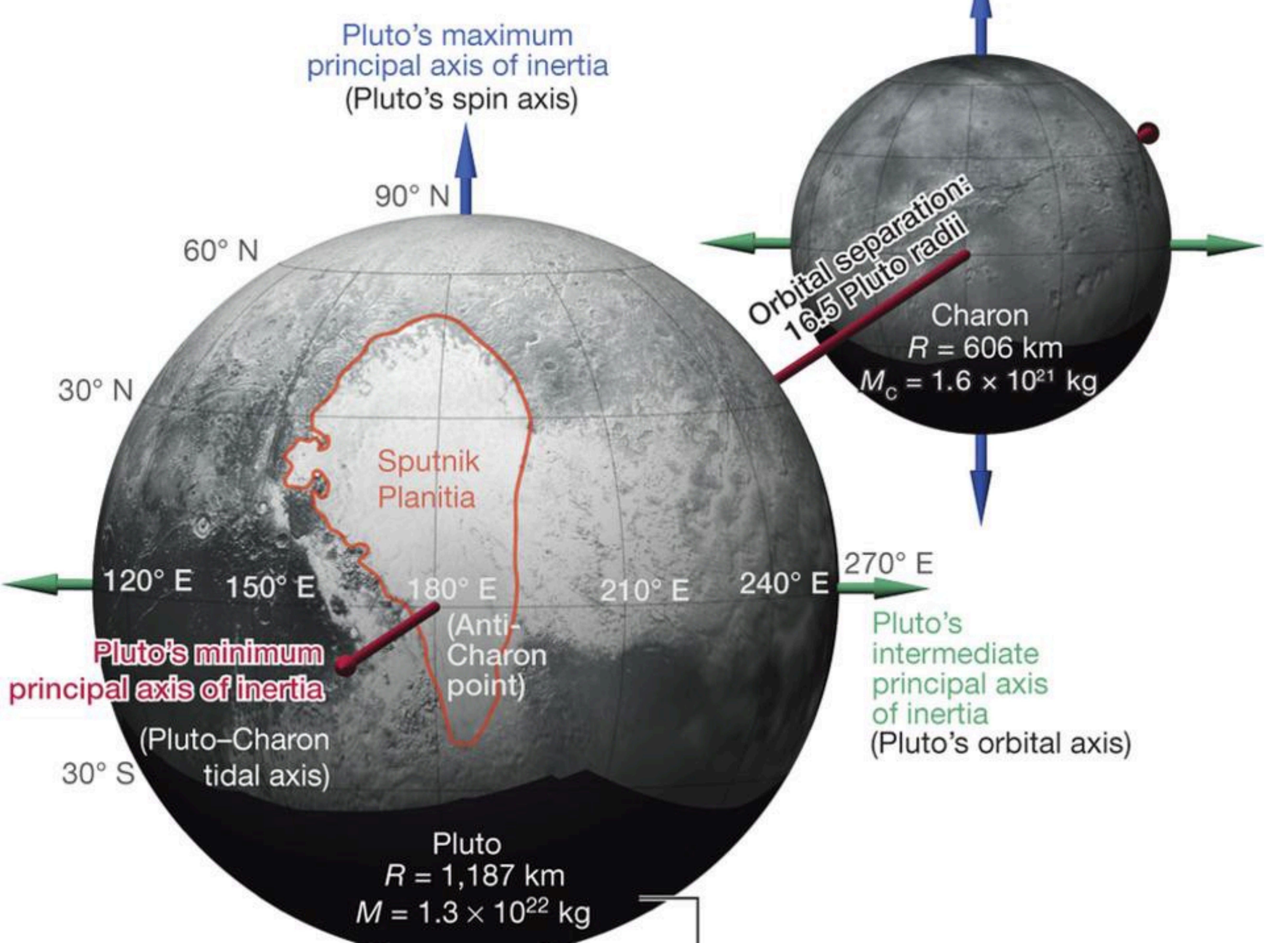


Sputnik Planitia, Pluto

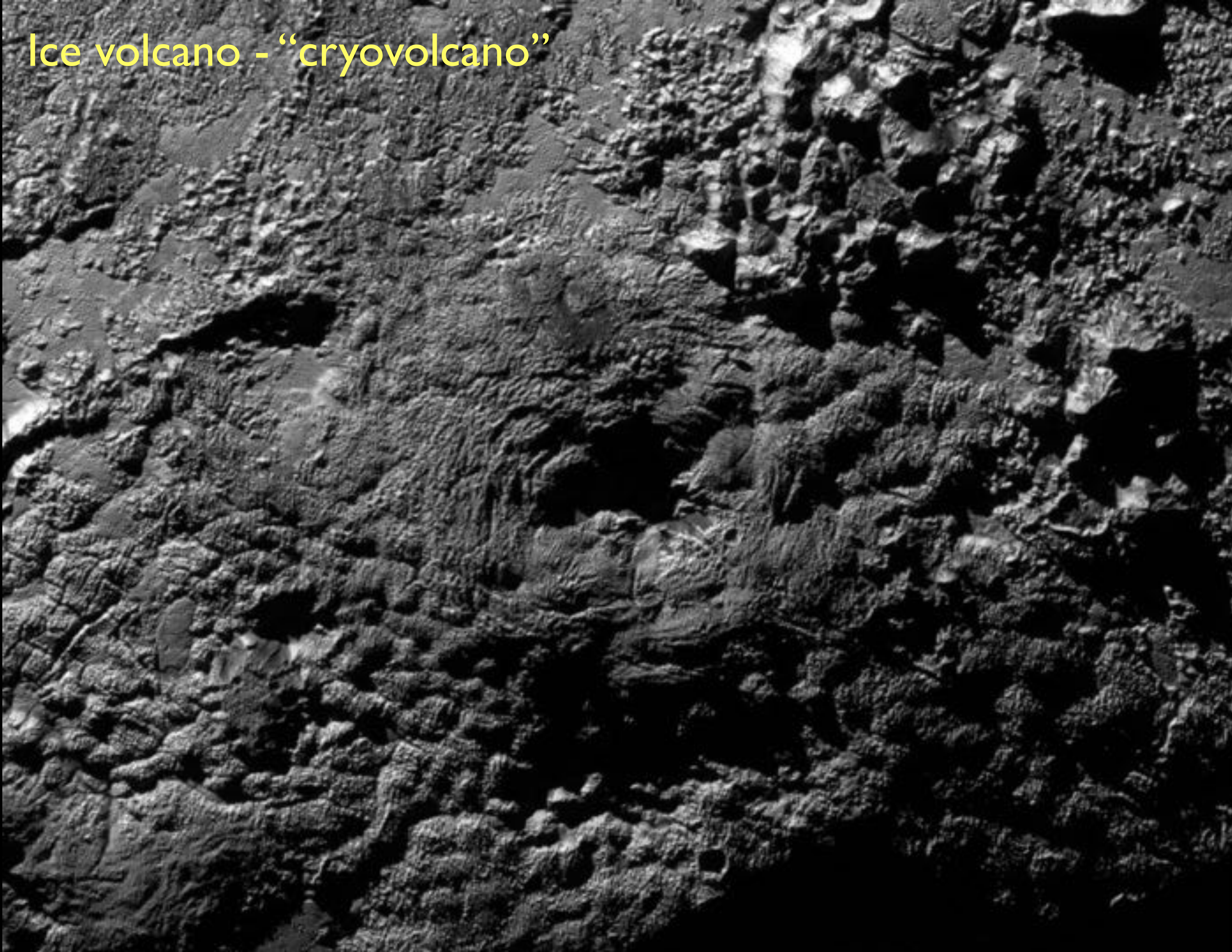
- Impact basin filling in with nitrogen ice in thin spot of crust over upwelling subsurface ocean



- Ice cap at coldest latitude whose weight presses down on water ice to compress & sink basin



Ice volcano - “cryovolcano”



Pluto’s atmosphere looking back towards the sun

Thin nitrogen atmosphere
some being lost to space;
some re-freezing onto single ice cap (Sputnik Planitia)

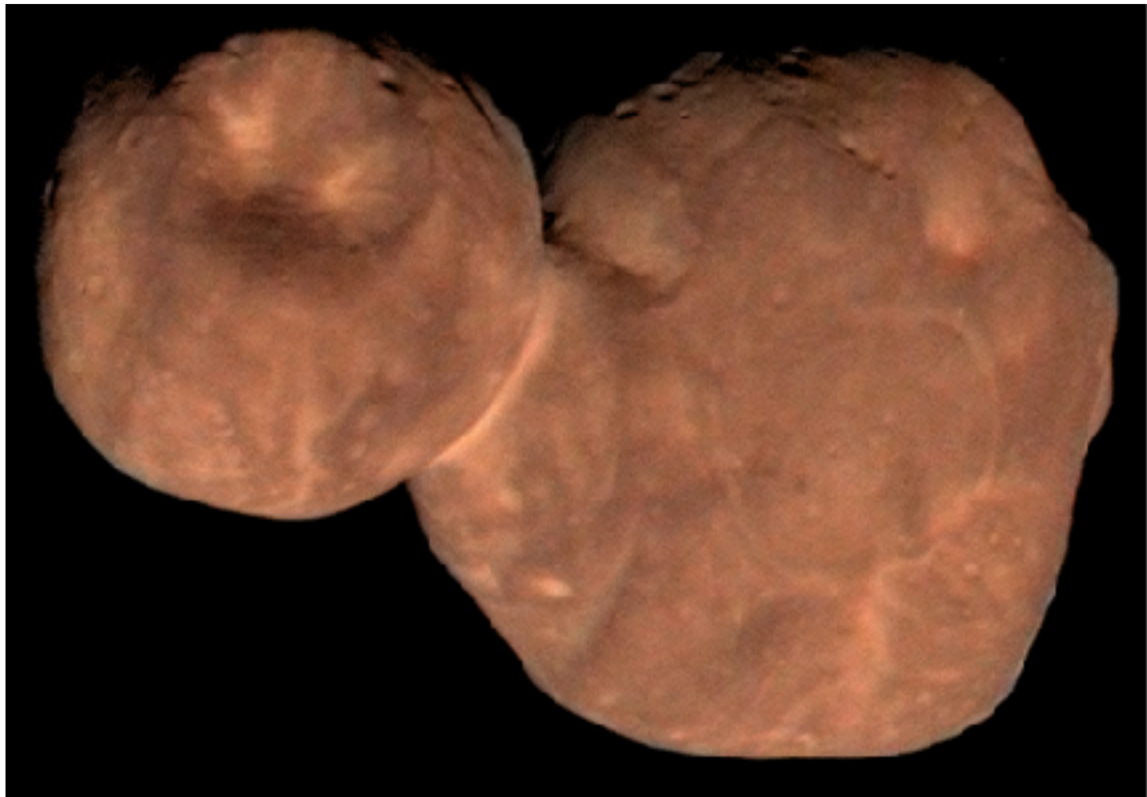
Charon

Charon is very different

no atmosphere
darker surface
more craters
long chasms

Other Kuiper Belt Objects

- Most have been discovered very recently so little is known about them.
- NASA’s *New Horizons* mission visited Pluto and Arrokoth.
  - – no close-up pictures of other Kuiper belt objects



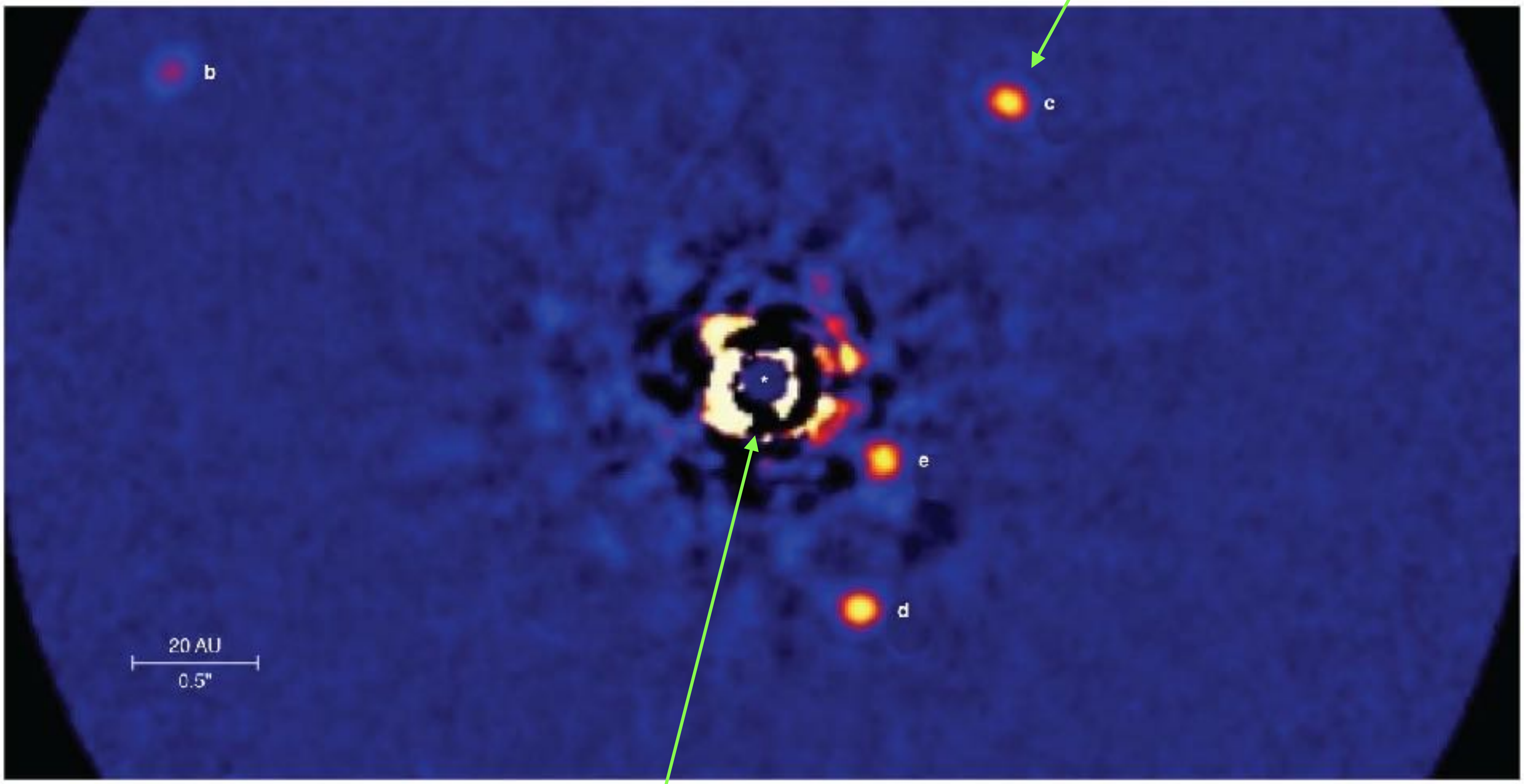
Extrasolar Planets

Planet Detection methods

- Direct: pictures of the planets themselves
- Indirect: measurements of stellar properties revealing the effects of orbiting planets
  - Astrometric method (face-on)
  - Doppler method (edge-on)
  - Transit method (edge-on)
  - Gravitational lensing

Direct Imaging

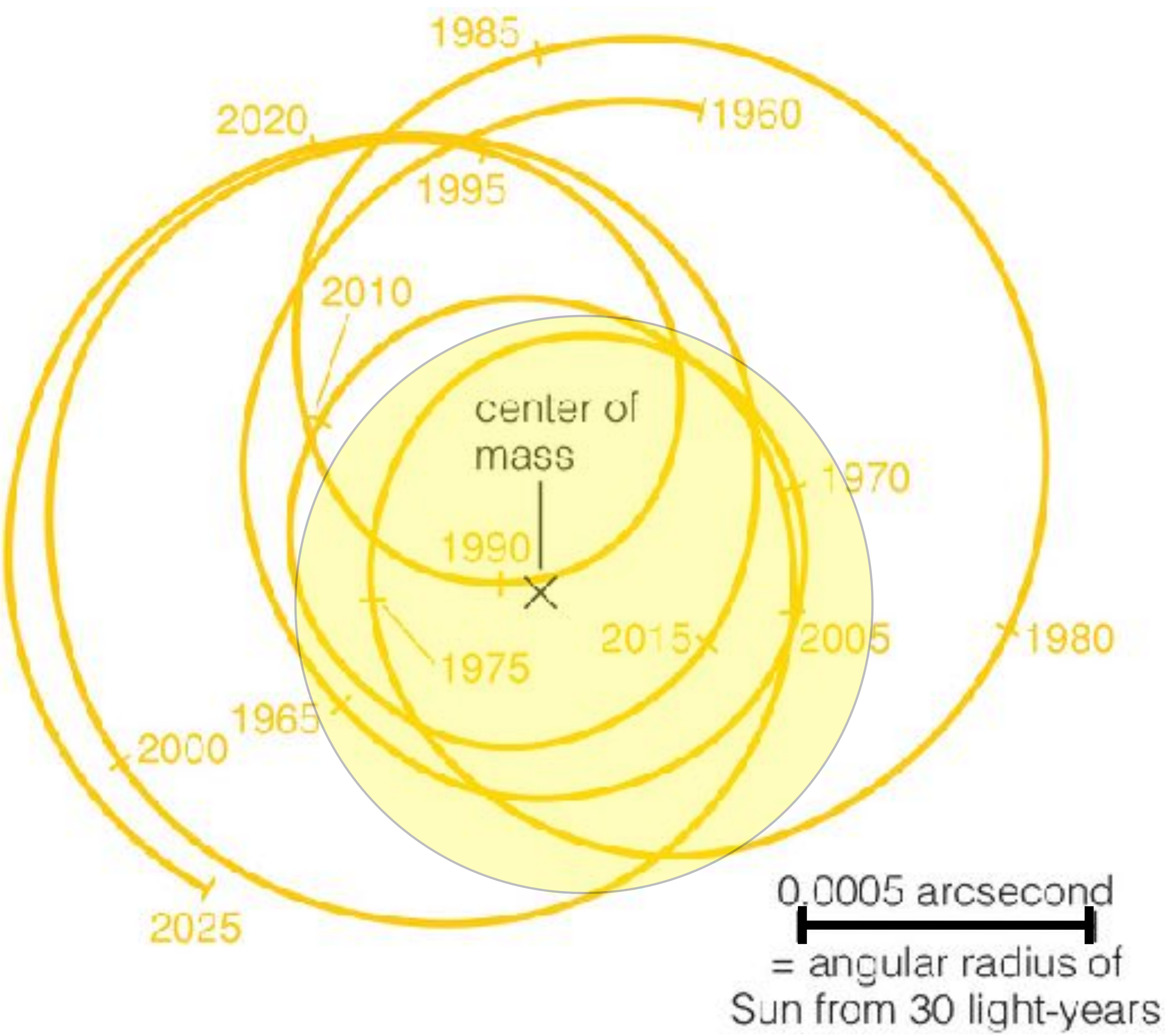
planets



Coronograph blocks light from star, which is otherwise overwhelming.
Even blocked, a tiny fraction of scattered light make the mess you see here.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yodAmnlFT7U

Astrometric Technique



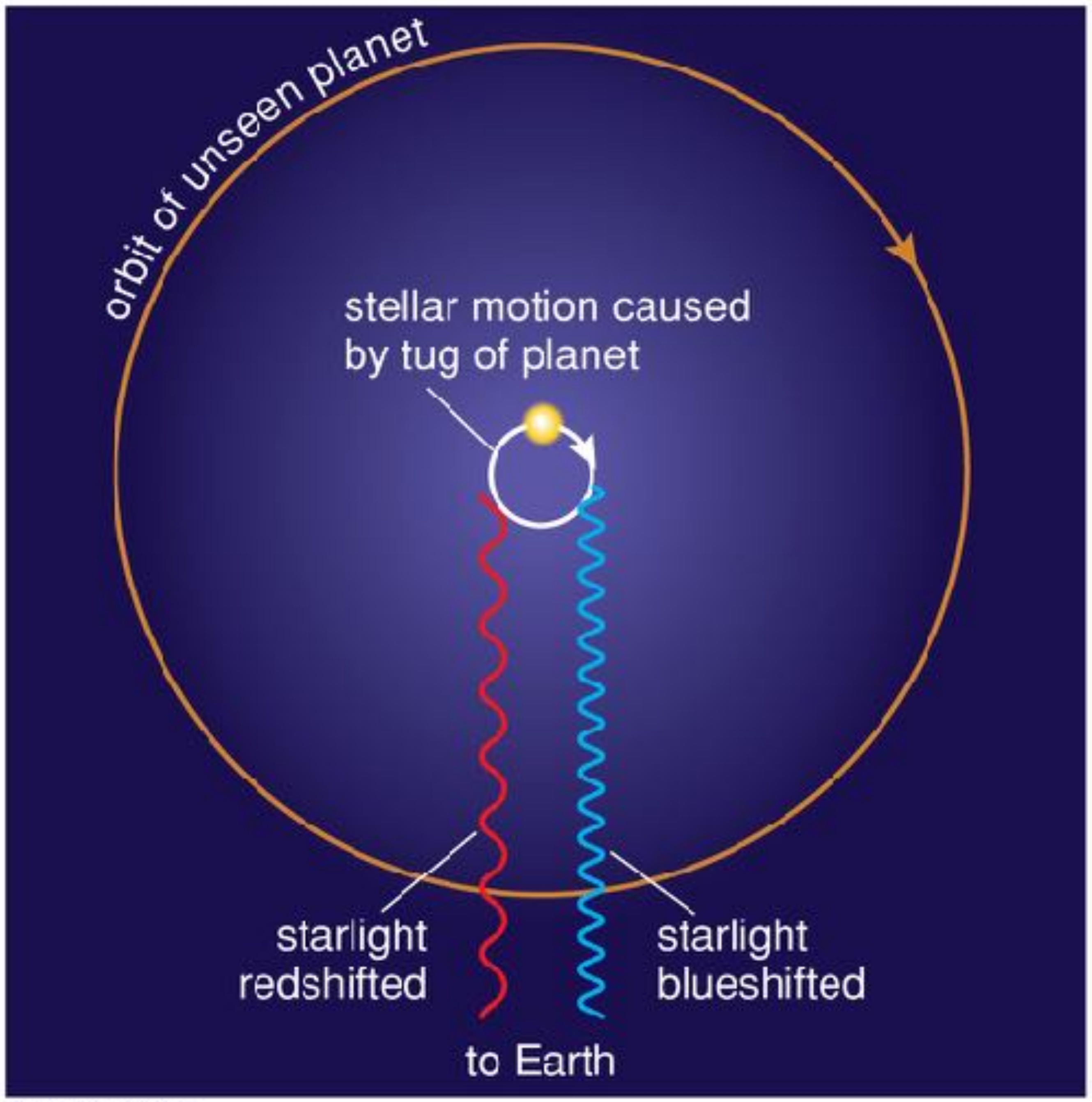
= solar radius

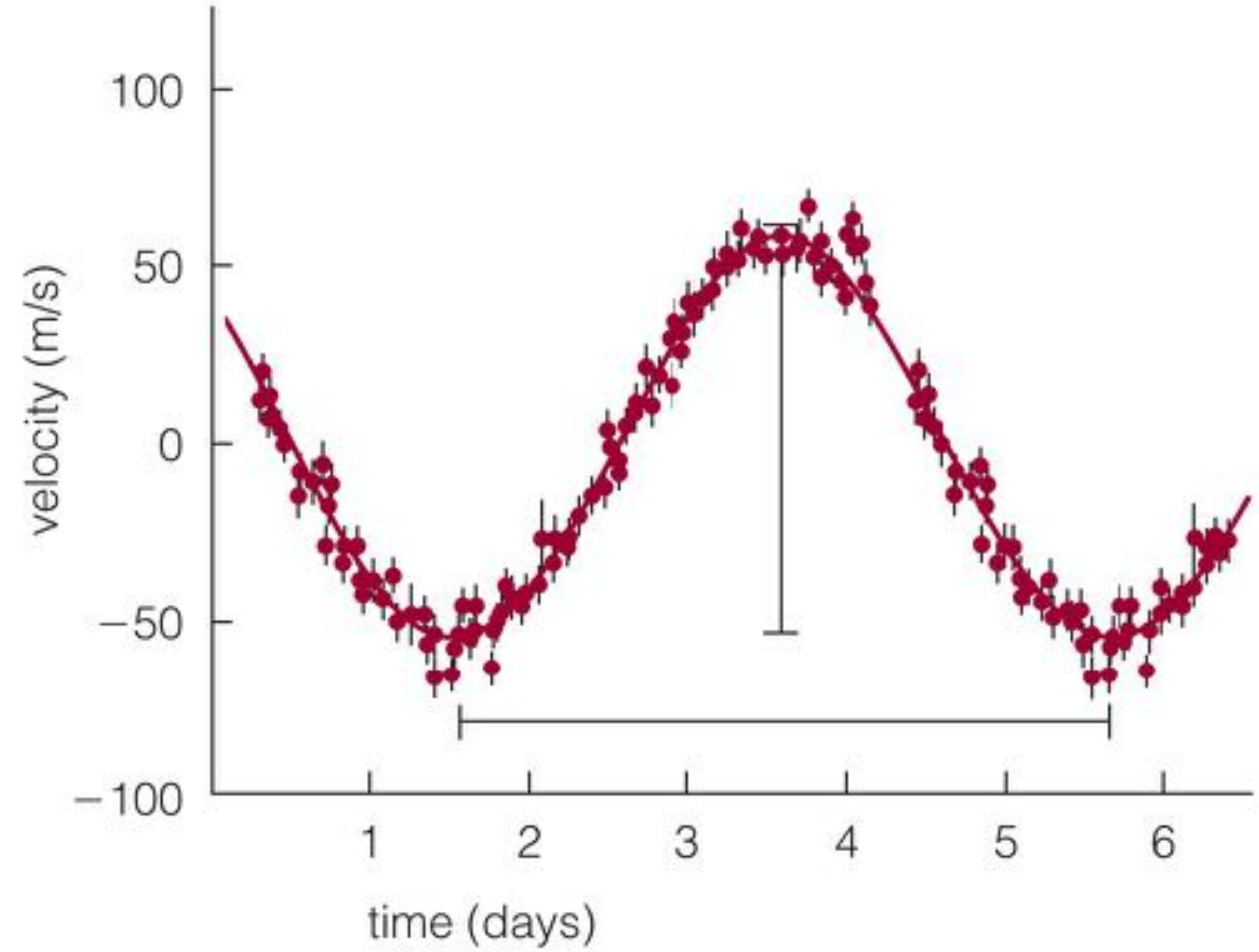
- We can detect planets by measuring the change in a star's position on sky as its center of mass wobbles in response to orbiting planets.
- However, these tiny motions are very difficult to measure (~ 0.001 arcsecond).
- Best seen face-on

https://sci.esa.int/web/exoplanets/-/60655-detection-methods

https://sci.esa.int/web/gaia/-/58788-detecting-exoplanets-with-astrometry

Doppler Technique





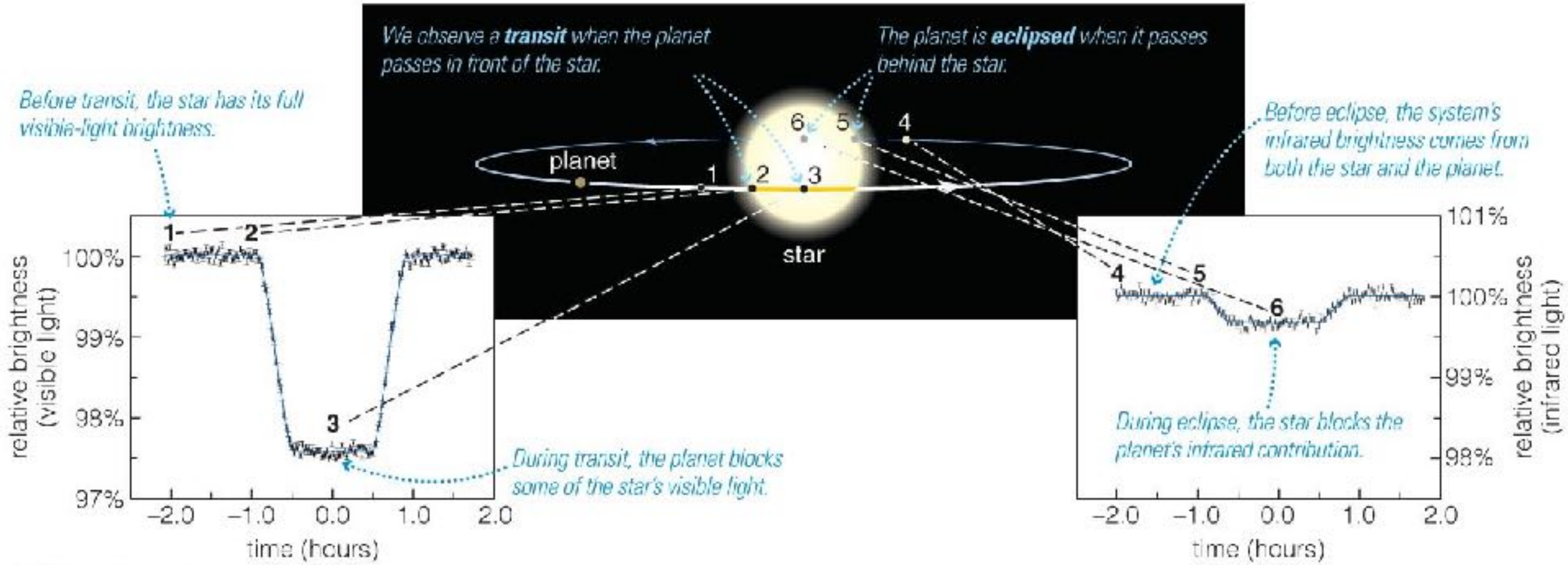
a A periodic Doppler shift in the spectrum of the star 51 Pegasi shows the presence of a large planet with an orbital period of about 4 days. Dots are actual data points; bars through dots represent measurement uncertainty.

- Best seen edge-on

Doppler ball

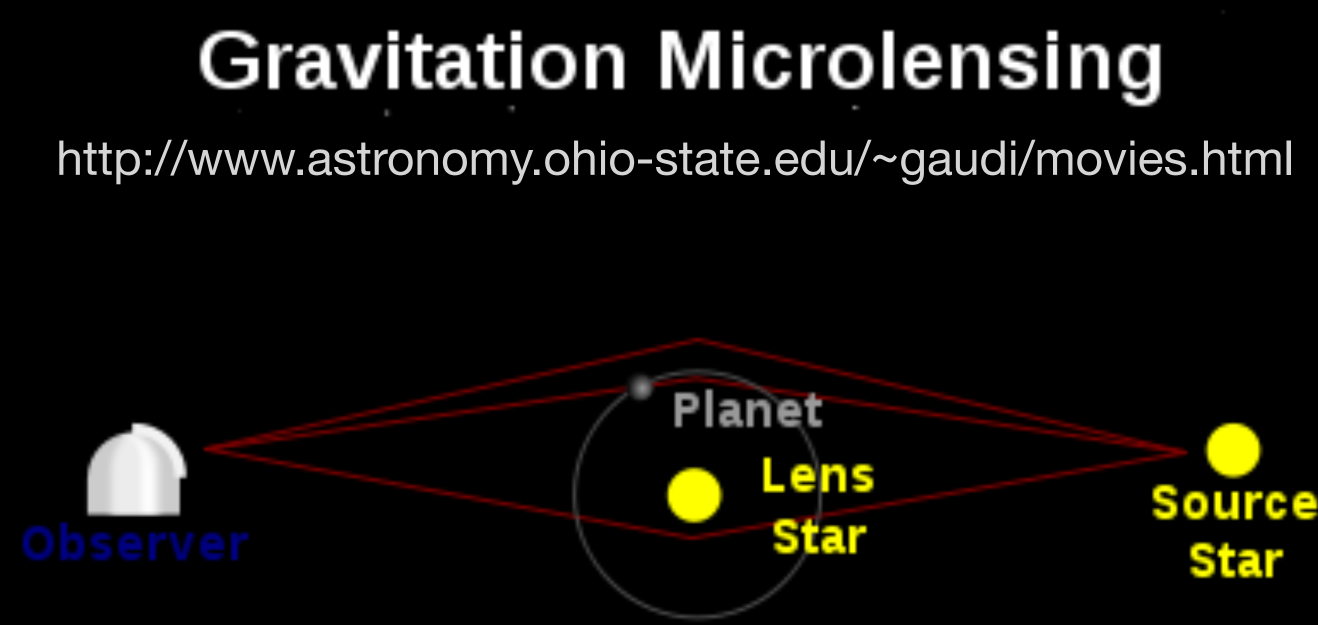
https://www.eso.org/public/usa/videos/eso1035g/

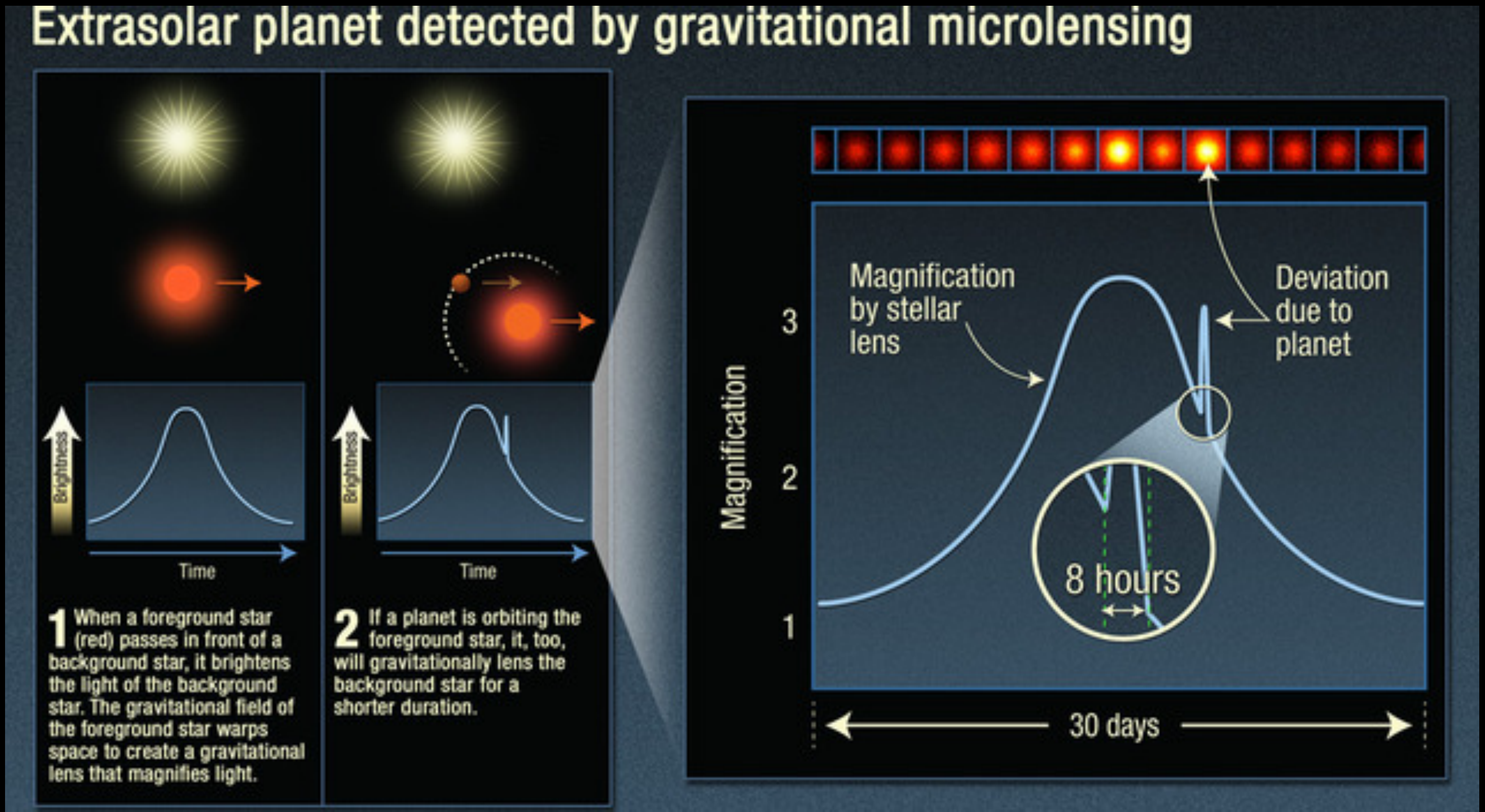
Transit Technique

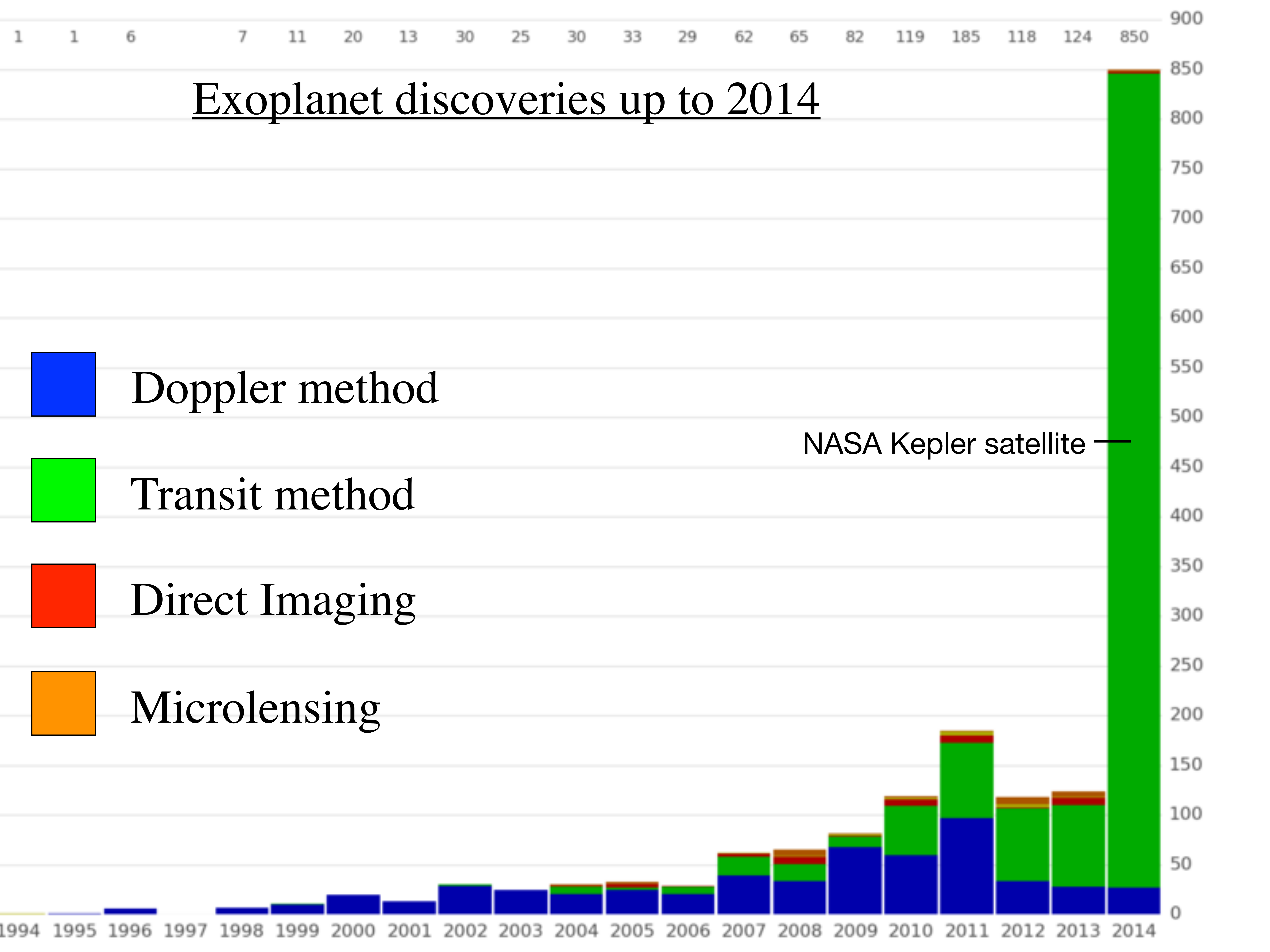


- A transit is when a planet crosses in front of a star.
- The resulting eclipse reduces the star's apparent brightness and tells us planet's radius.
  - best seen edge-on

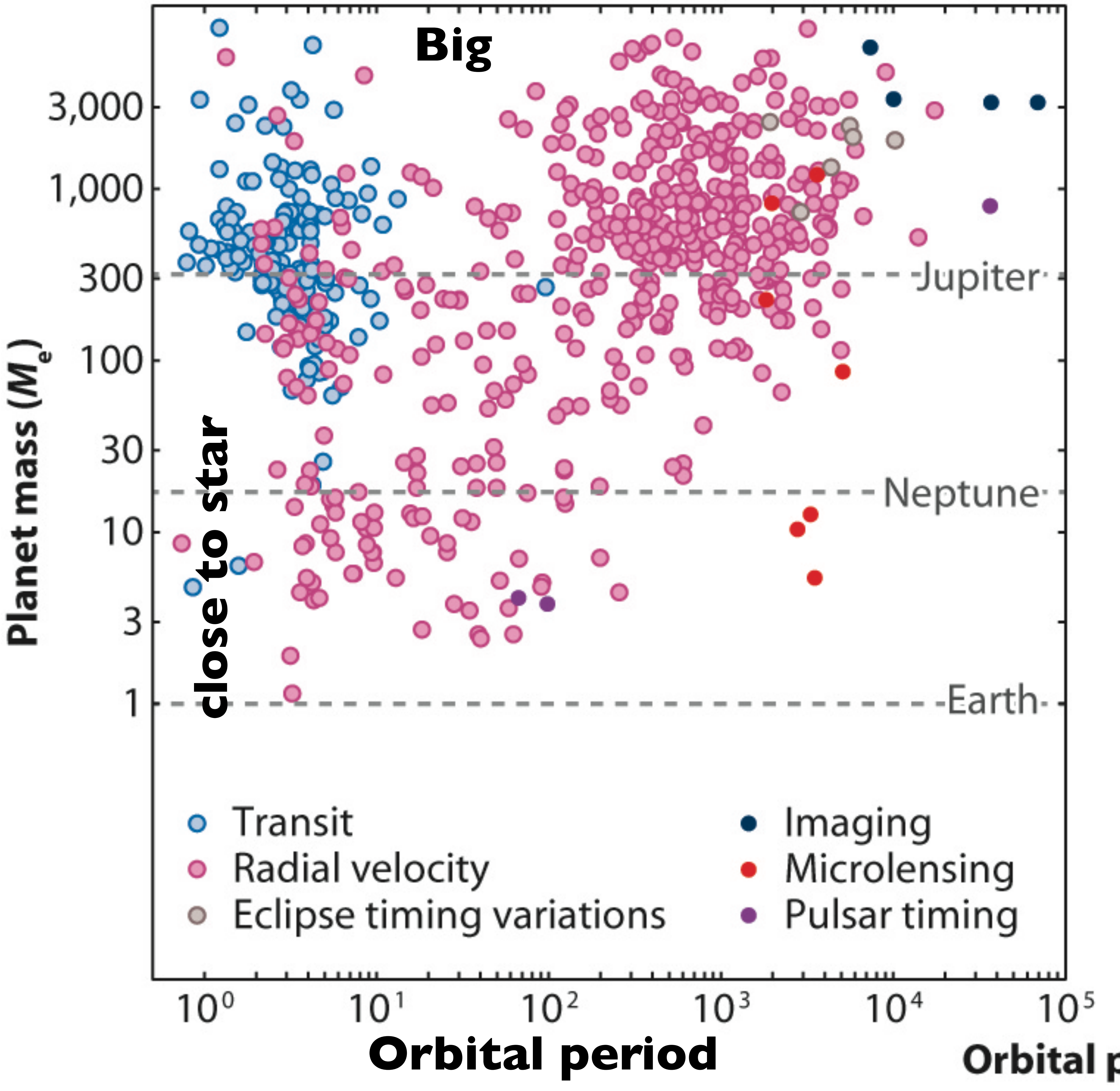
Gravitational lensing Technique



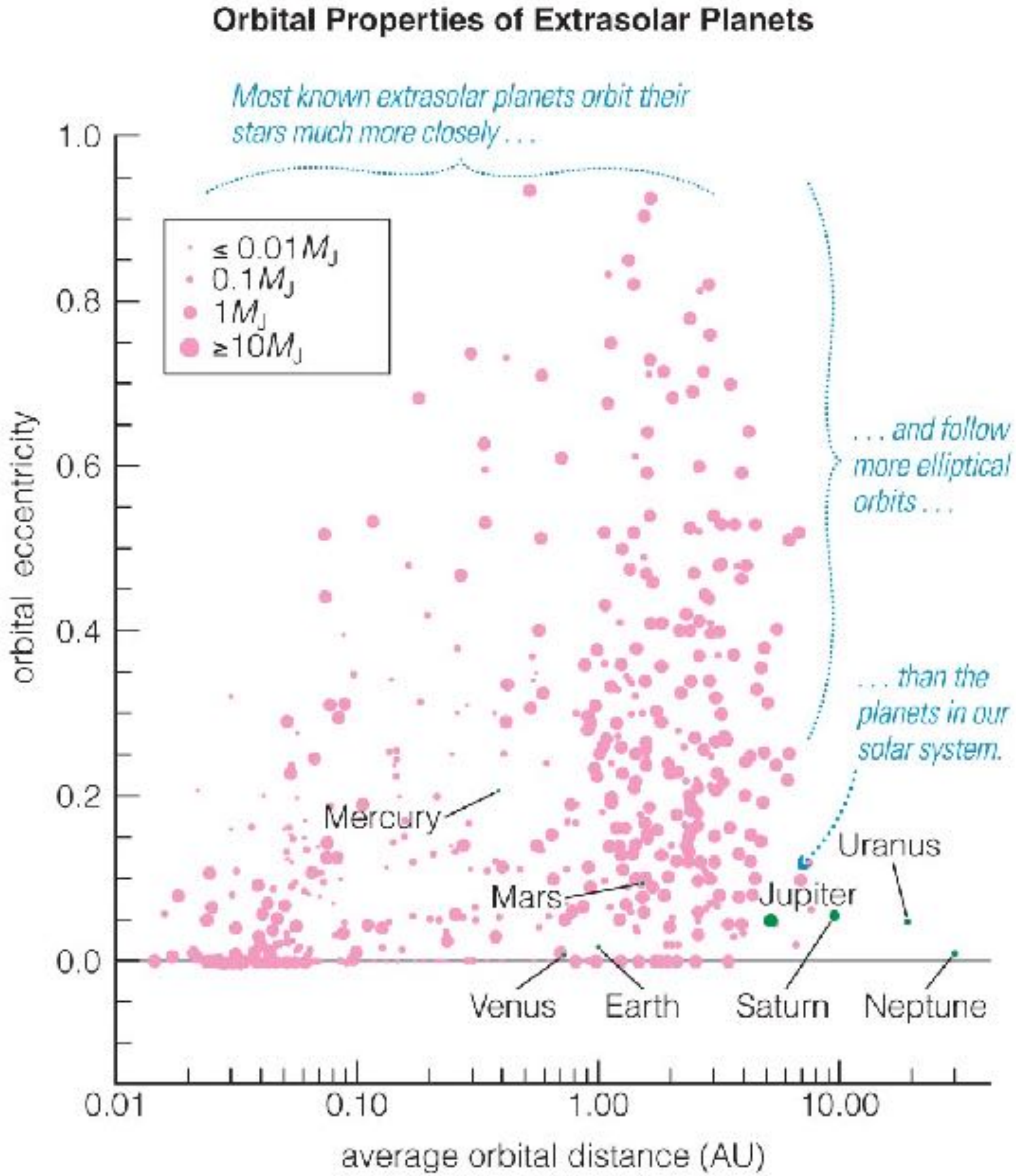



Exoplanet discoveries up to 2014
Doppler method
Transit method
Direct Imaging
Microlensing
NASA Kepler satellite
1 1 6 7 11 20 13 30 25 30 33 29 62 65 82 119 185 118 124 850
1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014
0 50 100 150 200 250 300 350 400 450 500 550 600 650 700 750 800 850 900

All methods have strong selection effects



What properties of extrasolar planets can we measure?



Measurable Properties

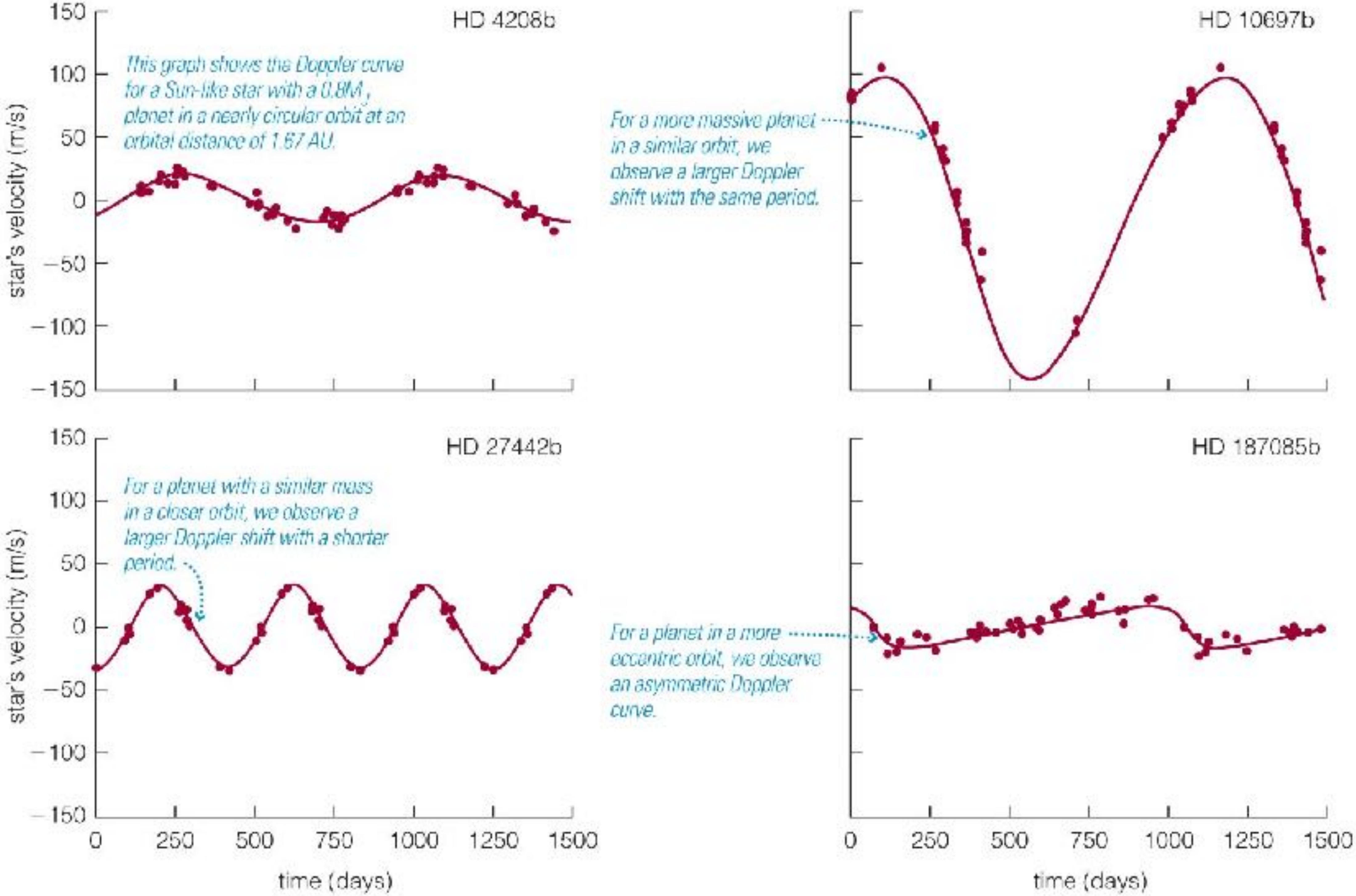
- Orbital period, distance, and shape (eccentricity)
- Planet mass, size, and density
- Atmospheric properties (sometimes)

Exoplanet app

gives you scientific data

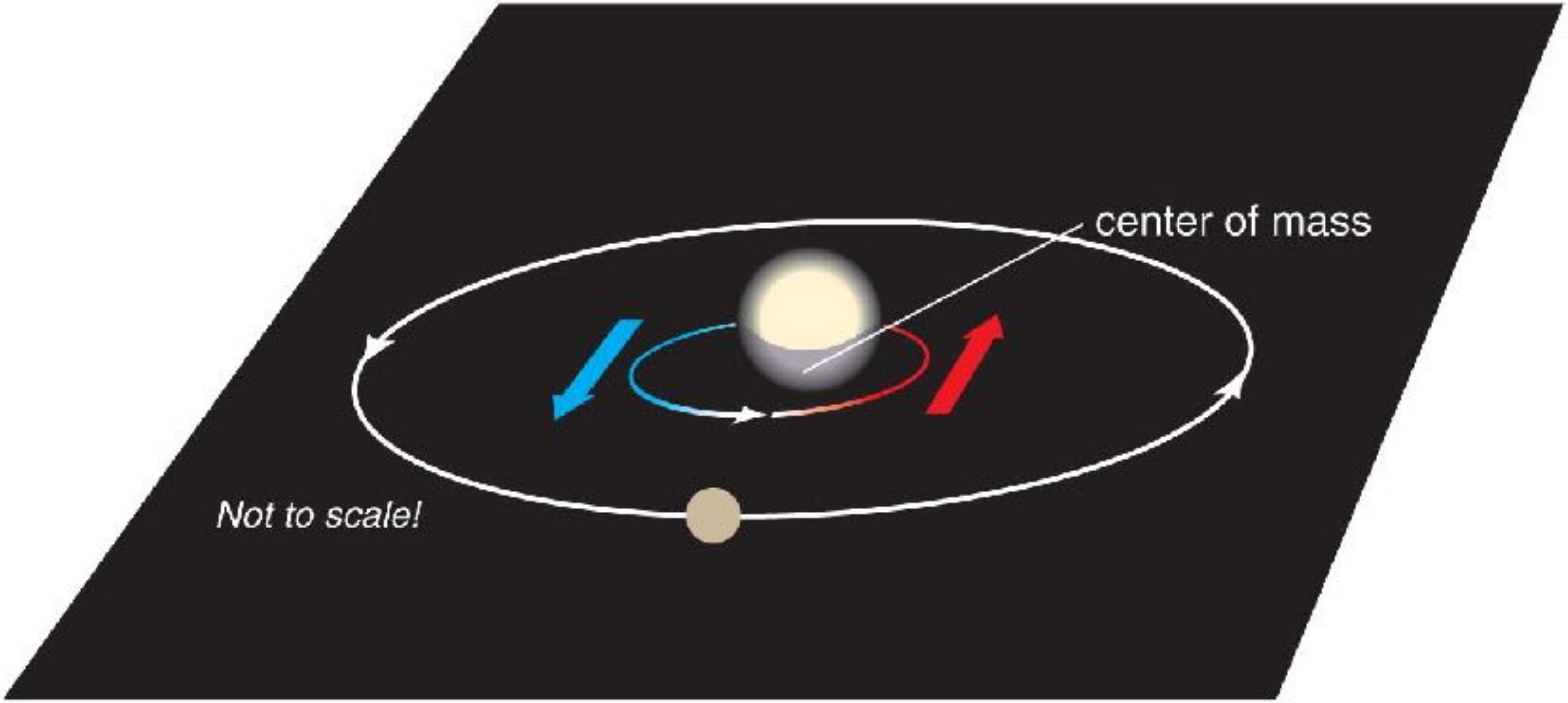
for thousands of exoplanets

What can Doppler shifts tell us?



- Doppler shift data tell us about a planet's mass and the shape of its orbit.

Planet Mass and Orbit Tilt

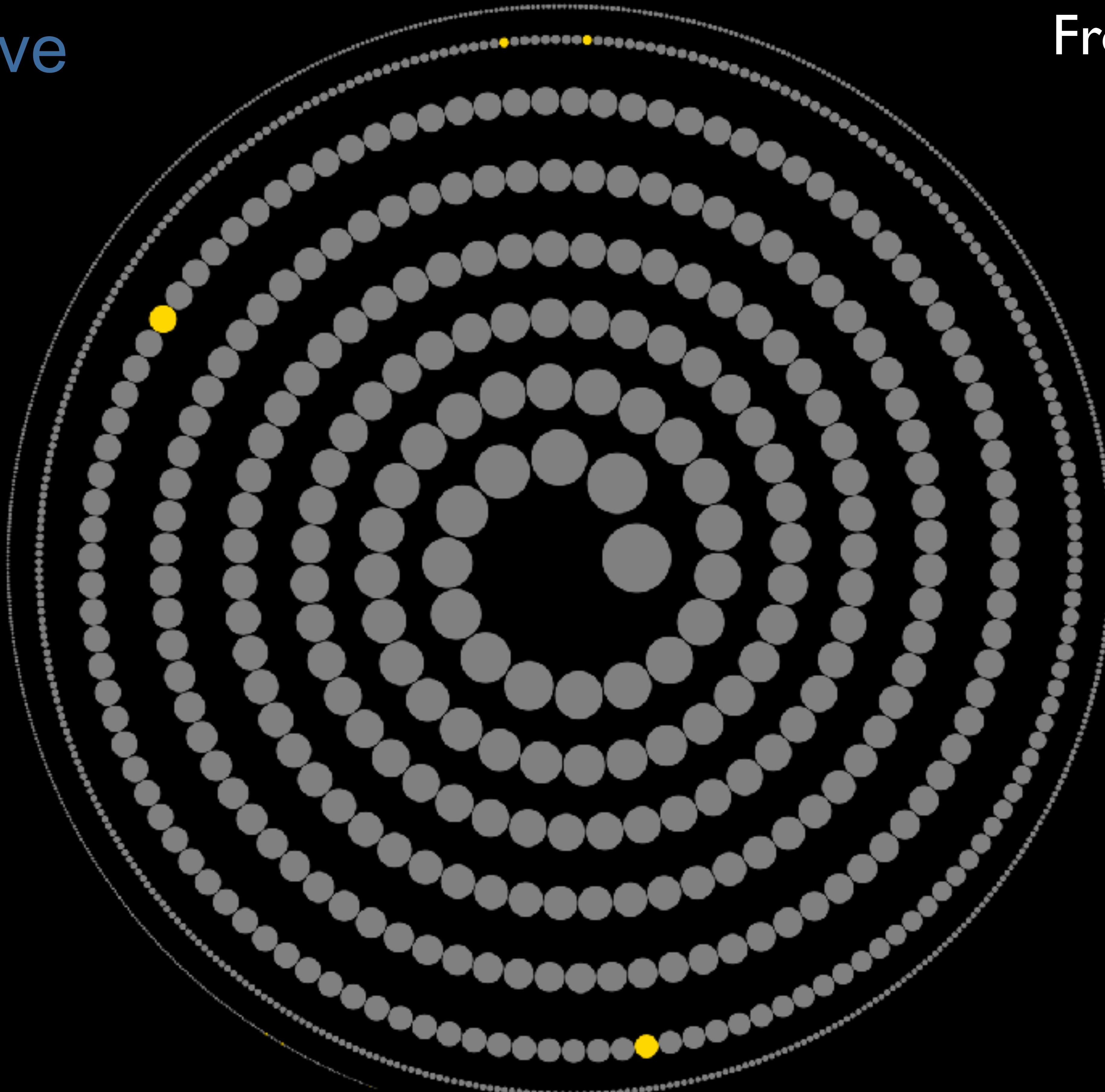


b We can detect a Doppler shift only if some part of the orbital velocity is directed toward or away from us. The more an orbit is tilted toward edge-on, the greater the shift we observe.

- We cannot measure an exact mass for a planet without knowing the tilt of its orbit, because Doppler shift tells us only the velocity toward or away from us.
- Doppler data give us lower limits on masses, M*sin(i)

Relative Radii

From transits



The Relative Sizes of Known Exoplanets and Solar System Planets

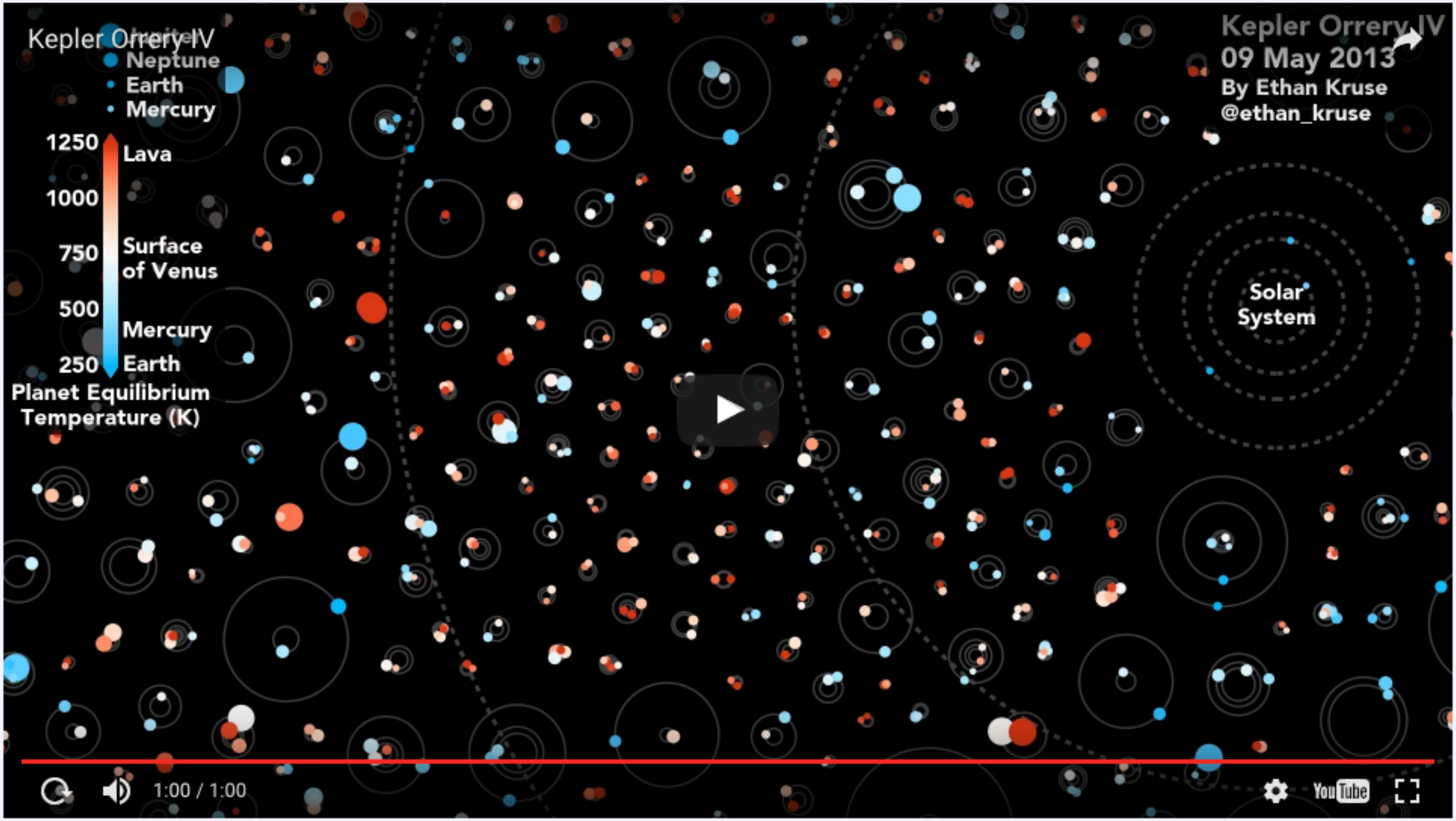
Alex H. Parker / @Alex_Parker
Data from http://exoplanet.eu/

Astronomy Picture of the Day

over the cosmos! Each day a different image or photograph of our fascinating universe is featured, along with a brief explanation written by professional astronomer.

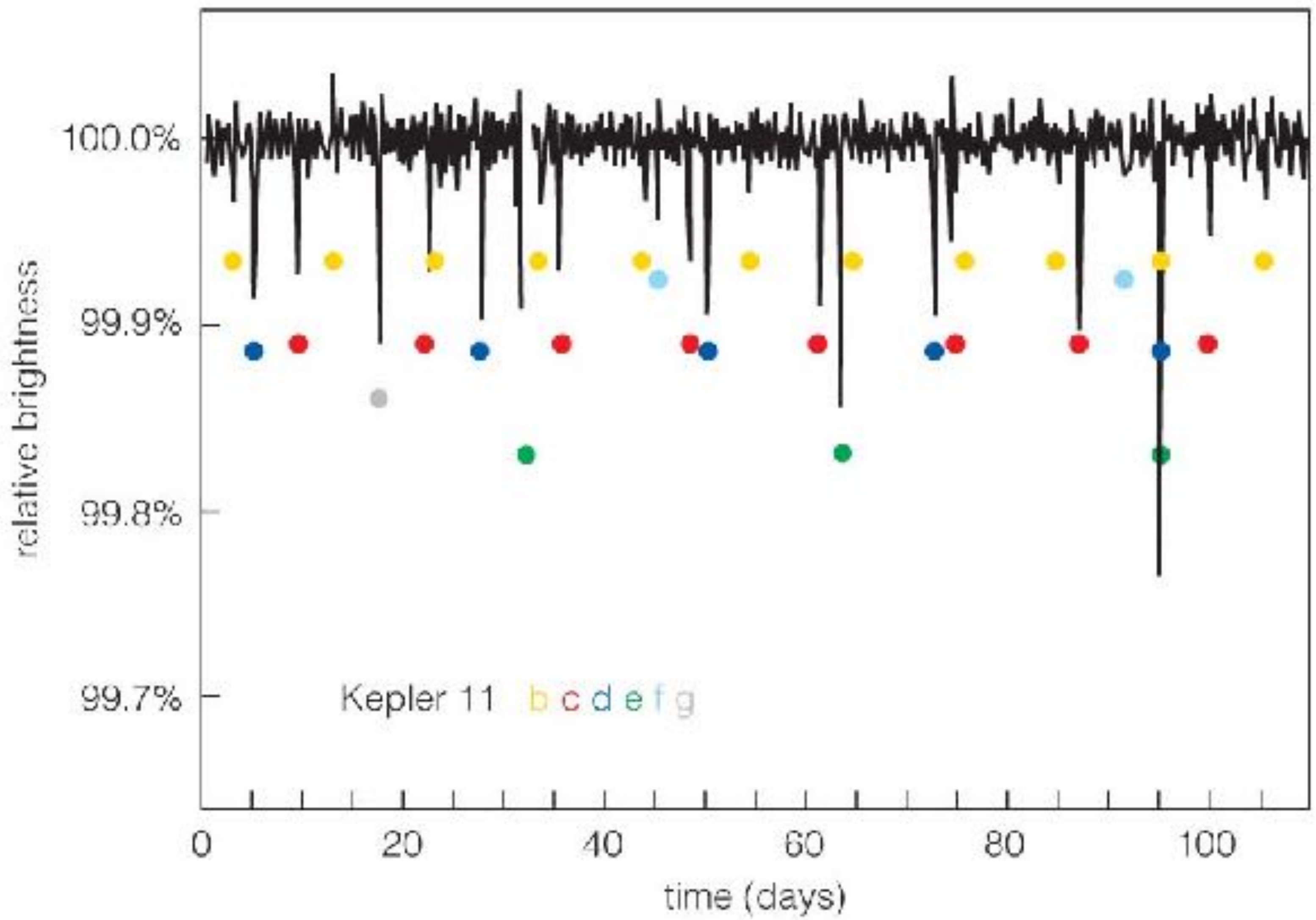
https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap151205.html

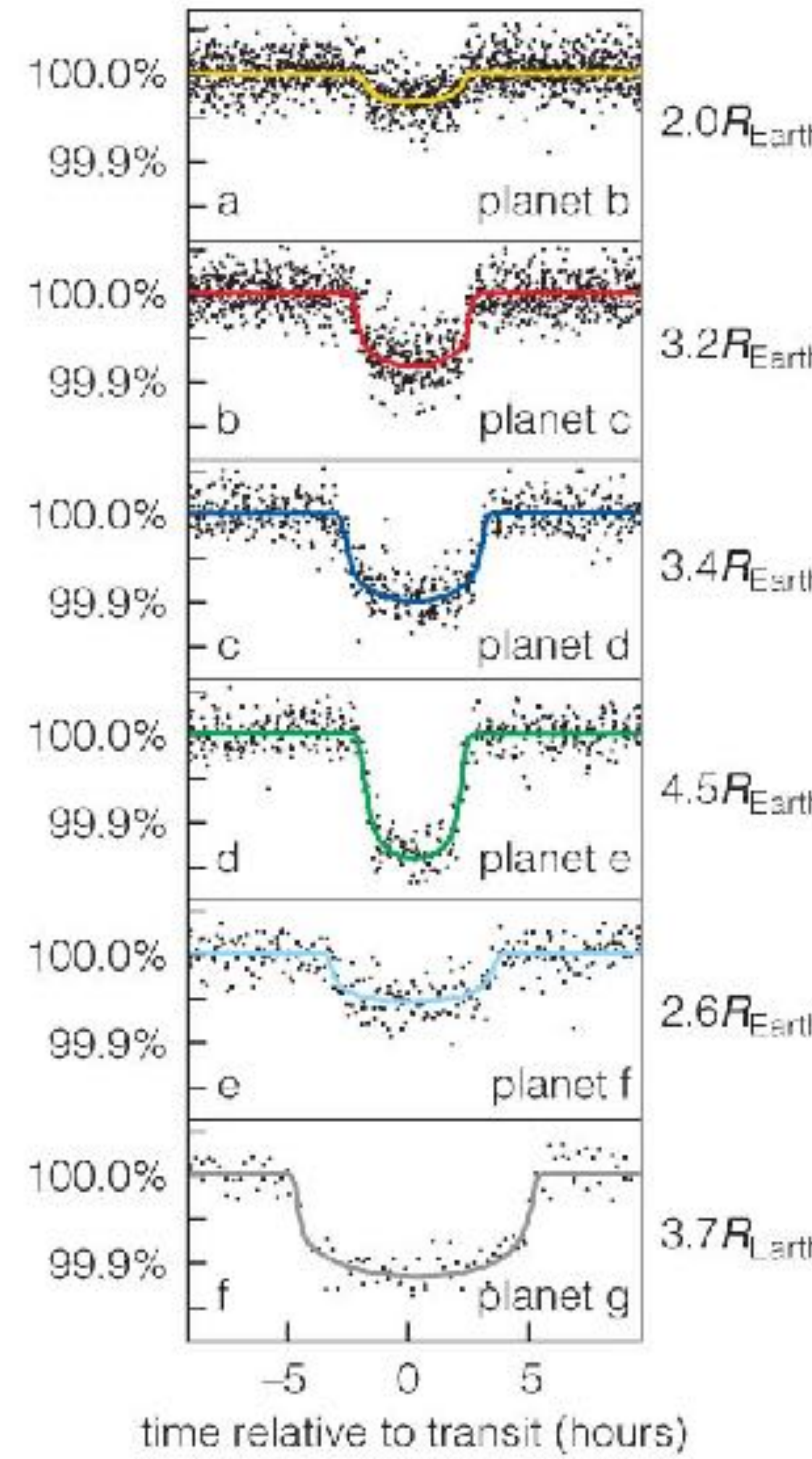
2015 December 5



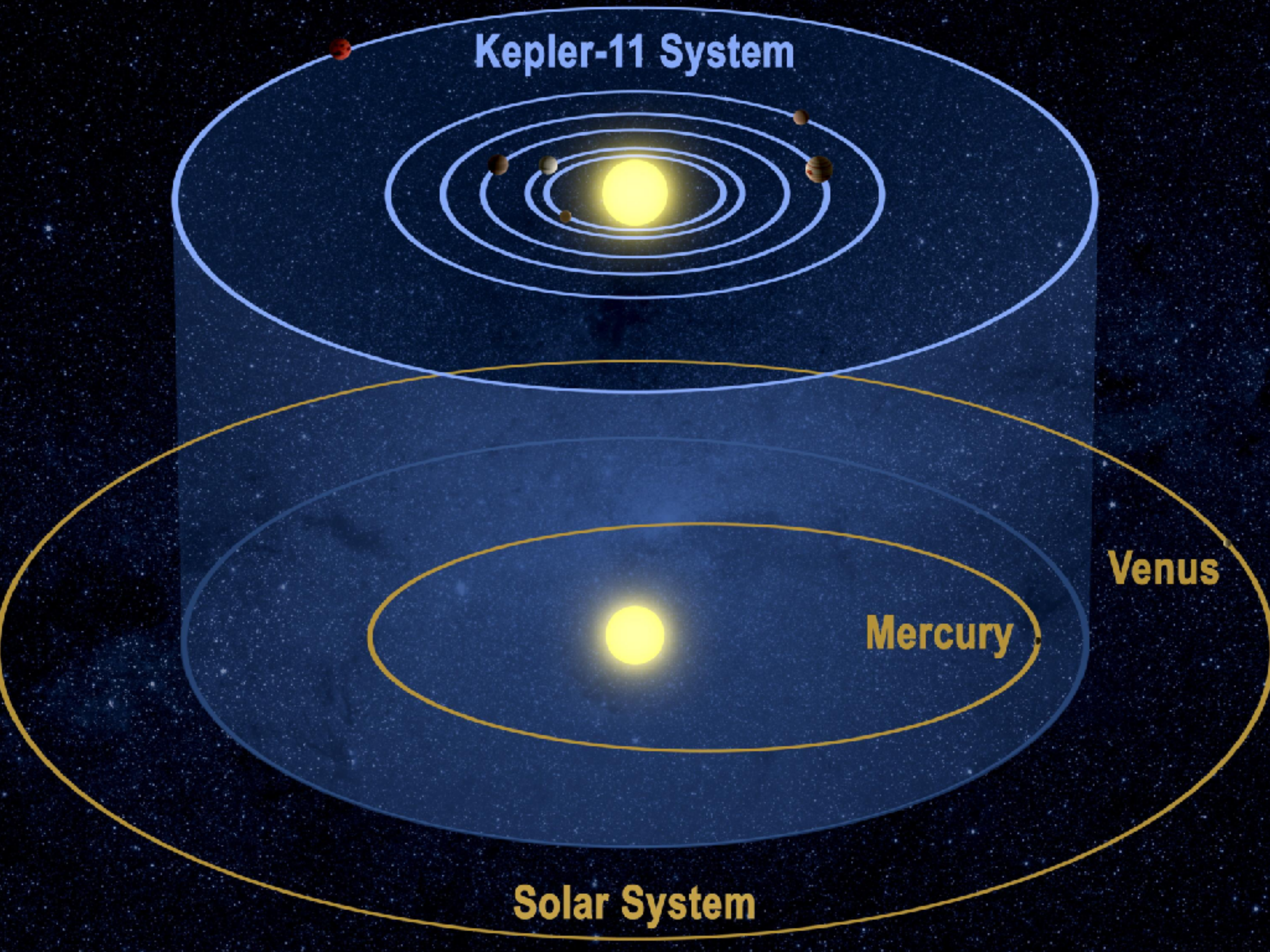
Kepler Orrery IV

The Kepler 11 system

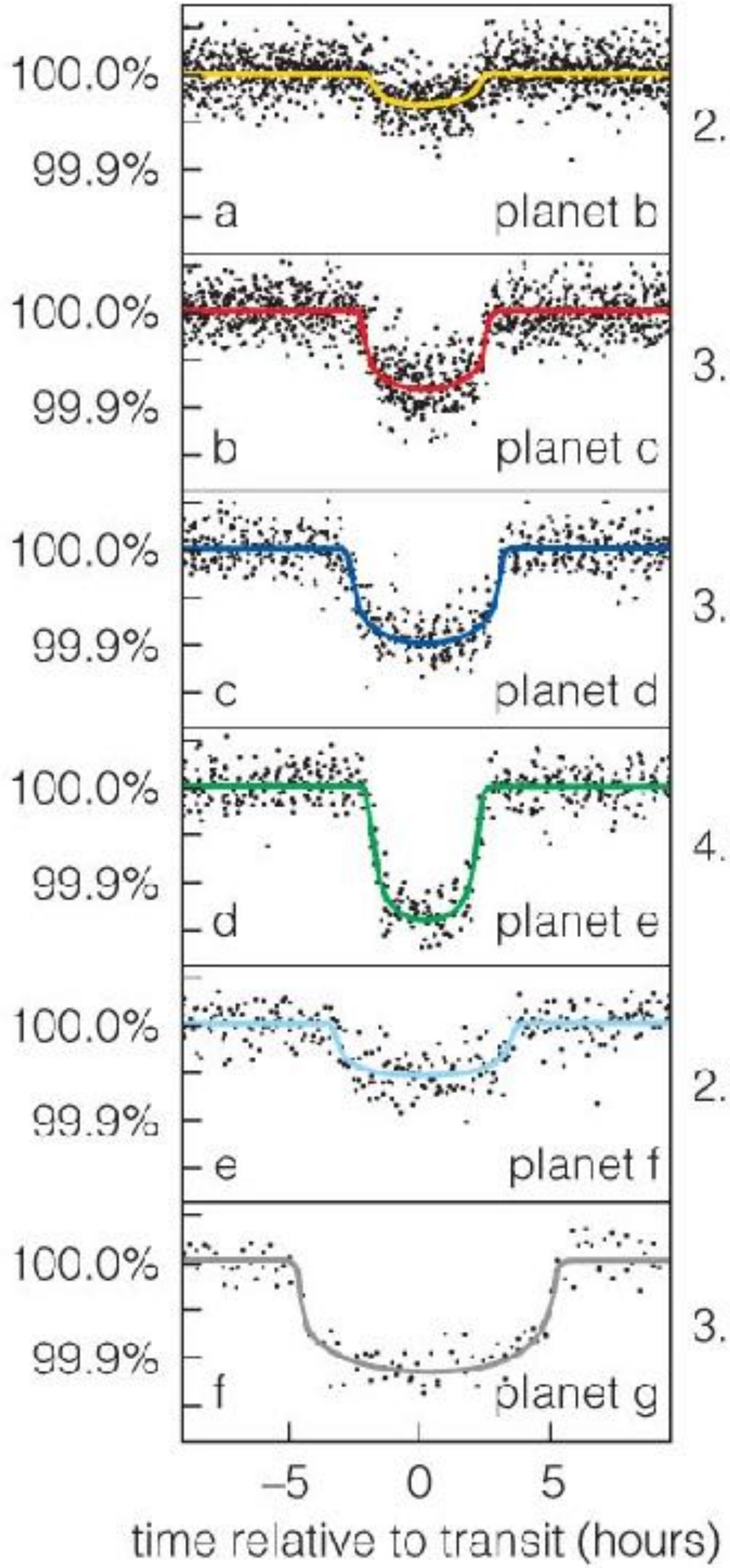




- The periods and sizes of Kepler 11's 6 known planets can be determined using transit data.
- These periods are short
  – longest Kepler g at 118 days
- Tightly packed system!


Kepler-11 System
Venus
Mercury
Solar System

The Kepler 11 system

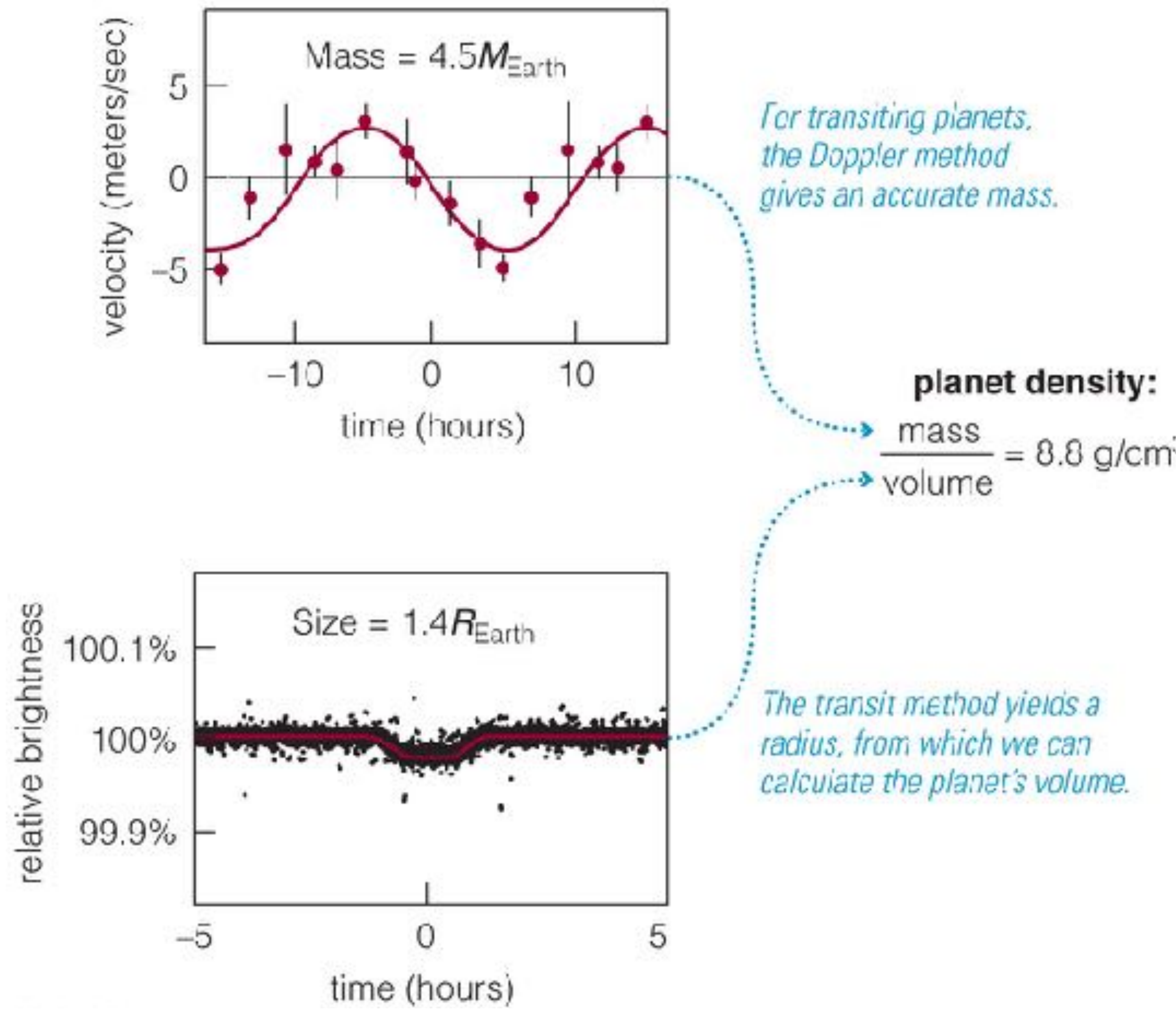


- Note sizes - all planets in this system a few times the size of the Earth!

- Uranus is 4 R_E;
- Neptune 3.8 R_E

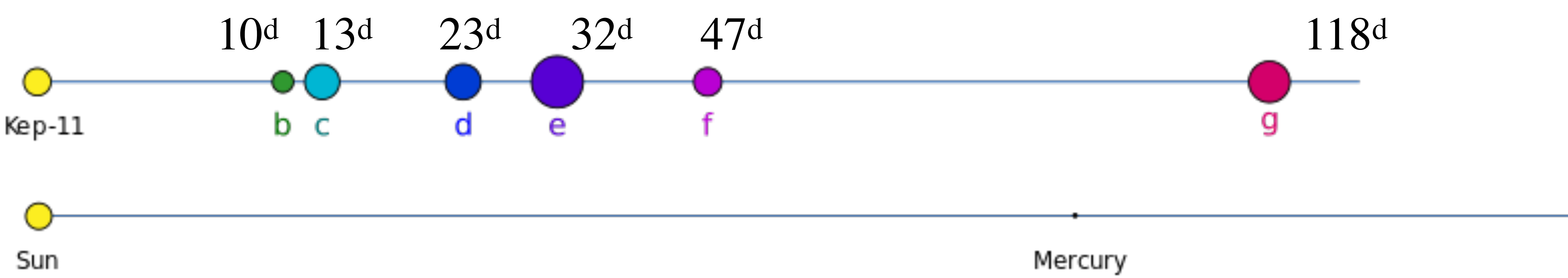
Calculating density

- Mass and size specify the density
- Mass is determined using the Doppler technique
- Size is determined using the transit technique.



The Kepler 11 system

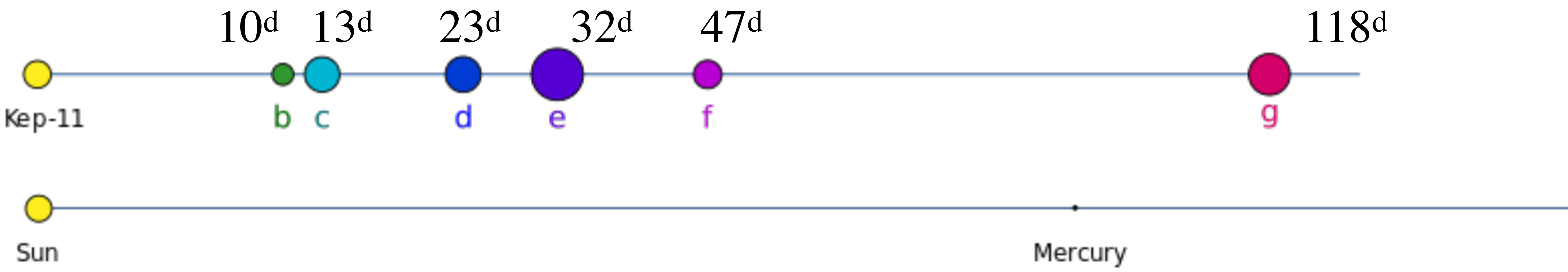
- The densities of all these planets are low
  – 0.6 - 1.7 g/cc (Typical of Jovian planets)
- Star is
  – 0.96 mass of sun
  – 1.07 radius of sun
  – 8.5 Gyr old (sun is 4.5 Gyr)
- Tightly packed system that is nevertheless stable
  – despite lack of orbital resonances

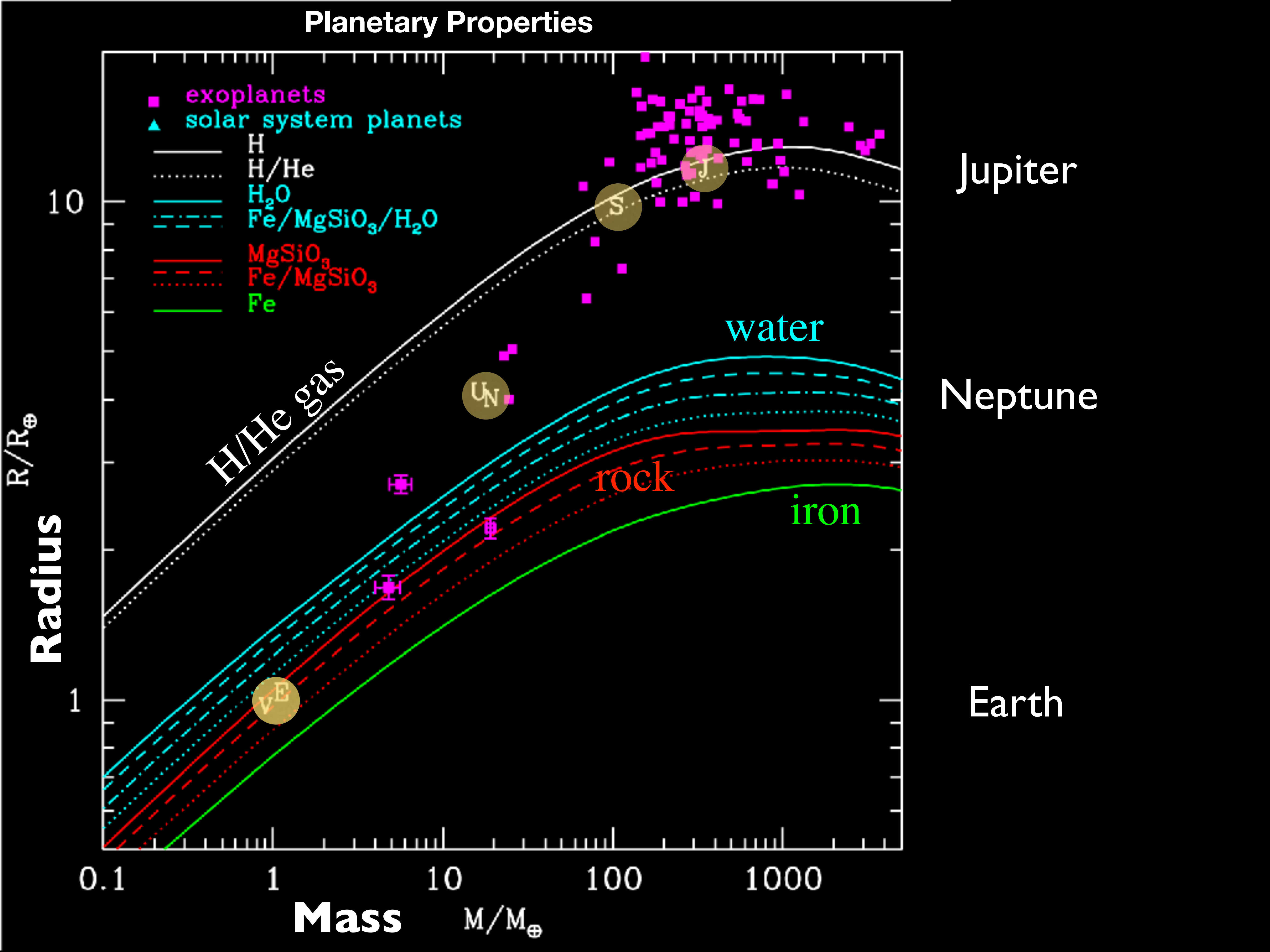


The Kepler 11 system

- The densities of all these planets are low
  – 0.6 - 1.7 g/cc (Typical of Jovian planets)

- What does this imply about the solar nebula hypothesis?

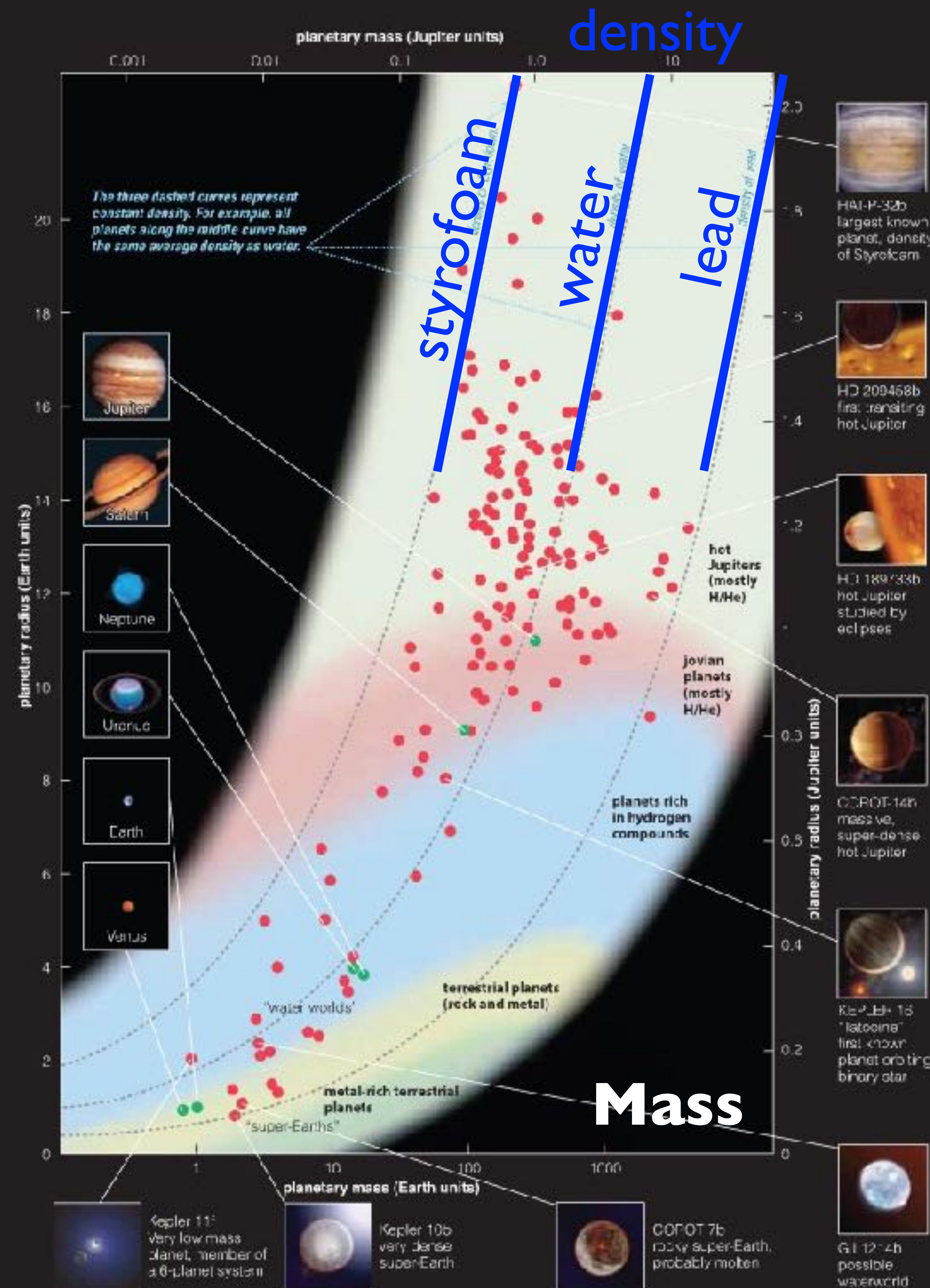




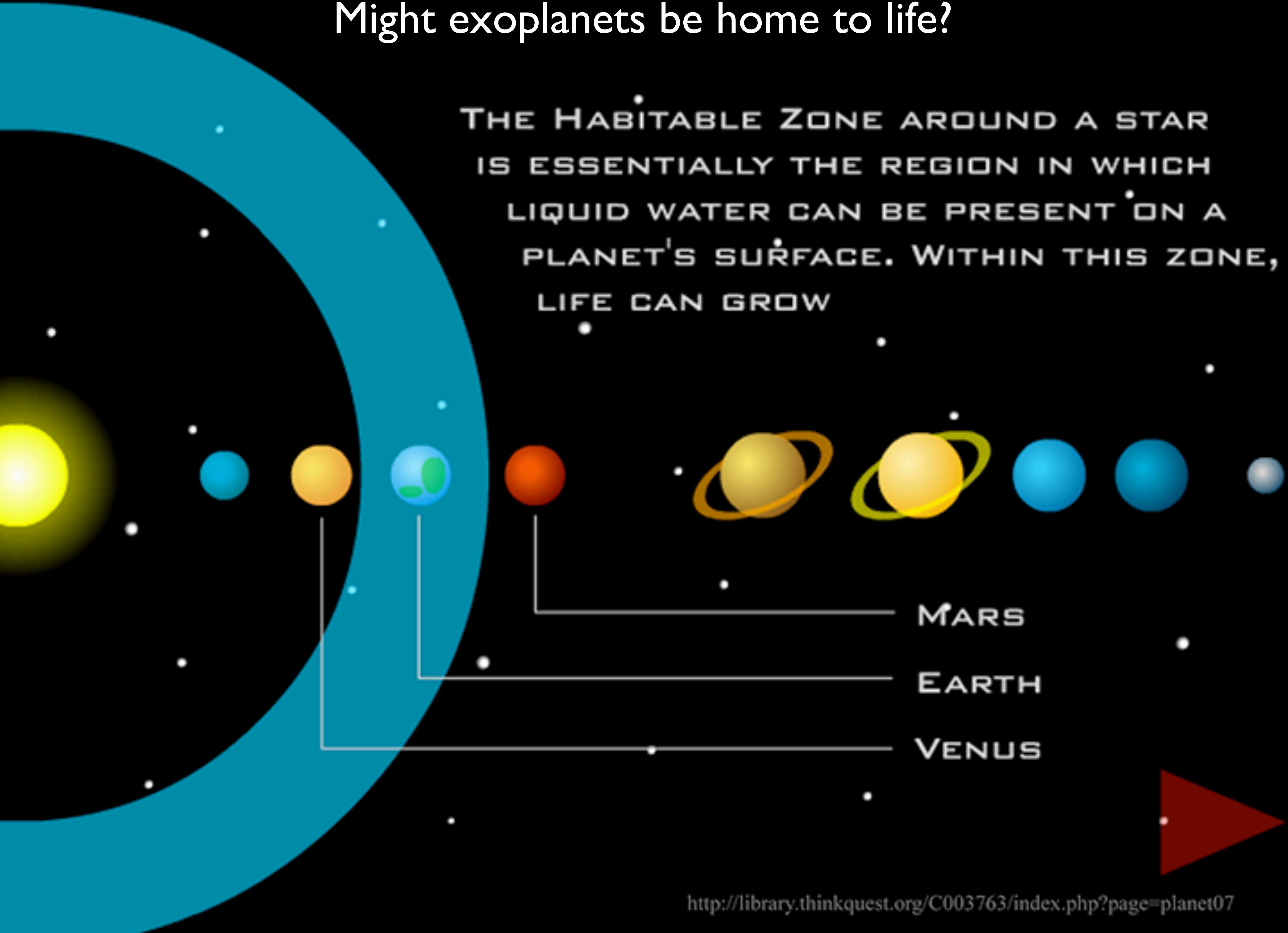
Planetary Properties
exoplanets
solar system planets
H
H/He
H2O
Fe/MgSiO3/H2O
MgSiO3
Fe/MgSiO3
Fe
H/He gas
water
rock
iron
Jupiter
Neptune
Earth
S
J
U N
V E
10
1
0.1
1
10
100
1000
Radius
R/R⊕
Mass
M/M⊕

Exoplanet properties in general:
size vs. mass

Radius



Might exoplanets be home to life?



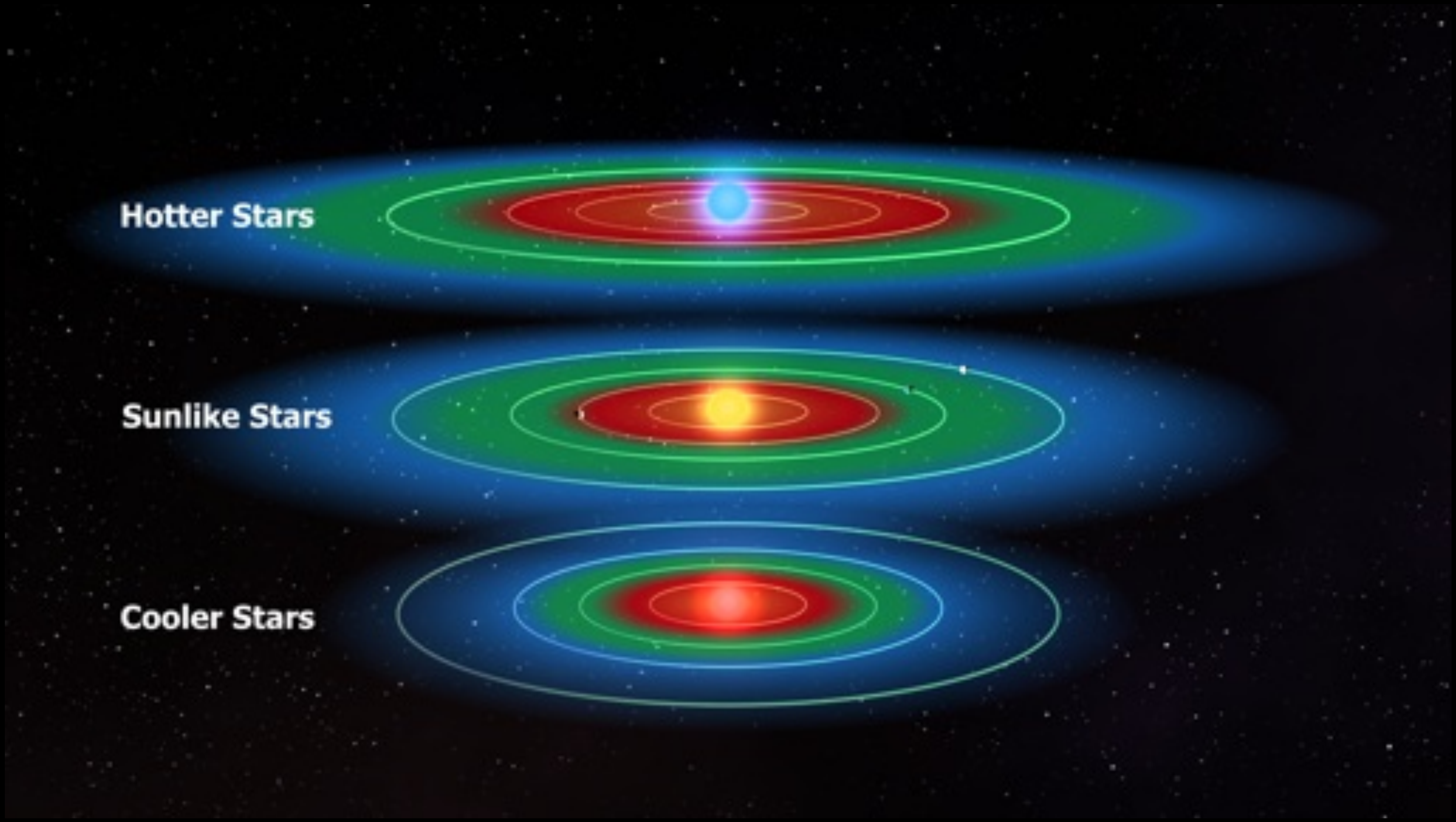
http://library.thinkquest.org/C003763/index.php?page=planet07

Habitable Zone

for terrestrial life

- Depends on
  - Brightness of star
    - also the spectrum of star - too much UV? too little?
  - Distance of planet from star
  - Nature of planet
    - surface gravity
    - atmosphere
      - greenhouse gases
      - water
  - other... some argue the moon is a necessary shield against too many major impacts

Presumably, the habitable zone is farther out form hot, bright stars and closer in to faint, cool ones.



Stars evolve over billions of years, gradually becoming brighter - planets may slip out of the habitable zone as a result

For the Earth, expect

- The sun increases slowly in brightness
- in 600 million years, the Carbon cycle may have progressed to the point that the atmosphere may lack sufficient CO_2 to sustain plant life
- In ~ 1 billion years, solar luminosity will have increased ~10%, evaporating the oceans (“wet greenhouse”)
- In ~6 billion years, the sun will expand into a red giant, potentially swelling far enough to encompass the orbit of the Earth

Habitable zones don’t last forever