

- [UA Science Home](#)
- 
- 



- [Home](#)
- [Academic Program](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [People](#)
- [News](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Contacts](#)



Campers query orbiting astronaut

A short time ago, in an auditorium close, close by, 30 teens boldly went where no University of Arizona astronomy camper had gone before: the International Space Station.

For 10 minutes on Saturday - in voice, at least - Astronomy Camp participants boarded the Space Station as it passed over Australia, orbiting 250 miles above the Earth, for a ham-radio chat with one of its astronauts, Chris Cassidy. It was the first time in the camp's 25-year history that students contacted the International Space Station.

"It was so amazing to talk to an actual astronaut," Kevin Yee, 13, of Austin, Texas, said. Though Yee didn't get to ask his question about life aboard the space station, he was thrilled nonetheless with the opportunity to listen in as other campers asked questions. [story...](#)

We now have Facebook and Twitter Pages

We have started [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. Our goal for these pages, in concert with a soon to be

unveiled new webpage, is to keep you informed about events at Steward, astronomical events in Tucson, talks and lectures, podcasts, events in the sky, our favorite websites, awards and honors of our faculty and students and staff, and the like.

Astronomical Facility Tours

Tucson and various nearby mountaintops in Southern Arizona are especially active in astronomy and have many related attractions. [more...](#)

In the News

Recently published news articles featuring and/or citing members of the Astronomy Department and Steward Observatory. [News](#)

Videos

Video files featuring Astronomy at the University of Arizona. [Videos](#)

Stars don't obliterate their planets — very often

Stars have an alluring pull on planets, especially those in a class called hot Jupiters, which are gas giants that form farther from their stars before migrating inward and heating up.

Now, a new study using data from NASA's Kepler space telescope shows that hot Jupiters, despite their close-in orbits, are not regularly consumed by their stars. Instead, the planets remain in fairly stable orbits for billions of years until the day comes when they may ultimately get eaten.

"Eventually, all hot Jupiters get closer and closer to their stars, but in this study, we are showing that this process stops before the stars get too close," said Peter Plavchan of NASA's Exoplanet Science Institute at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. "The planets mostly stabilize once their orbits become circular, whipping around their stars every few days." [story...](#)

Departmental Overview

The Department of Astronomy and Steward Observatory on the campus of the University of Arizona form one of the world's leading astronomy research organizations. [more...](#)

[2011 Annual Research Report Now Available](#)

- 2010 Annual Research Report
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Steward Observatory/ NOAO Joint Colloquium Series

- Joint Colloquium Podcasts
-

Theoretical Astrophysics Colloquium

Public Evenings

- Public Lecture Podcasts
-

Master List of Talks

Future Events

Showing events after 6/13.

[Look for earlier events](#)

Friday, June 14

10:30am [Steward Science Coffee](#)

Monday, June 17

10:30am [Steward Science Coffee](#)

12:00pm [Star and Planet Formatio](#)

Tuesday, June 18

12:00pm [Observer's Lunch](#)

Wednesday, June 19



A full version of the Calendar of Upcoming Events is available [here](#).

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