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News & Comments

Our Understanding of Stars Outside the Milky Way is Changing

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The University of Copenhagen's astrophysicists made an important discovery regarding star populations outside of the Milky Way. The implications of this discovery could reshape our understanding of black holes, supernovae, and why galaxies die.

It has been assumed for a long time that stars in Milky Way are similar to stars in other galaxies. The team examined whether the distribution of stars in the Milky Way is the same elsewhere.

With high-tech equipment, the team observed more than 140, 000 galaxies across the universe, concluding that stars outside the Milky Way are much more massive than stars in the Milky Way.

Typically, huge stars emit lights of bluish wavelengths, while the smaller stars emit yellow or red lights. And by comparing the blue versus red in the galaxy, the team calculated the distribution of small vs large stars.

Astronomers know a lot about stars by their mass. A massive star will produce more black holes and supernovae if its mass is changed. According to Albert Sneppen, a key author and student of Niels Bohr Institute, "The distant galaxies look quite different from our own," which means that many things we once assumed will need to be revised.

Now that astronomers can see new patterns, they can make discoveries.

KEYWORDS

Black hole, Galaxy, Milky Way, University of Copenhagen