**STORY 2**

**Extra-solar planets**

People always were wondering if they travel to live in other planets or if there is some-kind of life out there in the big universe. Actually, some people believe that mankind is hybridization between life that existed on earth with genetics and intelligence from some extraterrestrial ancient astronauts who visited our planet long time ago. For that, astronomers have been searching for extra-solar planets that may be conducive to life.

Based on research in different disciplines, researchers predicted that in order for a planet to have life –similar to what we know-, it must have “water” in liquid form, be “big” enough to have a stable carbon dioxide atmosphere and “warm” enough to have oceans, clouds, and rainfall (according to France's National Centre for Scientific Research).

In 2009, the *Kepler* mission was launched by NASA with the objective of finding the ‘Terrestrial Planet’, this is why they launched their big satellite telescope.

Since 1992, hundreds of [planets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planets) around other stars ("extrasolar planets" or "[exoplanets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exoplanets%22%20%5Co%20%22Exoplanets)") in the [Milky Way Galaxy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milky_Way) have been discovered. As of October 25, 2013, the [Extrasolar Planets Encyclopedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrasolar_Planets_Encyclopaedia%22%20%5Co%20%22Extrasolar%20Planets%20Encyclopaedia) identified 1028 [extrasolar planets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrasolar_planets%22%20%5Co%20%22Extrasolar%20planets) (in 782 [planetary systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary_systems) and 170 [multiple planetary systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_multiplanetary_systems)); the extrasolar planets range in size from that of [terrestrial planets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrestrial_planet) similar to Earth to that of gas giants larger than Jupiter. The number of observed exoplanets is expected to increase greatly in the coming years. Because the *Kepler* spacecraft must view three stellar transits by exoplanets before it identifies them as candidate planets, it has so far only been able to identify planets that orbit their star at a relatively quick rate. The mission is expected to continue until at least 2016, in which time many more exoplanet candidates are expected to be found.

On May 29, 2007, the [Associated Press](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Associated_Press) released a report stating that scientists identified twenty-eight new extra-solar planetary bodies. One of these newly discovered planets is said to have many similarities to Neptune. In December 2011, NASA confirmed that 600-light-year distant [Kepler-22b](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kepler-22b%22%20%5Co%20%22Kepler-22b), at 2.4 times the radius of Earth, is potentially the closest match to Earth in terms of both size and temperature.

Despite this success, the transit method employed by the *Kepler* spacecraft requires that planetary orbits be at a small inclination to the line of sight of the observer. Due to this constraint, the probability of detecting a planet of Earth's size and orbital radius around a distant star is just 0.47%. Thus, the number of planets we are currently able to detect is only a small fraction of the total number of planets present within the galaxy.

Many articles and films are being created to document these scientific achievements, but the effort is still in progress…