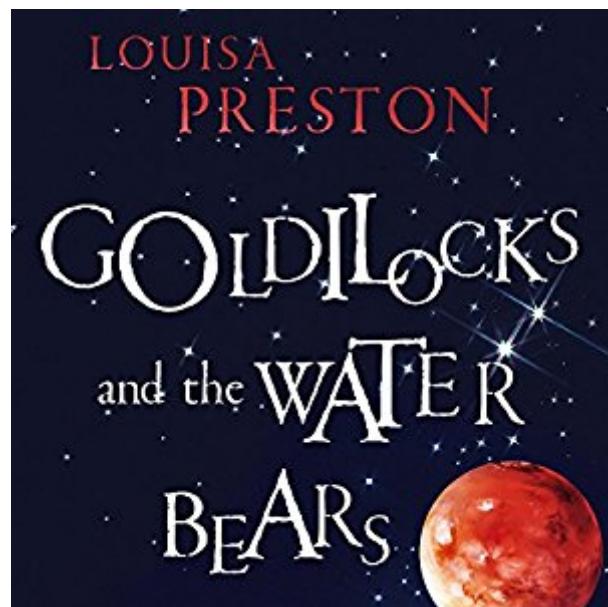


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# Goldilocks And The Water Bears: The Search For Life In The Universe



## Synopsis

All life as we know it is carbon-based and reliant on sources of liquid water and energy for its survival; it is also, of course, known from just one planet: the Earth, a world perfectly suited to host life. But across a universe of at least 100 billion habitable, earthlike worlds, life cannot be restricted to just this one place. Or can it? The Earth is just the right distance from the sun - within the so-called 'Goldilocks zone' - and has a protective shielding atmosphere to allow for life to thrive. Life's journey in four billion years from single-celled organism to upright humanoids with the capacity to undertake missions to other planets is remarkable. But there is a chance that life exists (or existed) elsewhere in the solar system, and recent discoveries of just how common planets are in other systems means it is highly likely that life does indeed occur on other planets. How might life appear on these other worlds? It is possible to make best guesses using facts rooted in physics, chemistry and biology and by studying 'extremophiles' - organisms, such as nematodes and water bears, that can survive in the harshest conditions that Earth can offer. Ultimately we need to figure out what is next for humanity. Our logical move is to break free of the confines of the Earth and colonise another body in the solar system, such as the moon or Mars. How and when will we do this? Or is it all just science fiction? These questions, in a nutshell, make up the core of astrobiology - the study of the origins, evolution and biology of life elsewhere in the universe - and the search for it. This audiobook is an accessible introduction to this most fascinating of all the astrosciences. Are we alone in the universe? Goldilocks and the Water Bears looks at this and many other questions as the search for life elsewhere in the universe goes on.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

While there is a lot of interesting material in this book, it is very difficult to read. The author starts a sentence with one thought, then changes it part way through. Paragraphs have apparently random sentences inserted. Many pronouns lack antecedents, and infinitives are split not with adverbs for emphasis, but with extended clauses. You cannot rely on the facts presented. Here is one example: "If the entire DNA in just one of your cells were unpacked and stretched out straight, it would be nearly two meters long. Since you have about five trillion cells in your body and just over 2m of DNA in every cell, the total length of DNA packed into our bodies would stretch from here to the moon and back 1,500 times. No experiments can presently test all of the theories as to why life is built the way it is and uses certain molecules over others in its construction." Where to start? The second sentence is unrelated to the first. The first isn't very meaningful, and it's not true. Two meters times five trillion cells is ten trillion meters, 5,200 times the distance to the moon, not 1,500. And no one knows how many cells you have in your body, but 35 or 40 trillion is probably closer than five trillion. Not all the cells in your body contain your DNA (you have microbes and other cells in there). Notice the switch from "nearly" to "just over," "your body" to "our bodies" and from writing out "two meters" to "2m." It's hard to imagine we will ever have an experiment to test "all of the theories" about life, but there are plenty of present experiments that shed light on aspects of life and why certain molecules are helpful.

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