

# *Searching for Other Earths and Life in the Universe*

**Dr. Geoffrey W. Marcy; Professor of Astronomy,  
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Science fiction assumes that our Milky Way Galaxy abounds with habitable planets populated by advanced civilizations engaged in interstellar commerce and conflict. Back in our real universe, Earth-like planets and alien life have proved elusive. Has science fiction led us astray? Last year astronomers launched the first searches for Earth-like worlds around other stars, using remarkable telescopes for the task. These telescopes fundamentally supersede Galileo's historic little scope for the first time. A race for signs of inhabited worlds and extraterrestrial life is underway using modern, technical underpinnings.

**Biography:** **Dr. Geoff Marcy** is a Professor of Astronomy at UC Berkeley and an Adjunct Professor of Physics and Astronomy at San Francisco State University. He is the Director of Berkeley's "Center for Integrative Planetary Science", a research unit designed to study the formation, geophysics, chemistry and evolution of planets. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences and has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the NASA Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement. He was named Discovery Magazine's Space Scientist of the Year in 2003. He was also co-recipient of the prestigious Shaw Prize. He received his PhD in 1982 from UC Santa Cruz.

Geoff is one of the pioneers and leaders in the discovery and characterization of planets around other stars. He and his collaborators have discovered nearly half of the 450 known exoplanets. They found the first system of multiple planets around a normal (main sequence) star, and also found the first Saturn-mass planet and the first Neptune-like planet. They also found the first transiting planet (a co-discovery with T. Brown and D. Charbonneau). His group is now searching for Earth-like planets using NASA's Kepler Mission and the Keck telescope in Hawaii. Marcy has won several awards including the Shaw Prize (2005, shared with M. Mayor), Discover Magazine Space Scientist of the Year (2003), the NASA Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement (2003), California Scientist of the Year (2000), Beatrice Tinsely Prize from the American Astronomical Society (2002), and membership in the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (2002). He did a guest appearance on the David Letterman Late Show (11 April 2001). He has over 400 publications in refereed journals. He loves teaching undergraduates courses at UC Berkeley.