

• [More Space Science News](#)

- Brit woman claims to have seen alien spaceship
- Natural nuclear reactors might be operating at Earth's core
- Now, 3 D 'super road maps' of planets and moons
- Indian astronomers measure temperature of the early universe
- Universe is twice as bright as previously thought
- Water, possible life, might be located deeper on Mars than previously believed
- US spacecraft finds Mars colder than expected
- Scientists detect key molecule in atmosphere of Venus
- Date for Zimbabwe elections announced
- China suffers severe aftershock
- Bin Laden threatens Israel in latest message
- Marine sex abuser jailed in Japan

**Get Malaysia Sun headlines emailed to you daily.**

[Add Email](#)

[XML](#) [RSS](#) [RSS Directory](#)

## Universe is twice as bright as previously thought

Malaysia Sun  
Friday 16th May, 2008  
(ANI)

London, May 16 : Astronomers from UK Universities working with colleagues from Germany and Australia have calculated that the Universe is actually twice as bright as previously thought.

The team of astronomers has come up with this theory after finding how dust is obscuring approximately half of the light that the Universe is currently generating.

"For nearly two decades we've argued about whether the light that we see from distant galaxies tells the whole story or not," said lead author Dr Simon Driver from the University of St Andrews.

"It doesn't; in fact only half the energy produced by stars actually reaches our telescopes directly, the rest is blocked by dust grains," he added.

While astronomers have known for some time that the Universe contains small grains of dust, they had not realised the extent to which this is restricting the amount of light that we can see. The dust absorbs starlight and re-emits it, making it glow.

They knew that existing models were flawed, because the energy output from glowing dust appeared to be greater than the total energy produced by the stars.

"You can't get more energy out than you put in so we knew something was very wrong. Even so, the scale of the dust problem has come as a shock appears that galaxies generate twice as much starlight as previously thought," said Dr Driver.

For their research, the team combined an innovative new model of the dust distribution in galaxies developed by Dr Cristina Popescu of the University of Central Lancashire and Prof Richard Tuffs of the Max Plank Institute for Nuclear Physics.

Using the new model, the astronomers could calculate precisely the fraction of starlight blocked by the dust.

"The results demonstrate very clearly that interstellar dust grains have a devastating effect on our measurements of the energy output from even nearby galaxies," said Professor Richard Tuffs. "With the new calibrated model in hand, we can now calculate precisely the fraction of starlight blocked by the dust," he added.

After carefully measuring the brightness of thousands of disc-shaped galaxies with different orientations, the astronomers matched their observations to computer models of dusty galaxies.

From this, they were able to calibrate the models and, for the first time, determine how much light is obscured when a galaxy has a face-on orientation. This then allowed them to determine the absolute fraction of light that escapes in each direction from a galaxy.

 [Email this story to a friend](#)

**Have your say on this story**

Your

Ads by Google

**Glow in the Dark Stars**

Glow Stars & Planets. A massive range of stars, planets and shapes.  
[www.woolgarstoy.com](http://www.woolgarstoy.com)

**E.ON Energy-Official Site**

Sign up to our cheapest offer £140 Savings with EnergyOnline  
[www.eonenergy.com](http://www.eonenergy.com)

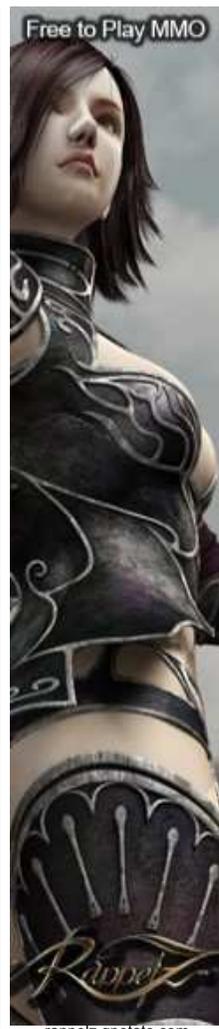
**Energy**

Switch to EDF Energy & you could enjoy Lower Bills. Sign up Now  
[www.edfenergy.com](http://www.edfenergy.com)

**New Mexico Skies**

2+ Acre Home & Observatory Sites Where the "SEEING" is Believing...  
[www.NMSouthernSkies.com](http://www.NMSouthernSkies.com)

nickname	(optional)
Message	<input type="text"/>
Image verification	 (enter the verification code from the image above) <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Post comment"/>	



[rappelez.gpotato.com](http://rappelez.gpotato.com)  
Ads by Google

Ads by Google

**Telescopes For All Ages**

All Models, Wide Price Range, Free Accessories & Delivery. Gift Wrap.  
[www.ScopesNSkies.co.uk](http://www.ScopesNSkies.co.uk)

**Low Power LED Light Bulbs**

Super High Quality LED MR16 & GU10 In Stock Now For Fast Dispatch  
[www.global-gadgets.com](http://www.global-gadgets.com)

**Solar Energy Solutions**

Energy Efficient Solar Water Heater Solar Energy Quote  
0845 1300 137  
[www.Solartwin.com](http://www.Solartwin.com)

**Solar's Breakout Market**

Next-Generation Solar Technology Your Portfolio Can't Do Without.  
[www.GreenChipStocks.com](http://www.GreenChipStocks.com)