

Saturn now the planet with the most moons

10th October, 2019



Astronomers have promoted Saturn as the planet with the most moons. Saturn has overtaken the solar system's largest planet Jupiter as the "king of the moons". The astronomers recently discovered 20 new moons

orbiting Saturn, which brings the planet's total number to 82. This edges out Jupiter, with 79 celestial bodies, into second place. Each of the newly-discovered moons is at least 5km in diameter. Seventeen of them orbit Saturn backwards and take more than three years to complete one orbit of Saturn. The astronomers found the moons using the powerful Subaru telescope, located on Hawaii. The research team will now look for moons that are around a kilometer in diameter.

Lead astronomer Dr Scott Sheppard commented on the perceived origins of the new moons. He said: "We don't think they formed with the planet. We think they were captured by the planet in the past." He posited that Saturn sucked in a swirling mixture of gas and dust to form the moons. Dr Sheppard added: "We think these moons interacted with that gas and dust. These were comets or asteroids that happened to be passing by....They were captured into orbits around the planet rather than falling into the planet. We think these are the last remnants of what formed Saturn." The moons will be named in a competition after giants from Gallic, Inuit and Norse mythology.

Sources: bbc.com / space.com / usatoday.com

Writing

Spending money on space research is extremely important. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

astronomer / planet / moon / Saturn / Jupiter / diameter / celestial body / telescope / origins / the past / mixture / gas / dust / asteroids / remnants / giants / mythology

True / False

- a) Astronomers promoted Saturn to being the planet with the most moons. T / F
- b) The article called Saturn "the king of moons". T / F
- c) Saturn now has a total of 79 moons. T / F
- d) The astronomers used a Subaru telescope on a volcano in Japan. T / F
- e) An astronomer said the moons were created as Saturn was created. T / F
- f) Saturn may have sucked in the moons from a mix of gas and dust. T / F
- g) An astronomer said the moons are the first remnants of Saturn. T / F
- h) The new planets will be named after giants from Hawaiian mythology. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. promoted | a. beginnings |
| 2. overtaken | b. situated |
| 3. discovered | c. leftovers |
| 4. orbit | d. eclipsed |
| 5. located | e. go around |
| 6. lead | f. hypothesized |
| 7. origins | g. elevated |
| 8. posited | h. contest |
| 9. remnants | i. head |
| 10. competition | j. located |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of astronomy?
- c) What do you know about Jupiter?
- d) What do you know about comets and asteroids?
- e) What would you really like to know about space?
- f) Do you have a favorite planet?
- g) What kinds of names would you give the moons?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the astronomers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. the solar system's | a. of gas and dust |
| 2. 20 new moons | b. discovered moons |
| 3. This edges | c. mythology |
| 4. Each of the newly- | d. out Jupiter |
| 5. three years to complete one | e. largest planet |
| 6. the perceived origins of | f. formed Saturn |
| 7. Saturn sucked in a swirling mixture | g. orbiting Saturn |
| 8. comets or asteroids that happened | h. orbit of Saturn |
| 9. the last remnants of what | i. the new moons |
| 10. giants from Gallic, Inuit and Norse | j. to be passing by |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about Saturn?
- How interested are you in space?
- Why does one planet have so many moons?
- What do you think of Earth's moon?
- What experiences do you have with telescopes?
- Is something that is 5km in diameter really a moon?
- Why do scientists want to know about space?
- Would you like to work as an astronomer?

Spelling

- tsreansroo have promoted Saturn
- 20 new moons rbiingto Saturn
- 79 aeistlelc bodies
- each of the newly-osddevicer moons
- using the powerful Subaru tpceesole
- around a kilometer in dmiearet
- the rveceidpe origins of the new moons
- they were tdpcurae by the planet
- a iirsgwnl mixture of gas and dust
- comets or drtsasoie
- the last msatnern of what formed Saturn
- Gallic, Inuit and Norse ythgymolo

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. e	5. b
6. i	7. a	8. f	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Planets

You think planets are the most interesting things in space. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): asteroids, black holes or stars.

Role B – Asteroids

You think asteroids are the most interesting things in space. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): planets, black holes or stars.

Role C – Black Holes

You think black holes are the most interesting things in space. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): asteroids, planets or stars.

Role D – Stars

You think stars are the most interesting things in space. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): asteroids, black holes or planets.

Speaking – Celestial things

Rank these with your partner. Put the most interesting celestial things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| • moon | • planet |
| • sun | • comet |
| • space dust | • asteroid |
| • black holes | • star |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.