

Cover Story

A mosaic picture of the South Pole region of the Moon as released on September 27, 2010. The image has resulted from lots of snapshots taken in over a month by the Wide Angle Camera of NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera. The volatile compounds, including water ice found in this region, provide not only clues on the origin of our Solar System, but also valuable resources for future lunar explorers. Together with many other advantages, this has made the region an attractive site for a permanent lunar outpost of humankind.

When extending its space exploration to deeper space and outer planets, China is launching a plan to jointly design and build a Lunar Research Station open to the whole humankind with the European Space Agency and Russian Space Agency. For more please refer to page 72.

(Credit: NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University)



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Astrophysicists find out the "last piece" of the mosaic of the black hole accretion model, which explains how the central engines of quasars power these mysterious celestial bodies.

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A joint team of scientists find that circular RNAs, once thought a "mistake", turn out to be a biological lock on an important anti-viral factor, whose overreaction is associated with autoimmune diseases like lupus.



A small mustard plant uses certain chemicals to shape root microbes to its own advantage, such as improved nutrient absorption and protection from pathogenic species.

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