

A525

Stars

星の世界

■ Purpose of Exhibition

Come into this gallery from the north entrance and walk clockwise around the perimeter, looking at the displays, you will travel from our earth to the end of the Universe. The outer ring is lined with various astronomical objects and cosmic events in order. This exhibit is based on the idea of Powers of Ten, where the scale increases tenfold each time.

After travelling from the earth to the solar system, you are now ready to move on to the world of stars. The large screen will show you images of nebulae and star clusters. You can see the stars that form the constellations from the center of the room. The exhibit will illustrate the world of stars, including their sizes, temperatures, colors and brightness, binary and variable stars, the lives of stars, nebulae and star clusters, and even black holes.



■ Additional Knowledge

[Names of Stars]

A star can have several names. Names such as Vega and Altair are proper names, and many stars are given such names of Arabic origin. Orihime (a weaver) for Vega and Hikoboshi (a cowboy) for Altair are traditional Japanese names. And stars in constellations have their own systematic names. Vega is Alpha Lyrae and Altair is Alpha Aquilae. This system is called Bayer designation. Bayer designation usually assigns Greek letters to the stars in descending order of brightness in each constellation, but there are a few exceptions, like Ursa Major; the seven stars are labeled along the Big Dipper. Flamsteed designation gives a number to the stars in each constellation. There are also some nomenclatures for classification in various astronomical catalogs. All of these names can be used freely by anyone. Moreover, you may give any names to the stars as you like. However, it is never allowed to possess or sell these names, because the stars do not belong to anyone.

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