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Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (IX, 207 p. 38 illus., 19 illus. in color.)
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Disciplina	520
Soggetti	Astronomy Space sciences Planetary science Popular Science in Astronomy Space Sciences (including Extraterrestrial Physics, Space Exploration and Astronautics) Planetology
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- Chapter 1: When the Stars Fell Down -- Chapter 2: From Eyesight to Space Satellites.-Chapter 3: Find Minor Planets by Technology -- Chapter 4: Naming and Possessing -- Chapter 5: At the Edge of the Solar System -- Chapter 6: Filling the Gap -- Chapter 7: Controlled by Jupiter -- Chapter 8: The Chaotic Solar System -- Chapter 9: The Fate of Asteroids -- References.
Sommario/riassunto	This book relates the history of asteroid discoveries and christenings, from those of the early pioneering giants of Hersehel and Piazzi to modern-day amateurs. Moving from history and anecdotal information to science, the book's structure is provided by the names of the asteroids, including one named after the author. Free from a need to conform to scientific naming conventions, the names evidence hero-worship, sycophancy, avarice, vanity, whimsy, erudition and wit, revealing the human side of astronomers, especially where controversy has followed the christening. Murdin draws from extensive historical records to explore the debate over these names. Each age reveals its own biases and preferences in the naming process. < Originally

regarded as “vermin of the skies,” asteroids are minor planets, rocky scraps left over from the formation of the larger planets, or broken fragments of worlds that have collided. Their scientific classification as “minor” planets makes them seem unimportant, but over the past decades asteroids have been acknowledged to be key players in the Solar System. This view of their starring role even alters the trajectories of spacecraft: NASA’s policy for new space missions en route to the outer planets is that they must divert to study passing asteroids whenever possible. This book provides for readers a complete tour of the fascinating world of asteroids.

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