

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910554262303321
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Titolo	Planets and life // Therese Encrenaz, James Lequeux and Fabienne Casoli
Pubbl/distr/stampa	[Place of publication not identified] : , : EDP Sciences, , [2021] ©2021
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (164 pages)
Collana	Current Natural Sciences
Disciplina	523.01
Soggetti	Astrophysics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Foreword -- Contents -- Chapter 1. Introduction -- Chapter 2. The Formation of Terrestrial Planets -- Chapter 3. The Exploration of Terrestrial Planets -- Chapter 4. Venus, Earth and Mars: A Diverging Evolution -- Chapter 5. The Appearance of Life -- Chapter 6. The Development of Life on Earth -- Chapter 7. Life in the Solar System? -- Chapter 8. How to Search for Life on Rocky Exoplanets? -- Chapter 9. Conclusions: Some Future Directions in Exobiology -- Glossary -- Bibliography
Sommario/riassunto	The Earth is the only planet in the Solar System where liquid water is present on the surface, a condition that seems necessary for the development of life. Its sisters Venus and Mars are extremely different. Why did these three planets, born under fairly comparable conditions, evolve to the conditions we observe today? Understanding the physical or chemical factors that are at the origin of such divergent evolutions is a first step in an approach to the problem of the origin of life on Earth.