

Webb Autopsy of Planet Swallowed by Star Yields Surprise

Observations from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope have provided a surprising twist in the narrative surrounding what is believed to be the first star observed in the act of swallowing a planet.

The new findings suggest that the star did not actually swell to envelop a planet as previously hypothesized. Instead, Webb's observations show the planet's orbit shrank over time, slowly bringing the planet closer to its demise until it was engulfed in full.



This artist's concept shows the end stage of the first-ever recorded planetary engulfment event observed by Webb. Credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, Ralf Crawford (STScI)

Paper: <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.3847/1538-4357/adb429>

Story: <https://science.nasa.gov/missions/webb/nasa-webbs-autopsy-of-planet-swallowed-by-star-yields-surprise/>