



# Lambda Sci-Fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians

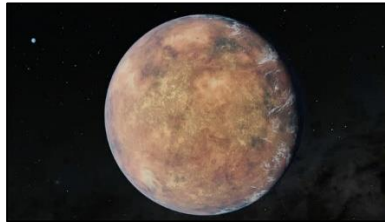
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E-MAIL: [info@lambdascifi.org](mailto:info@lambdascifi.org)

WEBSITE: [www.lambdascifi.org](http://www.lambdascifi.org)

### NASA's TESS Satellite Discovers Earth-sized Planet in Habitable Zone

info passed along by Carl



On January 10th, NASA announced that they'd discovered an Earth-sized planet orbiting in the habitable zone of the star TOI 700 (a small red dwarf star located about 100 light years from Earth). The discovery was made with NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS). TESS was designed and launched specifically to find Earth-sized planets orbiting nearby stars.

The newly-discovered planet is called TOI 700 e. It's 95% the size of Earth and takes 28 days to orbit TOI 700; and it's likely that it's a rocky plan-

et. NASA previously discovered three other planets in the same system (TOI 700 b, c, and d). Planet d also orbits in the star's habitable zone. In a statement on NASA's website, Emily Gilbert (postdoctoral fellow at Jet Propulsion Laboratory) said: "This is one of only a few systems with multiple, small, habitable-zone planets that we know of... Planet e is about 10% smaller than planet d, so the system also shows how additional TESS observations help us find smaller and smaller worlds."

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### The LSF Book Discussion Group

If you're interested in lively discussions of F&SF books (with an emphasis on elements of interest to the LGBT community), we invite you to join the LSF Book Discussion Group. Each month, we conduct fascinating round-table discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF Book Discussion Group usually meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW. The next book discussion will be held in person on February 23rd. **All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.**

Here are the details for the next several months:

**Feb. 23** – *Something Is Killing the Children*, graphic novel by James Tynion & Werther dell'Eddra (moderator: Ben).

**March 23** – *Black Sun*, by Rebecca Roanhorse (moderator: Rob).

**April 27** – *Queers Destroy Science Fiction*, anthology edited by Seanan McGuire (moderator: Carl).

**May 25** – *Of Wars, and, Memories, and Starlight*, collection by Aliette de Bodard (moderator: Andy).

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Warm valentine's Day wishes to everyone at Lambda Sci-Fi from everyone in the Hundred Acre Wood!!

### \*\*\*\*\* February 12, 2023 Meeting \*\*\*\*\*

The next LSF meeting will be held on Sunday, February 12th. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC. **All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.** The doors open at 1:30 PM and the meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. Hope to see you there!



### What's Inside?

Page 2: October Reading, Part 3 (book review); Minutes of the January 2023 LSF Meeting.

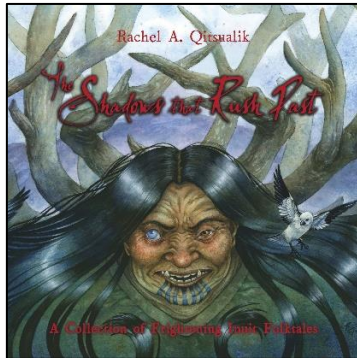
Page 3: Dinosaur Eats Mammal!

Page 4: Info About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians and Con Calendar.

## October Reading, Part 3

reviews by Carl

In honor of the Halloween season, I generally enjoy reading “weird” or “creepy” or “scary” books. Last October was no exception, and I certainly read a lotta creepy stuff that month. Most of my reviews have previously been included in the November and December 2022 issues of the LSF newsletter; and here’s a final title from my October 2022 reading list.



### *The Shadows That Rush Past: A Collection of Frightening Inuit Folktales*

by Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley  
(Inhabit Media, Inc., 2018)

I found this little gem in the museum store at the Smithsonian’s Na-

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## Minutes of the January 2023 LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

Carl passed along the sad news that LSFer Wayne #1 passed away on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

### TV News

Dan advised that the final season of *The Walking Dead* (Season 11) has popped up at NetFlix. The Hallmark Channel film *The Way Home* includes a time travel paradox, which is 100% absent from the film description at the Hallmark Channel website. The Hulu series *Palm Springs* is about two wedding guests who are stuck in a time loop – experiencing the same day over and over again. (Haven’t we seen this plot before?) Peter & Rob are enjoying NetFlix’s *Sandman* series; the production follows the model of the graphic novel. It was noted that there will be cross-over episode for the two recent *Star Trek* series *Strange New Worlds* and *Lower Decks*. (THAT should be fun!)

### Movie News

Wess & Peter enjoyed *Avatar: The Way of Water*, which has marvelous special effects. David mentioned that the next film will be fire-based. Peter indicated that one could watch and enjoy the second movie without having seen the first movie.

### Upcoming LSF Events

Thursday, Jan. 26 – the next meeting of the LSF Book Discussion Group. The topic will be the novella *What Moves the Dead* by T. Kingfisher and the short story “The Fall of the House of Usher” by Edgar Allan Poe.

Sunday, Feb. 23 – the next monthly LSF meeting.

Thursday, Feb. 23 – the February meeting of the LSF Book Discussion Group – topic TBD.

Then it was time for the Annual LSF Book-ish Exchange! (For details, see below.)

Finally, we then watched a trailer for the new comedy film *Renfield*, which stars Nicholas Cage, Nicholas Hoult, and Awkwafina.

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**Happy Lunar New Year!  
Year of the Rabbit (with attitude)!**

## Details of the LSF Book-ish Exchange

From	To	What
Peter	David	An omnibus edition of Orson Scott Card’s first two <i>Ender’s Game</i> novels.
Rob	Carl	Julian May’s “Saga of Pliocene Exile” novels: <i>The Many-Colored Land</i> , <i>The Golden Torc</i> , <i>The Nonborn King</i> , and <i>The Adversary</i> .
Carl	Rob	Two graphic novels: <i>Rorschach</i> and <i>Farewell, Brindavoine</i> .
David	Scott	DVD of Season 1 of <i>The Magicians</i> .
Dan	Peter	William Gibson’s <i>All Tomorrow’s Diaries</i> and <i>Pattern Recognition</i> and Wayne Barlowe’s <i>Guide to Extraterrestrials</i> (with a promissory note for Dougal Dixon’s <i>After Man</i> ).
Scott	Karl	A graphic novel of Philip K. Dick’s <i>A Scanner Darkly</i> .
Karl	Dan	Katherine Ramsland’s <i>Vampire Companion: The Official Guide to Anne Rice’s The Vampire Chronicles</i> .

## Dinosaur Eats Mammal!

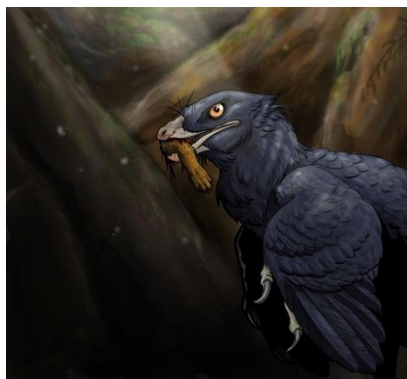
info passed along by Carl

OK, that's definitely a provocative title. It's meant to attract your attention to a recent ground-breaking fossil discovery. No, we're not talking about evidence that a *Tyrannosaurus rex* had eaten a mammoth, a moose, or a prehistoric human. But there's definitely a dinosaur and a mammal involved.

Let's make a couple of things clear right off the bat. First, not all dinosaurs had huge earth-shaking bodies like terrifying theropods (tyrannosaurs), long-necked sauropods (brontosaurus), and horned ceratopsians (triceratops). As we've discovered in the past few decades, some dinosaurs were quite small – no bigger than modern-day birds – and even feathered. (Oh, and let's not forget that a newborn dinosaur would probably have been quite small when it came out of the egg.) Second, mammals have been around for a very long time. Tiny mammalian creatures were scurrying around the landscape about 210 million years ago, long before the Age of Dinosaurs came to a cataclysmic end about 65 million years ago.

Thus, it's long been assumed that dinosaurs – especially small ones – included tasty little mammalian snacks as a regular part of their diet. But, until recently, there has been no solid fossil evidence to support this assumption. Fossil evidence of what dinosaurs have eaten is extremely rare – only about 20 examples exist. According to David Hone (professor at Queen Mary University, London): "It's so rare to find examples of food inside dinosaurs, so every example is really important, as it gives direct evidence of what they were eating." Now, an "exceptionally rare" discovery has confirmed that at least one dinosaur had indeed eaten a mammal.

In the early 2000s, the fossil of a *Microraptor zhaoianus* was discovered in northeast China. Microraptor was a small feathered dinosaur about the size of a crow that lived about 120 million years ago. It was only recently, however, that Hans Larsson (professor at McGill University, Canada) noticed some animal remains (a foot) inside the dinosaur's fossil.



Artist's depiction of Microraptor with prey

The findings of a research team were published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. The foot apparently belonged to a tiny (mouse-sized) ground mammal that wasn't good at climbing. This seemed to be "an interesting choice of food" for the Microraptor, which spent most of its life gliding from tree to tree in the forests of Early Cretaceous China. Previous research found that Microraptors were general carnivores that ate fish, birds, and lizards – but it's still uncertain whether this Microraptor preyed on a live mammal or scavenged a dead mammal. Researchers could confirm, however, that the tiny mammal was not an ancestor of humans. To quote Prof. Hone: "While this mammal would absolutely not have been a human ancestor, we can look back at some of our ancient relatives being a meal for hungry dinosaurs."

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Welcome to Fantasy!  
Tyrannosaurus & cavemen  
by Frank Frazetta

## October Reading

continued from page 2

tional Museum of the American Indian. It's a beautifully-illustrated children's book that includes four deliciously chilling folktales from the Inuit (or possibly their ancestral Sivulivinit) people of polar North America. The author is a folklorist, archaic language expert, and elder of Inuit-Cree ancestry.

Here's a quote from the Introduction: "All of these tales are fun, brimming with unique monsters, clever escapes, and strange forces that thrive in the Land. But they are also glimpses into the minds of generations long past. Some of the stories are thousands of years old, recognizable all around the wide Arctic!" Great reading for those lengthening Autumn and Winter nights, says I.

The first story – "Amautalik" – relates how a young Inuit boy is kidnapped by an *amautalik* (sort of a giant ogress-like cannibal) and is eventually rescued through the efforts of his grandmother (an *angakkuq* or shaman) and her tiny avian helper. The monster in the second story – "Akhla" – is a savage and primitive giant that eats bodies raided from Inuit graves as well as people carried off from Inuit camps. In this story, the hunter-shaman known as Upaum decides to bring an end to a series of raids by an *akhla* and (as it turns out) his fearsome family. The title of the third story – "Nanurluk" – refers to a gigantic polar bear that raids Inuit camps for human prey and is impervious to Inuit weapons. The overly proud hunter Nakasungnak takes on the *nanurluk*. Although he is victorious (using a rather unique strategy), he later meets his doom by ignoring the threat posed by clouds of huge carnivorous insects. The final story – "Mahaha" – features a truly creepy creature of the polar wastes that giggles and laughs as it tortures its victims to an icy death. (Which is why it's called *mahaha*.) In the story, a young Inuit hunter goes after the *mahaha* that killed his wife.

(continued on page 4)



Mahaha



**\*\* INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS \*\***

**Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans-gendered (GLBT) people, and their friends who are interested in science fiction, fantasy, horror and related genres in all forms (SF/F/H). LSF's primary goals are to have fun, to provide a community, and to:

- promote SF/F/H, with particular attention to materials of interest to GLBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for GLBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of GLBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the GLBT community.

Newsletter submissions are always welcome

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be on Sunday, February 12th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC. **All attendees MUST be fully vaccinated.** We hope to see you there.

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is an affiliate of **the Gaylactic Network**, an international organization for gay people and their friends who are interested in science-fiction and fantasy.

**\*\* Con Calendar \*\*** by Carl

Feb. 10-12, 2023 **FARPOINT**. Delta by Marriott Hunt Valley (Hunt Valley MD). Guest: Wilson Cruz (*ST: Discovery*), Rylee Alazraqui (*ST: Prodigy*). Membership (register on-line): \$90 for the weekend; daily rates available.

For more information: [www.FarPointCon.com](http://www.FarPointCon.com)

May 26-29, 2023 **BALTICON 57**. Renaissance Harborplace Hotel (Baltimore MD). GoH: Jane Yolen; Artist GoH: Ariel Burgess. Registration details TBA. Website: <https://www.balticon.org/wp57/>

July 7-9, 2023 **SHORE LEAVE 43**. Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley (Hunt Valley MD). "Guests will be announced as soon as they are confirmed." Weekend membership: \$105 (daily rates available). On-line membership application if paying by credit card. Website: [www.shore-leave.com](http://www.shore-leave.com)

June 16-18, 2023 **AWESOME CON 2023**. Walter E. Washington Convention Center (Washington DC). Guests TBA. On-line registration: details TBA. Website: <https://awesome-con.com>

July 21-23, 2023 **CONFLUENCE**. Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport Hotel (Pittsburgh PA). Guest of Honor: Ada Palmer; Featured Artist: Susan Dexter; Featured Music Guest: Sassafras+. Weekend membership: \$55 to 7/10/2023; \$65 thereafter (daily rates available). On-line registration. Website: [confluence-sff.org](http://confluence-sff.org)

July 28-30, 2023 **OTAKON 2023** (celebrating Asian pop culture, including anime and manga). Walter E. Washington Convention Center (Washington DC). On-line registration: details "currently being updated" on their website. Website: <https://www.otakon.com>

Sept. 29 – Oct. 1, 2023 **CAPCLAVE 2023**. Rockville Hilton & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville MD). GoHs: Sarah Pinsker, Kameron Hurley. Registration details: TBA. Website: <https://www.capclave.org/capclave23/>



Have a  
"super"  
Valentine's  
Day!



**October Reading**

continued from page 3

Qitsualik-Tinsley is a fine writer. She writes in an entertaining and easily-readable style that maintains a feeling that the stories are being told to you by an Inuit shaman. And the beautiful illustrations – by Emily Fiegenschuh and Larry MacDougall – definitely help to bring the stories to life. I'm very glad I ran across this little book.

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