

"Is Mercury Alive After All?"
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A four-decade-old Mercury mystery is now closer to being solved, but new questions have emerged in its place. In a September 29th press conference, NASA announced that its Messenger (MErcury Surface, Space Environment, GEochemistry, and Ranging) spacecraft had detected unusual depressions on Mercury's surface. Clustered together in impact craters and basins, the so-called hollows have "bright interiors and halos, and are found over a wide range of latitudes and longitudes," says David Blewett of Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory, lead author of the paper that appears in the latest issue of *Science*. These anomalous pits range in size from tens of meters in diameter to several kilometers. And they appear to be fresh, relatively young formations, suggesting that Mercury is more geologically active than previously thought.

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