

Interstellar Comet 3I/ATLAS

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Interstellar Comet 3I/ATLAS Latest News

Scientists studying the comet 3I/ATLAS have determined that this interstellar visitor is remarkably ancient – formed an estimated 10 to 12 billion years ago in a primordial planetary system.

About Interstellar Comet 3I/ATLAS

- It is the **third known interstellar object** from outside our solar system after **1I/'Oumuamua(2017)** and **2I/Borisov (2019)**.
- It was first observed by a **NASA-supported telescope in Rio Hurtado**, Chile, which is part of the **ATLAS (Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System) survey**.
- It will exit the solar system permanently after a brief interaction with the Sun.
- **Physical Characteristics of Interstellar Comet 3I/ATLAS**
 - It is confirmed to be **an active comet**, with a visible coma, a **cloud of ice particles** and dust surrounding the nucleus.
 - **Trajectory:** It has **hyperbolic orbit** and travels at 57–68 km/s speed relative to the Sun.

- As it nears the Sun, it is expected to develop a tail, a characteristic comet feature formed by solar heating.
- Photometric analysis shows a reddish hue suggests the surface may be rich in complex organic compounds or water ice.

What are Interstellar Objects?

- These are **celestial bodies that originate outside the solar system**, and travel through it. These objects are **not gravitationally bound to a star**.
- They can come from other solar systems and be thrown into interstellar space (the area between the stars) **due to collisions or be slingshotted by a planet's or star's gravity**.
- The trajectory of these objects is **basically open-ended hyperbolic orbit**, where **there is a perihelion point** (closest to the Sun) but **no aphelion**.

Source: **IT**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/3i-atlas/>

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