

# Probing the Local Dark Matter Halo with Neutrino Oscillations

Andrey Shkerin

FTPI, University of Minnesota

with Tony Gherghetta

2305.06441

PASCOS 2023 UC Irvine

#### **Motivation**

#### Dark matter exists.

Ultra-light scalar or vector bosons are well-motivated dark matter candidates.

These include QCD axion and dark photon.

They can form a coherently oscillating background.

astro-ph/0003365, 1105.2812, 1610.08297, 1907.06243

Interaction of this background with Standard Model fields leads, e.g., to the variation of fundamental constants of Nature.

 $\Rightarrow$  New possibilities for dark matter searches, e.g., in atomic clock experiments.

#### 1710.01833

Ultra-light dark matter particles can form dense compact objects.

hep-ph/9303313, 1406.6586, 1610.08297, 1804.05857, 1804.09647, 1809.07673, 1809.09241, 1906.01348, 2207.04057, 2304.13054

They are called **Boson / Axion / Proca stars** and represent coherent / solitonic / classical lumps of dark matter.

They are bound by **self-gravity** and can form by the Jeans mechanism.

 $\Rightarrow$  They can be classically stable (if in isolation).

Self-interaction and interaction with the surrounding medium are also important.



A boson star. Taken from 1804.05857.

Particle Data Group, Prog. Theor. Exp. Phys. 2022, 083C01 (2022)

#### **Motivation**

A solitonic configuration may also be sustained by an **external potential.** 

**Suppose** that dark matter particles are trapped in a potential created by some astrophysical body. Then they can form a soliton ("**local halo**").

The Earth or the Sun could have such a halo.

1902.08212, 1912.04295

2306.12477

The halo can be sustained solely by the **gravitational potential** of the host body.

- Inside the compact object  $\rho_{\rm DM,local} \gg \rho_{\rm DM,average}$ 
  - $\Rightarrow$  Effects from coupling to the Standard Model fields are enhanced.

**This is intriguing:** the presence of the local halo could greatly enhance the sensitivity of terrestrial experiments to new physics.

 $1902.08212,\,1906.06193,\,1912.04295,\,2103.03783,\,2201.02042,\,2305.01785$ 

#### Local scalar halo

, The energy of the bound state is  $E_0 \ll mc^2$ 

• Consider a local, **nonrelativistic** halo, made of **scalar** particles of mass *m*, which is the bound state in the **gravitational potential**  $\Phi(r)$  of the host body.

$$ds^{2} = -N(r)c^{2}dt^{2} + \frac{dr^{2}}{N(r)} + r^{2}d\Omega^{2}, \qquad N(r) = 1 + \frac{2\Phi(r)}{c^{2}}$$

We do not study the halo formation  $\Rightarrow$  the **halo mass**  $M_{halo}$  is a free parameter (subject to experimental constraints and  $M_{halo} \ll M$ ). 0808.0899

The halo size  $\ell$  is fixed by *m* and the parameters of the host body: its mass *M* and radius *R*.

Then finding the halo profile reduces to solving the Schroedinger equation:

$$\varphi(r,t) = \sqrt{\frac{2c}{m}} \left( \Psi(r,t)e^{-imc^2t} + c \cdot c \cdot \right) , \quad \Psi(r,t) = \psi(r)e^{-iEt}$$
$$x = r/R , \quad \mathcal{M} = Gm^2MR , \quad \mathcal{E} = EmR^2$$
$$\boxed{-\frac{1}{x^2}\frac{d}{dx}\left(x^2\frac{d\psi}{dx}\right) + 2(\mathcal{M}\tilde{\Phi} - \mathcal{E})\psi = 0}$$

where  $ilde{\Phi}$  is the rescaled grav. potential.

The halo is characterised by the parameter  $\mathcal{M}$ . We are interested in the ground state  $\psi_0(x)$ .





#### **Earth halo**

Take the Earth as the host body. From the properties of  $\psi_0(x)$  it follows that

$$\ell \sim R_{\oplus} \left(\frac{10^{-9} \,\mathrm{eV}}{m}\right)^2 \qquad m \ll 10^{-9} \,\mathrm{eV}$$

If  $\ell > R_{\oplus}$ , the halo extends beyond the Earth's surface  $\Rightarrow$  can be probed in terrestrial and near-orbit experiments – "**big halo**"

$$\ell \sim R_{\oplus} \left(\frac{10^{-9} \,\mathrm{eV}}{m}\right)^{1/2} \quad m \gg 10^{-9} \,\mathrm{eV}$$

If  $\ell < R_{\oplus}$ , the halo is in the Earth's interior

 $\Rightarrow$  much harder to probe - "small (interior) halo"

#### Neutrino oscillations as a probe of the local halo

Assume that the particles comprising the halo couple to neutrinos. Then one can look for the halo in the neutrino oscillation data.

Observational consequences of possible interactions between ultra light dark matter and neutrinos have been extensively studied in various terrestrial, astrophysical and cosmological setups.

1608.01307, 1705.06740, 1705.09455, 1804.05117, 1803.01773, 1809.01111, 1908.02278, 2007.03590, 2107.10865, 2205.03749, 2212.05073, 2301.04152

What can we add?

- If  $\ell \gtrsim R_{\oplus} \Rightarrow$  Enhanced homogeneous oscillating background  $\Rightarrow$  Stronger constraints on the couplings  $m \sim 10^{-10} - 10^{-9} \,\text{eV}$ , "big halo"
- If  $\ell \ll R_{\oplus} \Rightarrow$  Probe the small-size, interior halo inaccessible by other means; resolve its spatial profile





This is at the cost of the hypothesis that the halo exists; the constraints are functions of  $M_{halo}$ .

With atmospheric neutrinos flying through the Earth

#### (Scalar) dark matter - neutrino interaction

Adopt the plane-wave treatment of neutrino oscillations.

Neglect effects of neutrino decoherence and dispersion.

The evolution equation for the ultrarelativistic neutrino wavefunction:

 $i\frac{d\nu_a}{dz} = H_{ab}\nu_b$ 



• The correction  $\Delta H$  comes from the neutrino interacting with the background halo configuration

$$\varphi(r,t) = f(r)\cos(mt + \delta), \quad f(r) \sim \psi_0(r), \quad f_0 \equiv f(0)$$

the halo phase at the moment of neutrino production

#### (Scalar) dark matter - neutrino interaction

Consider the following scalar-neutrino interaction terms:

$$\mathscr{L}_{4,\text{int}} = -\frac{yh_{ab}}{\psi} \overline{\psi}_{La} \psi_{Lb}^{C} + h \cdot c .$$

small coupling





where  $m_{\nu}$  is the neutrino mass matrix in the flavour basis



shifts the neutrino fourmomentum

$$\Delta H_5 = \frac{m}{\Lambda_5} g\varphi$$

since  $|\partial_0 \varphi| \sim m f_0$  and  $|\nabla \varphi| \sim f_0 / \ell$ , and for our halo we have  $m\ell\gtrsim 10^4$ 

See, e.g., 2107.14018



## **Big halo**

#### Adiabatic regime

$$P_{ab}(L) = \left| \sum_{i} U_{ai}(0) e^{-\frac{i}{2E} \int_{0}^{L} dz \, m_{i}^{2}(z)} U_{bi}^{\star}(L) \right|^{2}, \qquad \langle P_{aa} \rangle_{\delta} = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{0}^{2\pi} d\delta P_{aa} \qquad - \text{Survival probability}$$

#### Perturbation theory

Introduce the following parameters: 
$$\beta_4 = \frac{y \sum m_{\nu}}{2E}$$
,  $\beta_5 = \frac{m}{2\Lambda_5}$ ,  $\beta = \beta_4$  or  $\beta_5$ 

$$\epsilon \equiv \frac{\beta f_0}{m} \sim \left(\frac{\beta}{10^{-22}}\right) \left(\frac{m}{10^{-10} \,\mathrm{eV}}\right) \left(\frac{M_{\mathrm{halo}}}{10^{15} \,\mathrm{kg}}\right)^{1/2}$$

- Expansion parameter, depends on the halo mass

- Number of halo oscillations per one neutrino oscillation

$$\eta \equiv \frac{mE}{\Delta m_0^2} = \left(\frac{2.5 \times 10^{-3} \,\mathrm{eV}^2}{\Delta m_0^2}\right) \left(\frac{m}{10^{-10} \,\mathrm{eV}}\right) \left(\frac{E}{25 \,\mathrm{MeV}}\right)$$

Then 
$$\langle P_{aa} \rangle_{\delta} = P_{0,aa} + (\epsilon \eta)^2 \langle P_{2,aa} \rangle_{\delta}$$

- If  $\eta \ll 1$ , this is like the usual MSW effect; P.T. works until  $\epsilon \sim \eta^{-1} \gg 1$ .
- If  $\eta \gg 1$ , the neutrino propagates in the wildly oscillating background; P.T. works until  $\epsilon \sim \eta^{-1}$ ?

Not really: the adiabatic approximation breaks down at  $\epsilon \sim \eta^{-2} \ll \eta^{-1}$ .



#### Nonadiabatic regime in big halo

If  $\eta \gg 1$ , what is the scale at which the correction becomes sizeable? What is the shape of the modified oscillation probability curve?

The situation is different for the different types of scalar-neutrino interaction.

Let  $\nu_i(z) = (1 + \Delta \nu_i(z))e^{-i\frac{m_i^2 z}{2E}}$  be the vacuum neutrino mass eigenstates.



## Nonadiabatic regime in big halo

If  $\eta \gg 1$ , what is the scale at which the correction becomes sizeable? What is the shape of the modified oscillation probability curve?

The situation is different for the different types of scalar-neutrino interaction.

Let  $\nu_i(z) = (1 + \Delta \nu_i(z))e^{-i\frac{m_i^2 z}{2E}}$  be the vacuum neutrino mass eigenstates.



## Nonadiabatic regime in big halo

#### Summary

- The correction due to the halo can be small and at the same time be dominated by nonadiabatic effects.
- The correction gives rise to interesting features in the oscillation curve.
- The magnitude of the correction is essentially energy-independent.

## **Big scalar halo: results**

• The above results can be rephrased in terms of the neutrino energy, the halo mass, and the scalar-neutrino coupling parameter, y or  $\Lambda_5$ .



Values of the parameters at which the relative deviation from the vacuum oscillation probability reaches 0.1. The grey shaded region depicts the experimentally excluded values of  $M_{\rm halo}$ , the dashed line is  $\eta = 1$ . We take  $m = 10^{-10}$  eV and  $\Delta m_0^2 = 3.5 \cdot 10^{-3}$  eV<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Probing the interior halo**

The previous analysis gives us the qualitative understanding of what happens in the case of small halo ( $m \gtrsim 10^{-9}$  eV). We have in mind atmospheric neutrinos of  $E \gtrsim 1$  GeV traversing the Earth.

The relevant parameters are

$$\epsilon \sim \left(\frac{\beta}{10^{-23}}\right) \left(\frac{10^{-9} \text{ eV}}{m}\right)^{5/4} \left(\frac{M_{\text{halo}}}{10^{15} \text{ kg}}\right)^{1/2}$$
$$\eta = 400 \left(\frac{2.5 \times 10^{-3} \text{ eV}^2}{\Delta m_0^2}\right) \left(\frac{m}{10^{-9} \text{ eV}}\right) \left(\frac{E}{1 \text{ GeV}}\right)$$

Recall that  $\beta \sim f(0)$  – the amplitude of the halo at its centre.

Clearly,  $\eta \gg 1$ .



- Perturbation theory is straightforward, but is limited to  $\epsilon \lesssim \eta^{-2} \ll 1$ .
  - $\Rightarrow$  Visible distortions in the oscillation probability arise due to the nonadiabatic effects.

They become order-one when f(0) is such that  $\epsilon \sim \eta^{-1}$  (for dim-4 int.) or  $\epsilon \sim 1$  (for dim-5 int.)

For small halos, the magnitude of the effect depends on the angle  $\Theta$  of the incoming neutrino.

## **Probing the interior halo**

• One computes numerically the neutrino wavefunction as it travels through the halo.

Here is the typical result for the survival probability after traversing the Earth (neglecting the MSW effect):



- vacuum oscillations
  - $\epsilon = 0.1$  the effect is only visible at small  $\Theta$ , due to the fact that  $\ell / L_0^{\text{osc}} \sim 10$  at this value of *m*.
- $\epsilon = 0.5 \text{the effect is visible at all } \Theta.$
- $\epsilon = 2.0 -$  the survival probability tends to 1/2 (grey dashed line).

## **Probing the interior halo**

• One computes numerically the neutrino wavefunction as it travels through the halo.

Here is the typical result for the survival probability after traversing the Earth (neglecting the MSW effect):



• What happens at  $m \gg 10^{-9}$  eV corresponding to  $\ell \ll R_\oplus$ ?

The sensitivity goes down due to the limited angular resolution  $\Theta_{res}$  of a detector. We can replace:

$$\epsilon \mapsto \epsilon_{\text{eff}} = \Theta_{\text{res}}^{-1} \int_{0}^{\Theta_{\text{res}}} d\Theta \ \epsilon(\Theta) \ , \qquad \epsilon(\Theta) = \frac{\beta}{m} f(R_{\oplus} \sin \Theta)$$

The effect is still there, if the halo amplitude is big enough.

- vacuum oscillations
  - $\epsilon = 0.1$  the effect is only visible at small  $\Theta$ , due to the fact that  $\ell/L_0^{\text{osc}} \sim 10$  at this value of *m*.
- $\epsilon = 0.5 \text{the effect is visible at all } \Theta.$
- $\epsilon = 2.0$  the survival probability tends to 1/2 (grey dashed line).



### **Probing the interior halo: results**

• The above results can be rephrased in terms of the dark matter particle mass, the halo mass, and the scalar-neutrino coupling parameter, y or  $\Lambda_5$ .



Values of the parameters at which the relative deviation from the vacuum oscillation probability reaches 0.1, for  $m \gtrsim 10^{-9}$  eV. The grey shaded region depicts the values of  $M_{\rm halo} > 0.1 M_{\oplus}$ . We take  $\Delta m_0^2 = 3.5 \cdot 10^{-3}$  eV<sup>2</sup>, E = 1 GeV, and  $\Theta_{\rm res} = 30^{\circ}$ .

### Outlook

- We worked in the approximate 2-flavour oscillation scheme.
  It is interesting to do the full 3-flavour analysis and to include the MSW effect.
- We repeated the analysis for the (radially-polarised) local vector halo coupled to the neutrino current.

It is interesting to consider other types of polarisations, since this would introduce additional directional dependence.

- Possible dark matter nucleon/electron interactions may affect the structure of the halo.
- It is important to understand how reliable the local halo hypothesis is.

2306.12477

It is intriguing that a local dark matter halo could exist surrounding the Earth (or the Sun).

Possible interactions with neutrinos provide a novel way to search for the dark matter particle in neutrino oscillation experiments.

Thank you!

#### Local vector halo

- It is interesting to repeat the analysis for the local halo made of vector particles  $A_{\mu}$ . New effects are expected due to the polarisation.
- Consider radially-polarised, spherically-symmetric configurations described by the ansatz:
- A. Yu. Loginov, Phys.Rev.D 91 (2015) 10, 105028

$$A_t(r,t) = cu(r)\cos\omega t$$
,  $A_r(r,t) = v(r)\sin\omega t$ 

In the external gravitational background, the equations of motion are **1508.05395** (this is similar to Proca stars, but in our case N(r) is not dynamical)

$$\omega v(r) - cu'(r) = \frac{m^2 c^4}{\omega} N(r) v(r)$$
$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}r} (r^2 (cu'(r) - \omega v(r))) = m^2 c^3 \frac{u(r)}{N(r)}$$

Make them dimensionless, take the nonrel. limit:

Choose the ground state  $u_0(x)$ ,  $v_0(x)$ .



 $\mathrm{d}u$ 

## **Probing the vector halo**

Consider the vector-neutrino coupling of the form

See, e.g., 2212.05073, 1909.12845, 2005.01515

Like the derivative scalar-neutrino interaction,  $\mathscr{L}_{V,\text{int}}$  shifts the neutrino four-momentum.

**Unlike** the scalar case, now the spatial component of the current dominates for the range of m we are interested in:  $|v_0| \gg |u_0|$  for  $10^{-12} \text{ eV} \le m \le 10^{-3} \text{ eV}$ .

If 
$$y_V |v_0| \ll \Delta m_0^2 / E$$
, then  $\Delta H_V = y_V \vec{n} \cdot \vec{A} \kappa$ 

 $\Rightarrow$  For the big halo, experiments with  $L \ll R_{\oplus}$  conducted on the surface are less advantageous than in the scalar case.

For the small halo, the analysis is similar to the scalar case.

#### Probing the small vector halo: results

• The result for the vector halo resembles the result for the scalar halo and the derivative scalar-neutrino coupling, with  $\Lambda_5 \mapsto m/(2y_V)$ .



Values of the parameters at which the relative deviation from the vacuum oscillation probability reaches 0.1, for  $m \gtrsim 10^{-9}$  eV. The grey shaded region depicts the values of  $M_{\rm halo} > 0.1 M_{\oplus}$ . We take  $\Delta m_0^2 = 3.5 \cdot 10^{-3} \, {\rm eV}^2$ , E = 1 GeV, and  $\Theta_{\rm res} = 30^{\circ}$ .

#### More on perturbation theory in the big halo

Survival probability to the 2nd order in  $\beta$ :  $\langle P_{aa} \rangle_{\delta} = P_{0,aa} + (\epsilon \eta)^2 \langle P_{2,aa} \rangle_{\delta}$ 

where 
$$P_{0,aa} = 1 - \sin^2 2\theta_0 \sin^2 X_0$$
,  $X_0 = \pi L/L_0^{\text{osc}}$ , and

$$\langle P_{aa} \rangle_{\delta} = 1 - \sin^2 2\theta_0 \sin^2 X_0 - 2\epsilon^2 \bigg( A_{m1}^2 \sin^2 2\theta_0 \cos(2X_0) \sin^2(2\eta X_0) + \eta A_{\theta 1} A_{m1} \sin 4\theta_0 \sin(2X_0) \sin(4\eta X_0) + 2\eta^2 \bigg[ X_0 A_{m2} \sin^2 2\theta_0 \sin(2X_0) + 2A_{\theta 1}^2 \big( \cos 4\theta_0 \sin^2 X_0 \cos^2(2\eta X_0) + \cos^2 X_0 \sin^2(2\eta X_0) \big) + A_{\theta 2} \sin 4\theta_0 \sin^2 X_0$$

#### More on perturbation theory in the big halo

Coefficients in the expression for  $\langle P_{aa}(L) \rangle_{\delta}$ 

- For the 5-dim derivative interaction:

 $\mathcal{A}_{\theta 1} = 2 \operatorname{Re}(g_{12}) \cos 2\theta_0 - (g_{22} - g_{11}) \sin 2\theta_0 ,$   $\mathcal{A}_{m1} = 2 \operatorname{Re}(g_{12}) \sin 2\theta_0 + (g_{22} - g_{11}) \cos 2\theta_0 ,$   $\mathcal{A}_{\theta 2} = -2\mathcal{A}_{\theta 1}\mathcal{A}_{m1} + 4 \operatorname{Im}^2(g_{12}) \cot 2\theta_0 ,$  $\mathcal{A}_{m2} = -\mathcal{A}_{m1}^2 + 4|g_{12}|^2 + (g_{22} - g_{11})^2 .$ 

- For the 4-dim interaction:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{A}_{\theta 1} &= \frac{2}{\sum m_{\nu}} \left( \operatorname{Re} \left[ (m_{11} + m_{22})h_{12}^{*} + m_{12}^{*}(h_{11} + h_{22}) \right] \cos 2\theta_{0} - \operatorname{Re} \left[ m_{22}h_{22}^{*} - m_{11}h_{11}^{*} \right] \sin 2\theta_{0} \right), \\ \mathcal{A}_{m1} &= \frac{2}{\sum m_{\nu}} \left( \operatorname{Re} \left[ (m_{11} + m_{22})h_{12}^{*} + m_{12}^{*}(h_{11} + h_{22}) \right] \sin 2\theta_{0} + \operatorname{Re} \left[ m_{22}h_{22}^{*} - m_{11}h_{11}^{*} \right] \cos 2\theta_{0} \right), \\ \mathcal{A}_{\theta 2} &= -2\mathcal{A}_{\theta 1}\mathcal{A}_{m1} + 4\operatorname{Im}^{2} \left[ m_{12}h_{11}^{*} - m_{11}h_{12}^{*} + m_{22}h_{12}^{*} - m_{12}h_{22}^{*} \right] \cot 2\theta_{0} \\ &+ \frac{2\Delta m_{0}^{2}}{(\sum m_{\nu})^{2}} \left( 2\operatorname{Re} \left[ (h_{11} + h_{22})h_{12}^{*} \right] \cos 2\theta_{0} + (|h_{11}|^{2} - |h_{22}|^{2}) \sin 2\theta_{0} \right), \\ \mathcal{A}_{m2} &= -\mathcal{A}_{m1}^{2} + \frac{2}{(\sum m_{\nu})^{2}} \left\{ \Delta m_{0}^{2} \left( (|h_{22}|^{2} - |h_{11}|^{2}) \cos 2\theta_{0} + 2\operatorname{Re} \left[ (h_{11} + h_{22})h_{12}^{*} \right] \sin 2\theta_{0} \right) \\ &+ \operatorname{Re} \left[ (m_{11}h_{11}^{*} - m_{22}h_{22}^{*})^{2} - 2m_{11}m_{22}^{*}h_{11}^{*}h_{22} + 4 \left( m_{11}m_{22}h_{12}^{*2} + m_{11}m_{12}h_{11}^{*}h_{12}^{*} + m_{12}^{2}h_{11}^{*}h_{22}^{*} + m_{12}m_{22}h_{12}^{*}h_{12}^{*} \right) \\ &+ m_{12}m_{11}^{*}h_{12}h_{22}^{*} + m_{12}m_{22}^{*}h_{12}h_{11}^{*} \right] + 2|m_{12}|^{2}(|h_{11}|^{2} + |h_{22}|^{2}) + 2(|m_{11}|^{2} + |m_{22}|^{2})|h_{12}|^{2} + |h_{11}|^{2}|m_{11}|^{2} + |h_{22}|^{2}|m_{22}|^{2} \right\} \end{aligned}$$