Searching for proton decay with paleo-detectors

based on "The Final Frontier for Proton Decay" arXiv:2405.15845
with Sebastian Baum, Cassandra Little, Paola Sala and Joshua Spitz

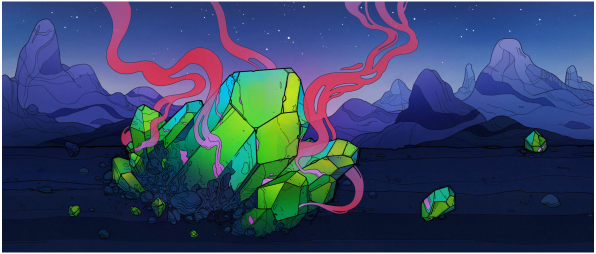


Figure: Olena Shmahalo/Quanta Magazine

Jožef Stefan Institute
Ljubljana, Slovenia

SMASH
machine learning for science and humanities postdoctoral program

Co-funded by the European Union

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Sklodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 101081355.

Damage features from recoils in ancient minerals

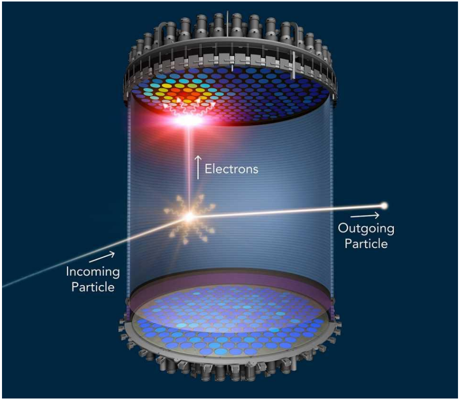


Figure: LUX-ZEPLIN (LZ) Collaboration / SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory

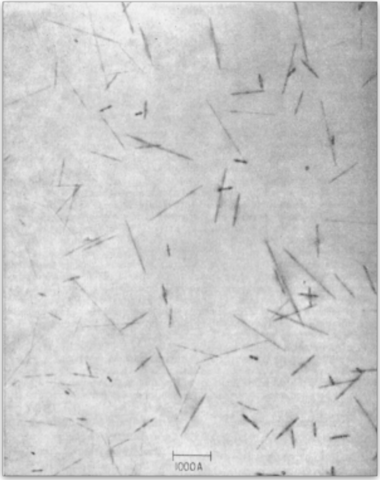
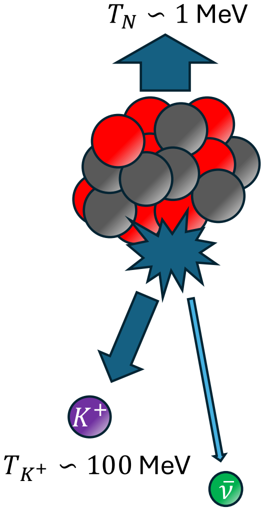
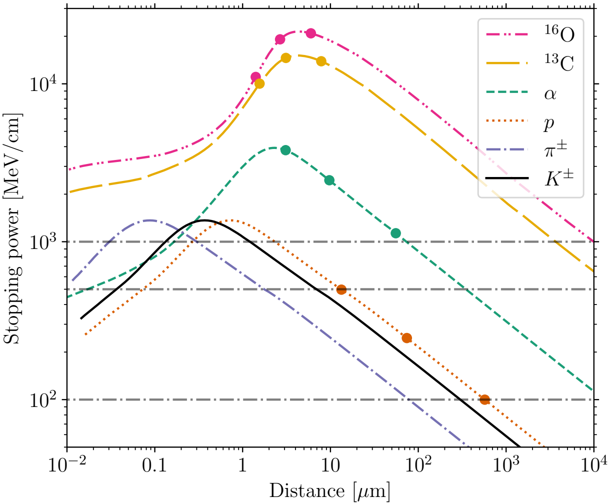


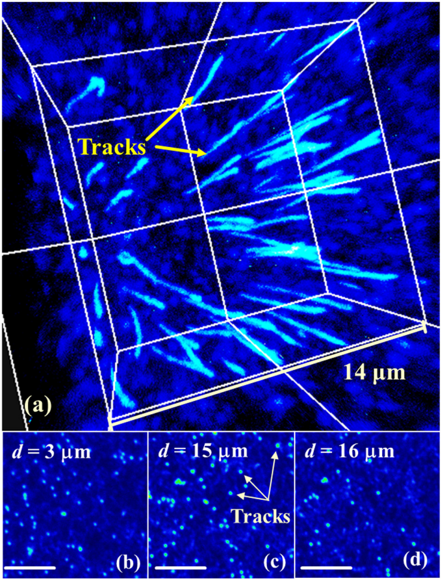
Figure: Price+Walker (1963)

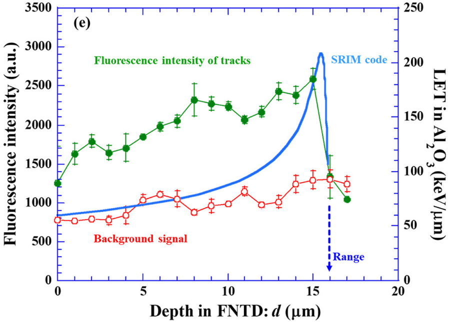
Large exposure from small target ⇒ $\mathrm{kg\,Gyr} = 1\,\mathrm{Mton\,yr}$





Fluorescent nuclear track detectors for K^+ endpoints

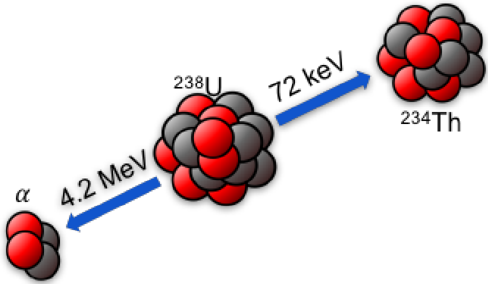


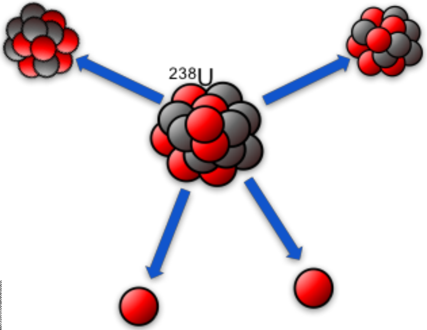


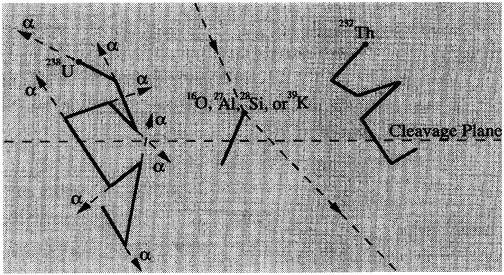
Figures from Kusumoto et al. (2022) show proton tracks in doped sapphire

- Theory of track formation?
- Are tracks robust to annealing?
- Use ***dE/dx* proxy** for tracks

Nuclear recoils from α-decays and spontaneous fission



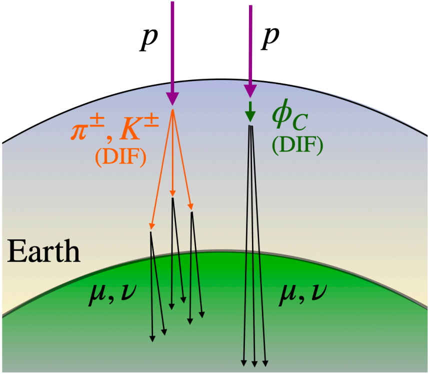


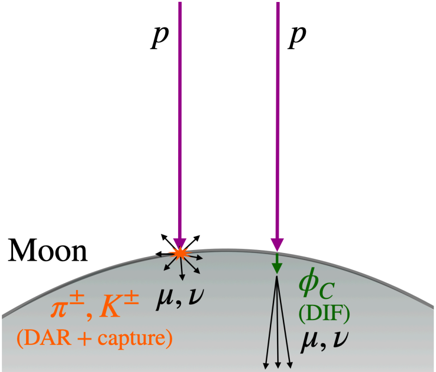


Need very radiopure minerals

Ultra-basic rocks formed in the mantle with $C^{238} \gtrsim 0.01\,\text{ppb}$

Atmospheric neutrinos induce $\mathcal{O}(100)\ K^+/100\,\mathrm{g}/\mathrm{Gyr}$





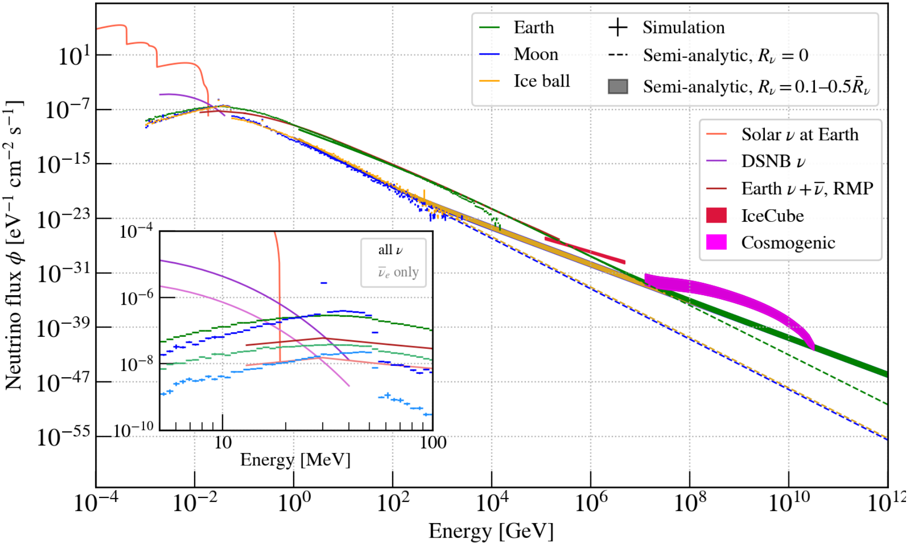
Figures from arXiv:2411.09634

- Conventional secondary mesons **decay in flight** on Earth
- Prompt fluxes from short-lived mesons decaying in flight

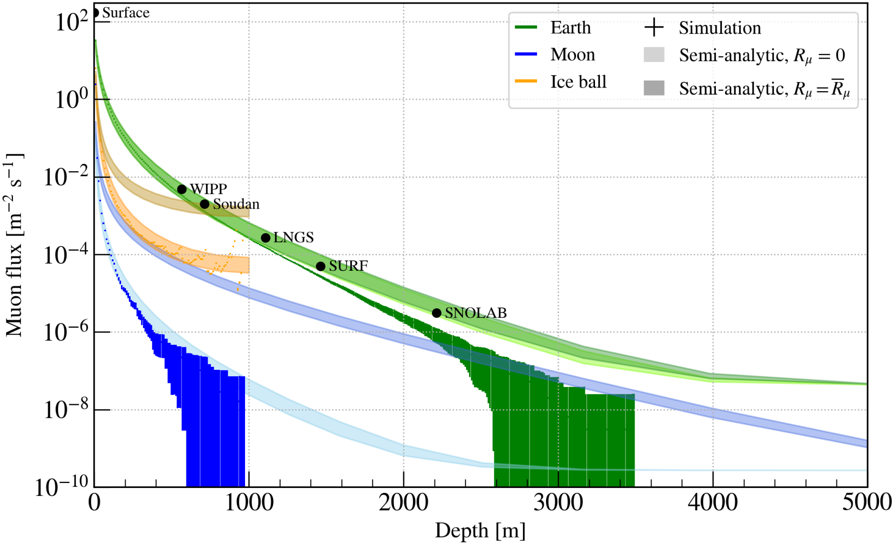
Suppression of lunar μ and ν fluxes

- Conventional secondary mesons **decay at rest** on the Moon
- Less suppression of short-lived mesons decaying in flight

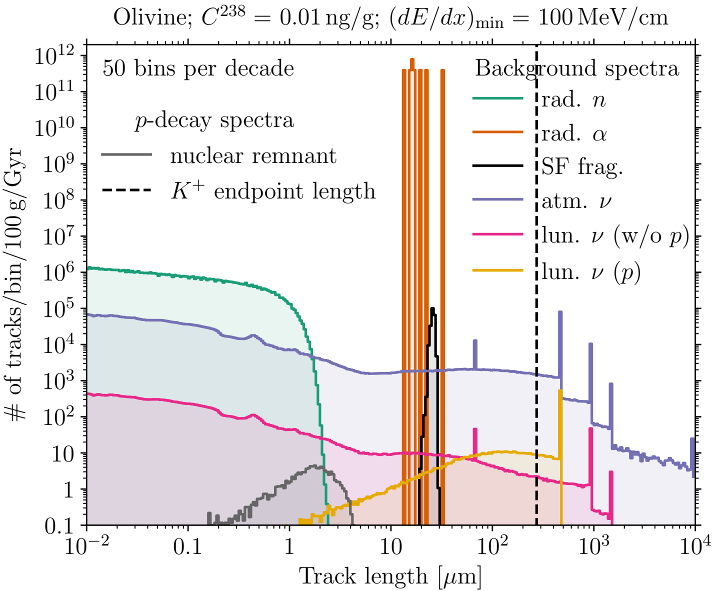
Lunar neutrinos induce $\sim 0.5\, K^+/100\,\mathrm{g}/\mathrm{Gyr}$ in Olivine



Lunar muons induce $\sim 0.1\, K^+/100\,\mathrm{g}/\mathrm{Gyr}$ at $\sim 5\,\mathrm{km}$ depth



Expect $\lesssim 6\, K^+/100\,\mathrm{g}/\mathrm{Gyr}$ for $\tau(p \to \bar{\nu} K^+) > 5.9 \times 10^{33}$ yr



arXiv > astro-ph > arXiv:2405.01626

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[Submitted on 2 May 2024]

Mineral Detection of Neutrinos and Dark Matter 2024. Proceedings

Sebastian Baum, Patrick Huber, Patrick Stengel, Natsue Abe, Daniel G. Ang, Lorenzo Apollonio, Gabriela R. Araujo, Levente Balogh, Pranshu Bhaumik Yilda Boukhtouchen, Joseph Bramante, Lorenzo Caccianiga, Andrew Calabrese-Day, Qing Chang, Juan I. Collar, Reza Ebadi, Alexey Elykov, Katherine Freese, Audrey Fung, Claudio Galelli, Arianna E. Gleason, Mariano Guerrero Perez, Janina Hakenmüller, Takeshi Hanyu, Noriko Hasebe, Shigenobu Hirose, Shunsaku Horiuchi, Yasushi Hoshino, Yuki Ido, Vsevolod Ivanov, Takashi Kamiyama, Takenori Kato, Yoji Kawamura, Chris Kelso, Giti A. Khodaparast, Emilie M. LaVoie-Ingram, Matthew Leybourne, Xingxin Liu, Thalles Lucas, Brenden A. Magill Federico M. Mariani, Sharlotte Mkhonto, Hans Pieter Mumm, Kohta Murase, Tatsuhiro Naka, Kenji Oguni, Kathryn Ream, Kate Scholberg, Maximilian Shen, Joshua Spitz, Katsuhiko Suzuki, Alexander Takla, Jiashen Tang, Natalia Tapia-Arellano, Pieter Vermeesch, Aaron C. Vincent, Nikita Vladimirov, Ronald Walsworth, David Waters, Greg Wurtz, Seiko Yamasaki, Xianyi Zhang

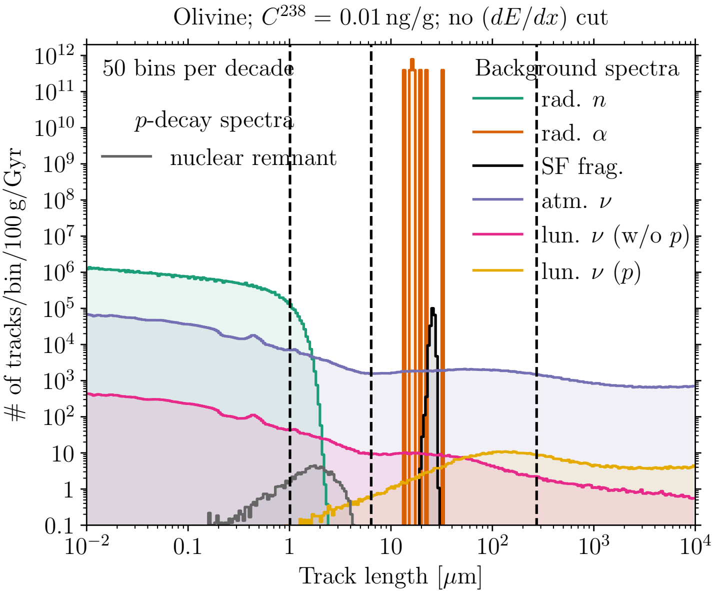
MDνDM community

- Groups across Europe, North America and Japan
- Astroparticle theorists, experimentalists, geologists, and materials scientists

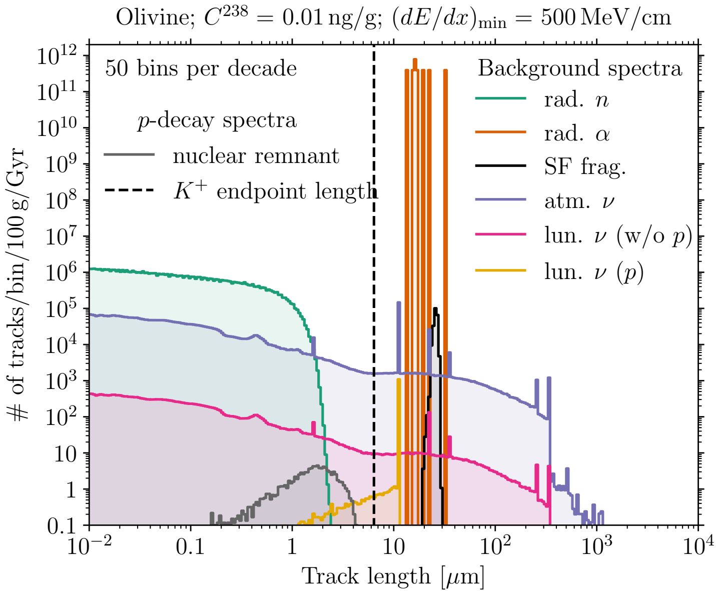
Also check out our whitepaper! arXiv:2301.07118, 2405.01626

- History of mineral detectors
- Review of scientific potential for particle physics, reactor neutrinos and geoscience

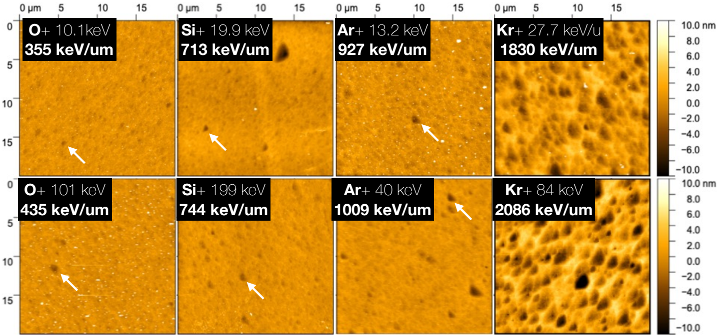
Trade-off between read-out resolution and exposure



Trade-off between read-out resolution and exposure



New techniques allow for much larger readout capacity



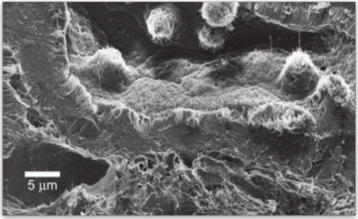
Irradiation dose is 80 ions per field of view (20umx20um).

proxy	DM scattering	alpha recoils
pit formation efficiency	several to 10 %	~ 100%

Cleaving and etching limits ϵ and can only reconstruct 2D

Readout scenarios for different x_T

- HIBM+pulsed laser could read out 10 mg with nm resolution
- SAXs at a synchrotron could resolve 15 nm in 3D for 100 g



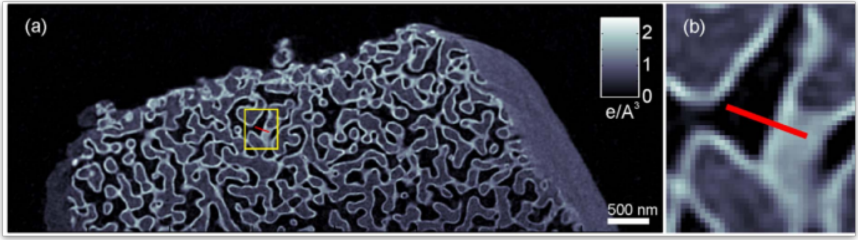
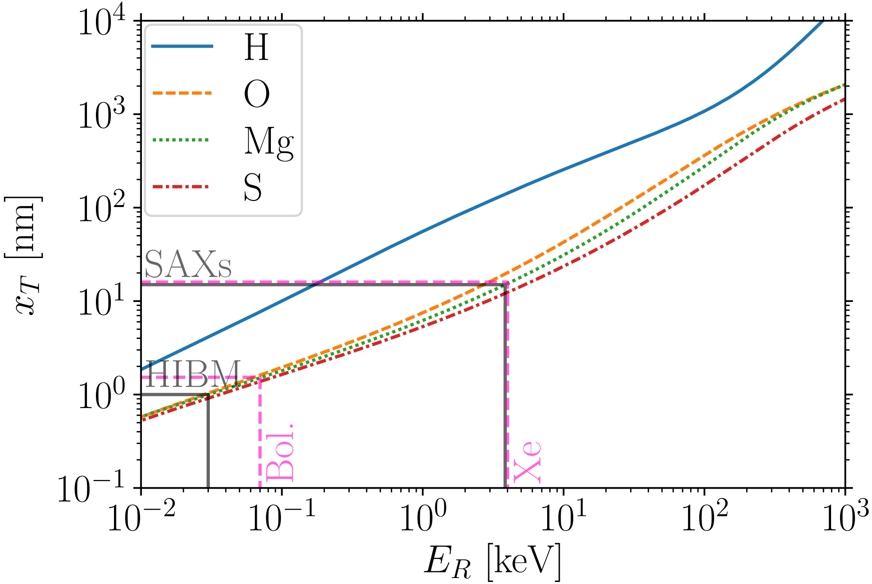
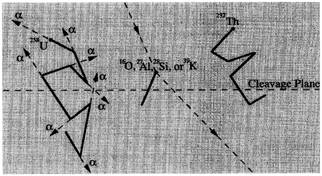


Figure: HIM rodent kidney Hill+ '12, SAXs nanoporous glass Holler+ '14

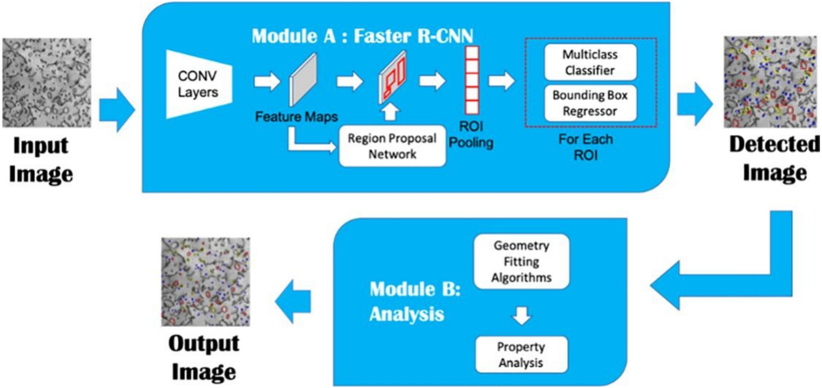
Integrate stopping power to estimate track length



Recognition of sparse tracks is a data analysis challenge



- 15 nm resolution of 100 g sample $\Rightarrow 10^{19}$ mostly empty voxels
- 1 Gyr old with $C^{238} = 0.01$ ppb $\Rightarrow 10^{13}$ voxels for α-recoil tracks



Scattering cross sections ⇒ scattering rates

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{dq^2 d\Omega_q} = \frac{d\sigma}{dq^2}\frac{1}{2\pi}\delta\left(\cos\theta - \frac{q}{2\mu_{XT} v}\right) \simeq \frac{\sigma_0 F(q)^2}{8\pi\mu_{XT}^2 v}\delta\left(v\cos\theta - \frac{q}{2\mu_{XT}}\right)$$

$$\frac{d^2 R}{dE_R d\Omega_q} = 2M_T \frac{N_T}{M_T N_T}\int \frac{d^2\sigma}{dq^2 d\Omega_q} n_X\, v\, f(\mathbf{v}) d^3 v \simeq \frac{\sigma_0 F(q)^2}{4\pi\mu_{XT}} n_X \hat{f}(v_q, \hat{\mathbf{q}})$$

Differential cross section

- δ-function imposes kinematics
- σ_0 is velocity and momentum independent cross section for scattering off pointlike nucleus

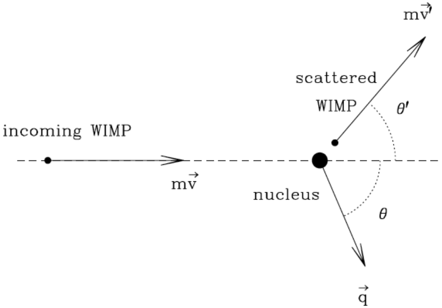
$$F(q) \simeq \frac{9\,[\sin(qR) - qR\cos(qR)]^2}{(qR)^6}$$

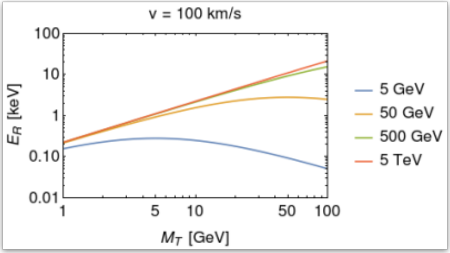
Differential scattering rate

- Rate per unit time per unit detector mass for all nuclei
- Convolute cross section with astrophysical WIMP flux

$$\sigma_0^{SI} = \frac{4}{\pi}\mu_{XT}^2\,[Zf_s^p + (A-Z)f_s^n)]^2$$

Nuclear recoils induced by elastic WIMP-nucleus scattering





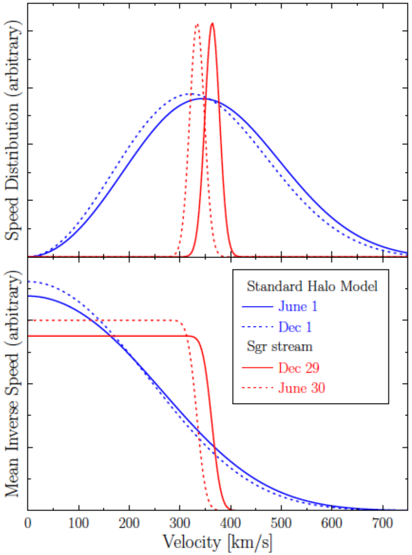
Rate per unit time per unit mass

$$\frac{dR}{dE_R} = \frac{n_X}{2}\frac{\sigma^{SI}_{Xp}}{\mu^2_{Xp}} A^2 F(q)^2 \eta(v_q)$$

Scattering kinematics ⇒ event rate

- Account for finite size of nucleus
- Convolute with WIMP flux
- Write cross section in terms of WIMP-nucleon interaction

WIMP velocity distribution and induced recoil spectra



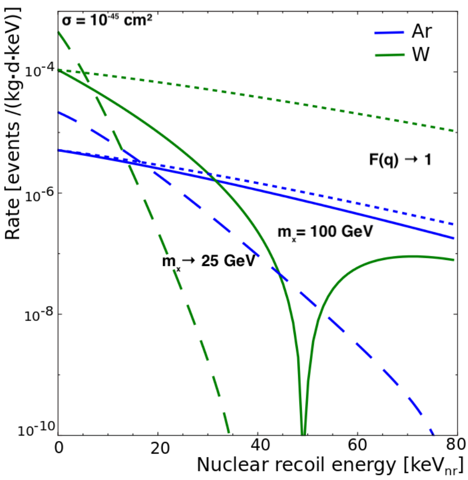
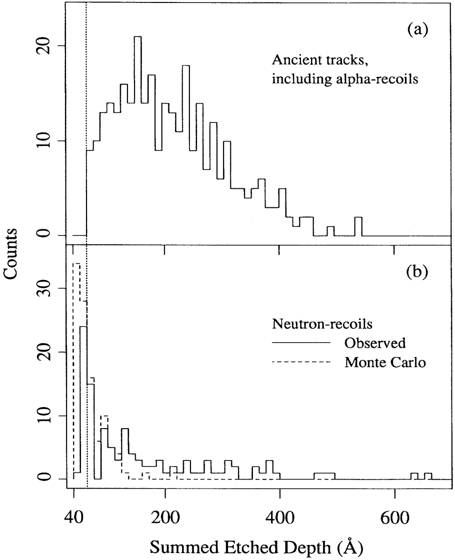


Figure: (left) 1209.3339 (right) 1509.08767

Mineral detectors used to constrain WIMPs before



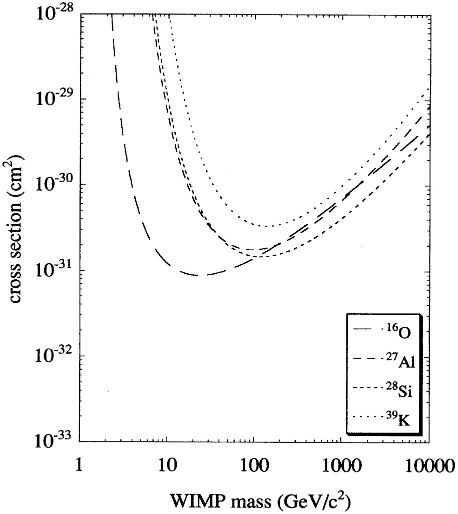
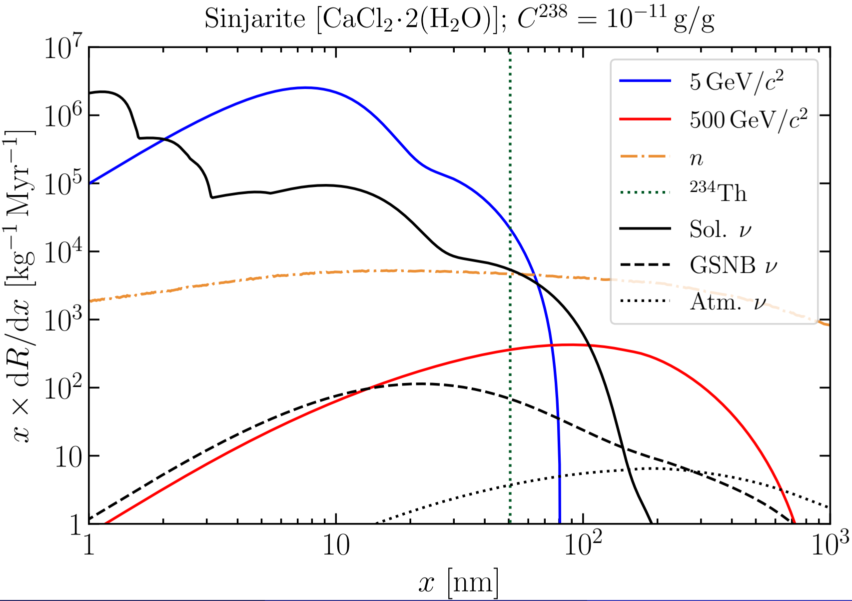
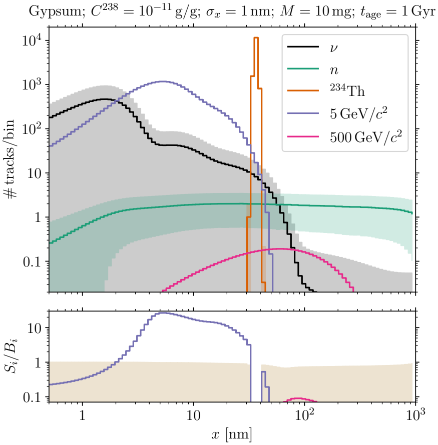


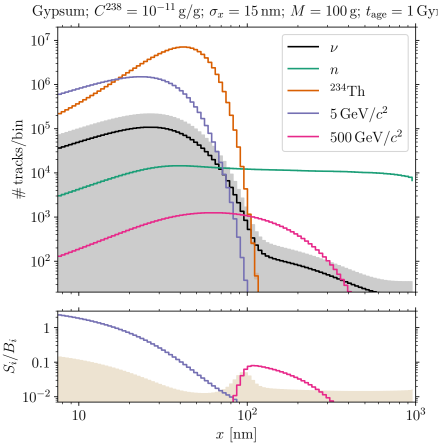
Figure: Snowden-Ifft et al. (1995)

Use track length spectra to pick out WIMP signal

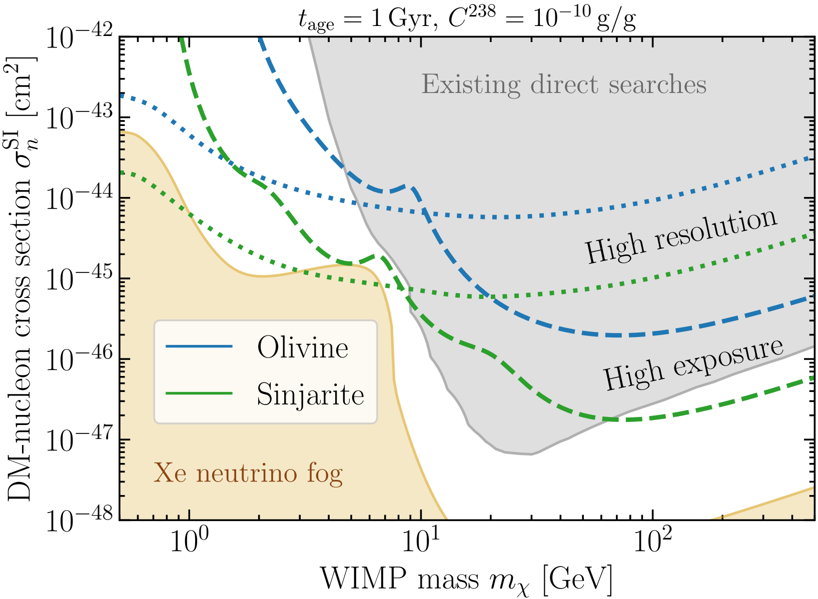


Track length spectra after smearing by readout resolution

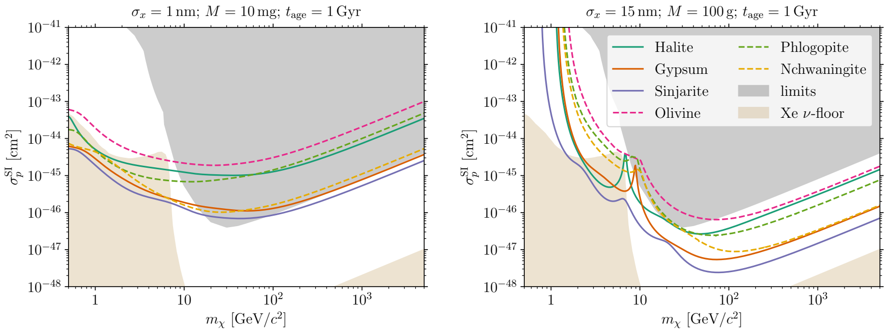




Trade-off between read-out resolution and exposure

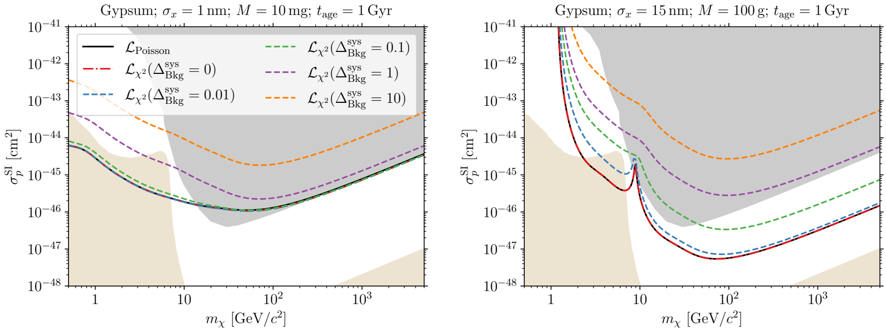


Sensitivity for different targets

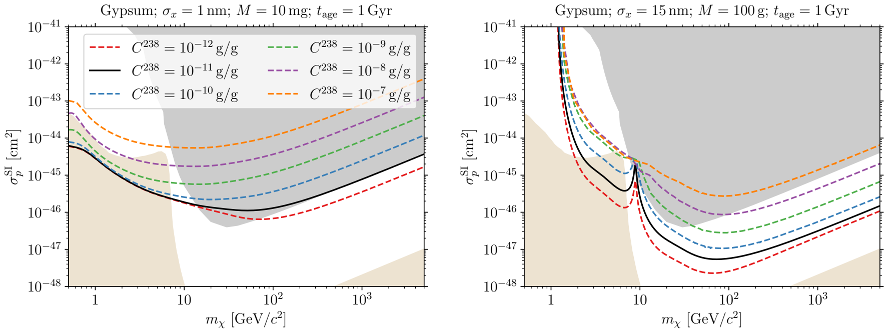


Halite	$NaCl$	$C^{238} = 10^{-11}$ g/g
Gypsum	$Ca(SO_4){\cdot}2(H_2O)$	$C^{238} = 10^{-11}$ g/g
Sinjarite	$CaCl_2{\cdot}2(H_2O)$	$C^{238} = 10^{-11}$ g/g
Olivine	$Mg_{1.6}Fe^{2+}_{0.4}(SiO_4)$	$C^{238} = 10^{-10}$ g/g
Phlogopite	$KMg_3AlSi_3O_{10}F(OH)$	$C^{238} = 10^{-10}$ g/g
Nchwaningite	$Mn^{2+}_2SiO_3(OH)_2{\cdot}(H_2O)$	$C^{238} = 10^{-10}$ g/g

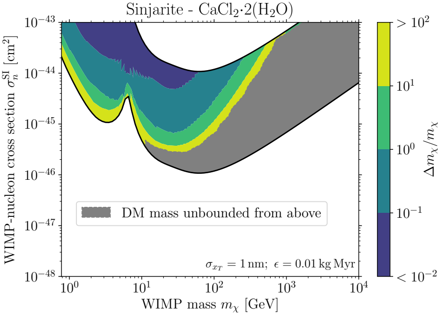
Effects of background shape systematics

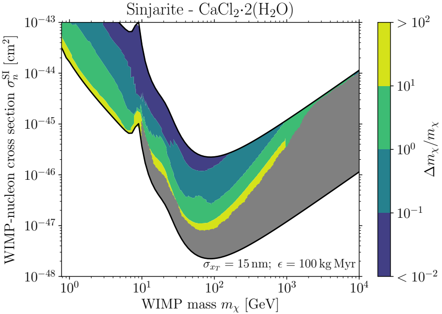


Sensitivity for different ^{238}U concentrations

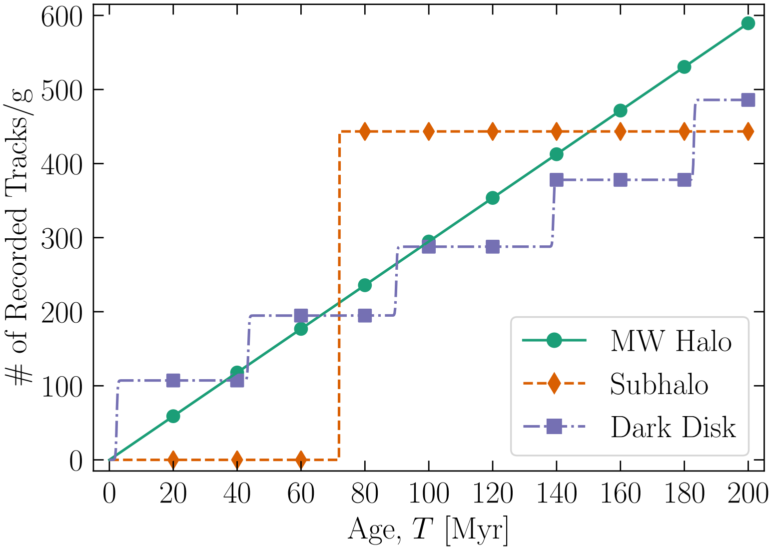


Multiple nuclei and large ϵ allow for optimal $\Delta m_X / m_X$

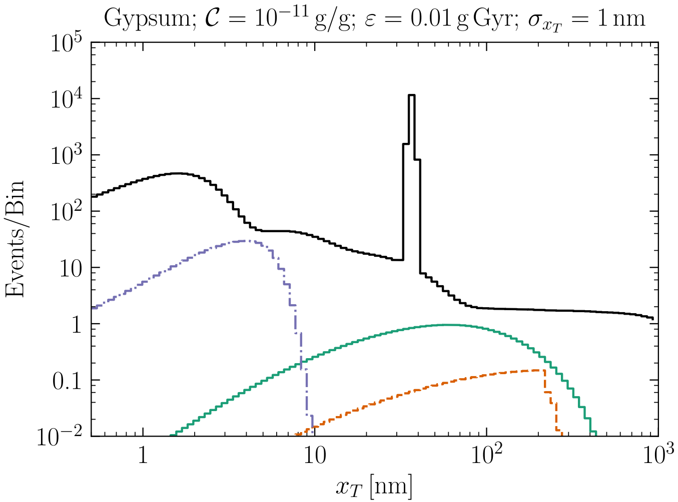




Mineral detectors can look for signals “averaged” over geological timescales or for time-varying signals

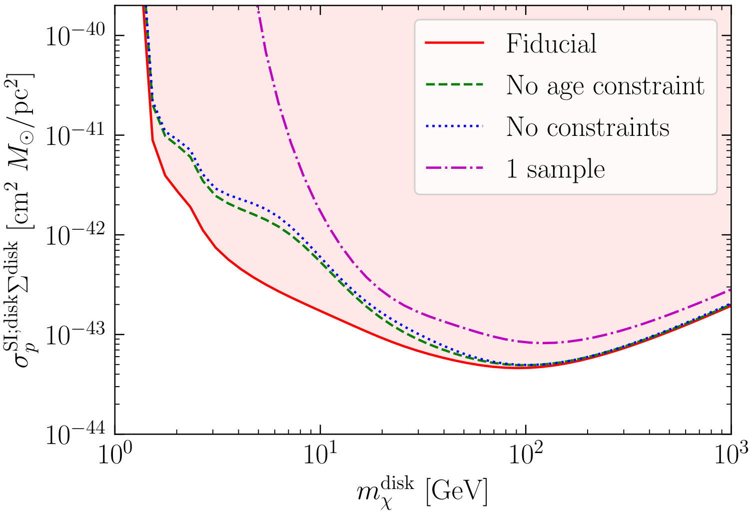


Multiple samples to detect dark disk transit every ~ 45 Myr



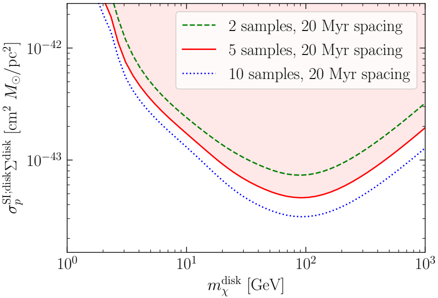
$m_X^{\rm disk} = 100$ GeV $\sigma_{Xp}^{\rm disk} = 10^{-43}\,{\rm cm}^2$ $m_X = 500$ GeV $\sigma_{Xp} = 5 \times 10^{-46}\,{\rm cm}^2$

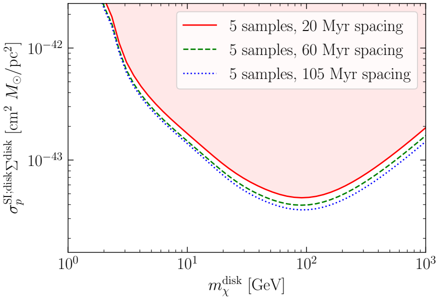
Distinguish from halo with 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 Myr samples



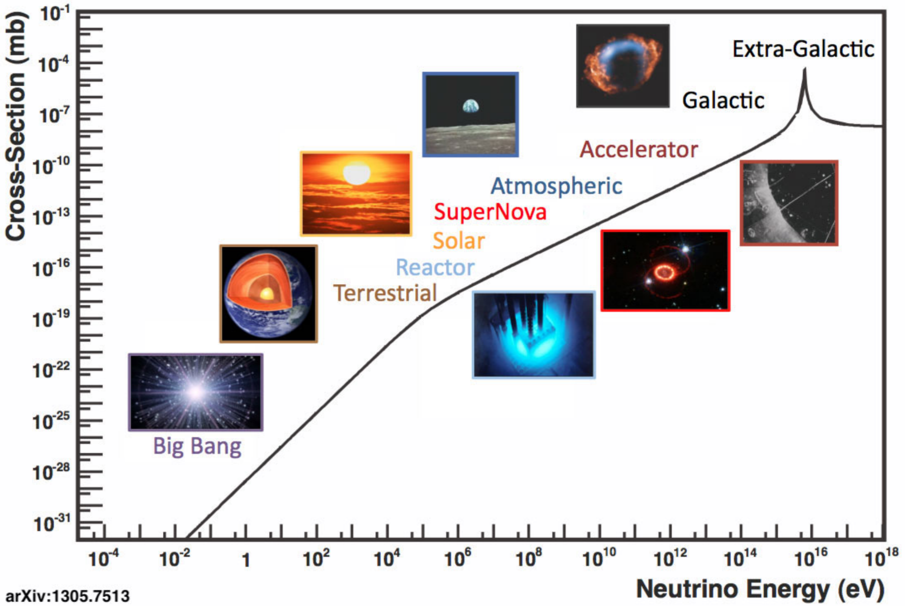
Systematic uncertainties $\Delta_t = 5\%$ $\Delta_M = 0.1\%$ $\Delta_C = 10\%$ $\Delta_\Phi = 100\%$

Change number of samples and sample spacing in time





Neutrinos come from a variety of sources



arXiv:1305.7513

Nuclear recoil spectrum depends on neutrino energy

$$\frac{dR}{dE_R} = \frac{1}{m_T} \int dE_\nu \, \frac{d\sigma}{dE_R} \frac{d\phi}{dE_\nu}$$

- Quasi-elastic for $E_\nu \gtrsim 100\,\text{MeV}$
- Resonant π production at $E_\nu \sim \text{GeV}$
- Deep inelastic for $E_\nu \gtrsim 10\,\text{GeV}$

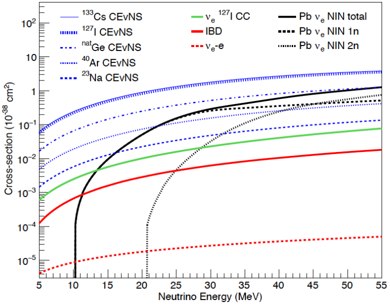


Figure: COHERENT, 1803.09183

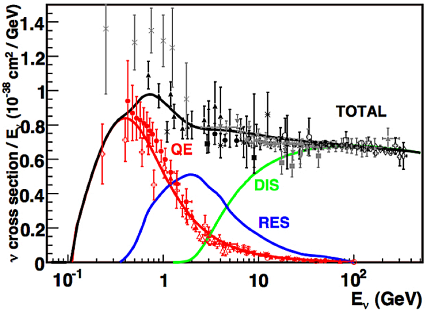
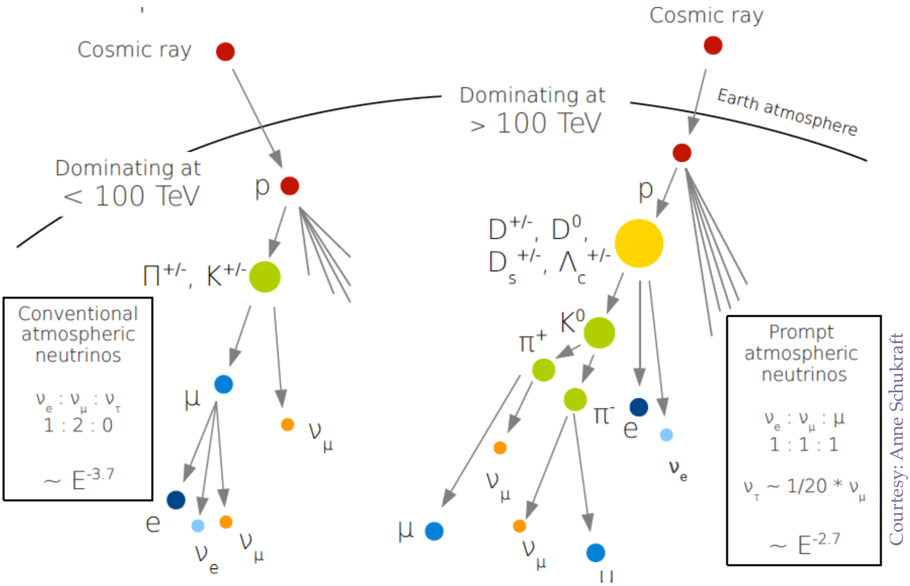


Figure: Inclusive CC $\sigma_{\nu N}$, 1305.7513

Atmospheric ν's originating from CR interactions



Atmospheric ν's originating from CR interactions

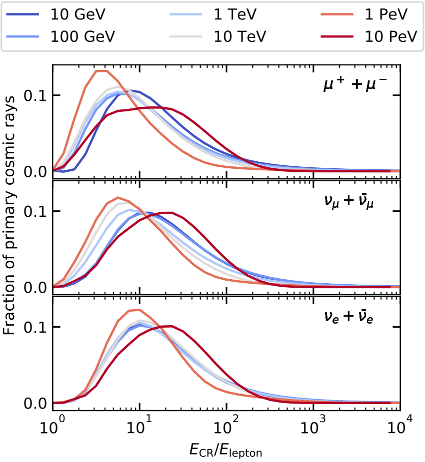


Figure: E_{CR} to leptons, 1806.04140

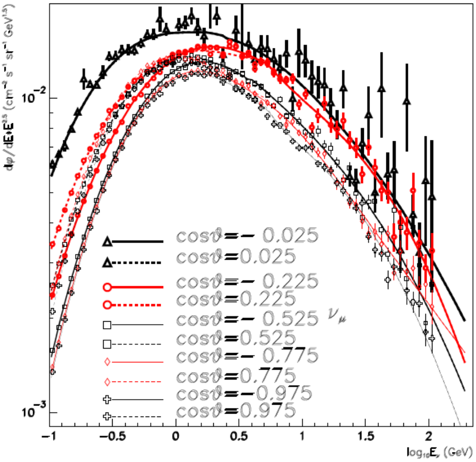


Figure: FLUKA simulation of ν_μ flux at SuperK for solar max, hep-ph/0207035

Geomagnetic field deflects lower energy CR primaries

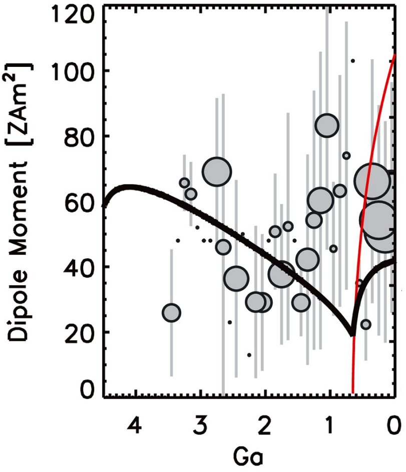
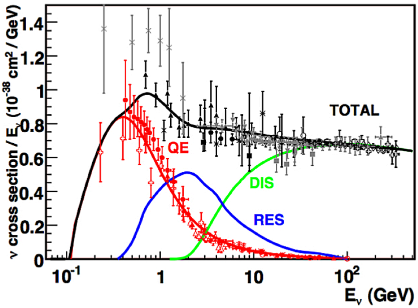


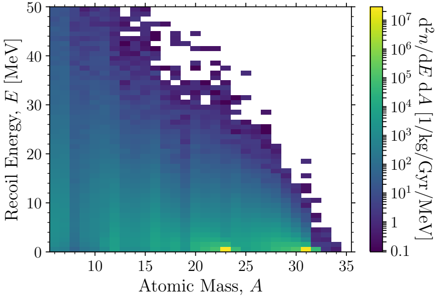
Figure: Driscoll, P. E. (2016), *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 43, 5680-5687

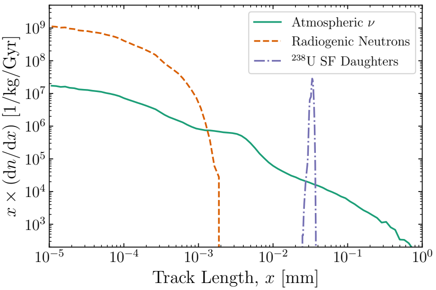
Rigidity $p_{CR}/Z_{CR} \simeq E_{CR}$ for CR protons

- Rigidity cutoff $\propto M_{dip}$ truncates atmospheric ν spectrum at low E_ν
- Maximum cutoff today $\sim 50\,\mathrm{GV}$
- Recall CR primary $E_{CR} \gtrsim 10\,E_\nu$



Recoil spectra from atmospheric ν's incident on NaCl(P)





Recoils of many different nuclei

- Low energy peak from QE neutrons scattering ^{23}Na, ^{31}P
- High energy tail of lighter nuclei produced by DIS

Background free regions for $\gtrsim 1\,\mu$m

- Radiogenic n-bkg confined to low x, regardless of target
- Subdominant systematics from atmosphere, heliomagnetic field

Galactic contribution to ν flux over geological timescales

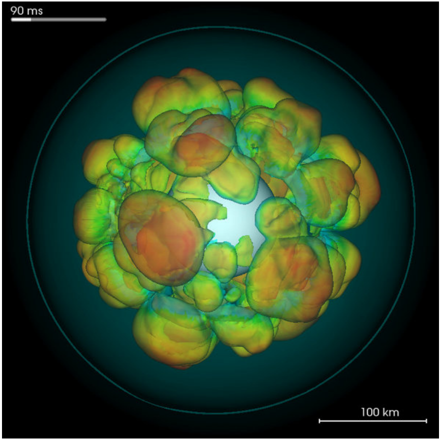


Figure: Supernova simulation after CC

Only $\sim$ 2 SN 1987A events/century

- Measure galactic CC SN rate
- Traces star formation history

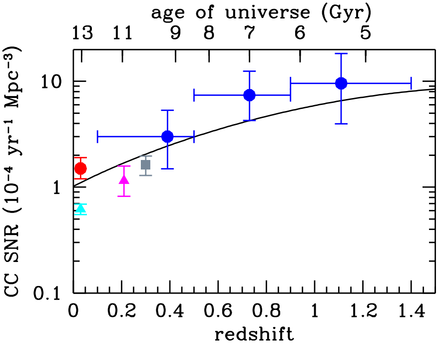


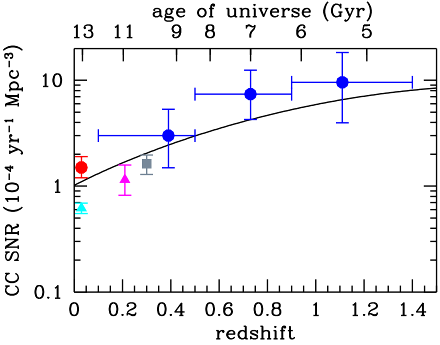
Figure: Cosmic CC SNR, 1403.0007

Galactic contribution to ν flux over geological timescales

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}\phi}{\mathrm{d}E_\nu} = \dot{N}^{\mathrm{gal}}_{\mathrm{CC}} \frac{\mathrm{d}n}{\mathrm{d}E_\nu} \int_0^\infty \mathrm{d}R_E \frac{f(R_E)}{4\pi R_E{}^2}$$

Only $\sim$ 2 SN 1987A events/century

- Measure galactic CC SN rate
- Traces star formation history



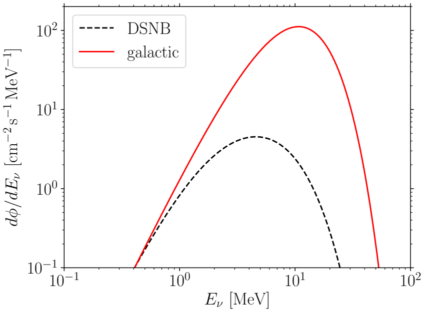
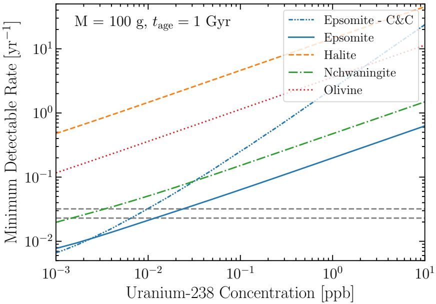
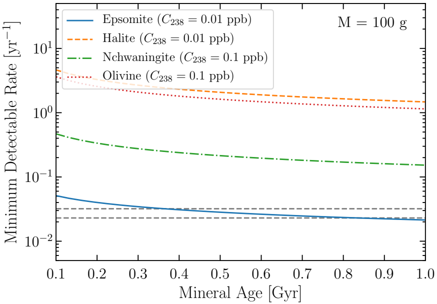


Figure: Cosmic CC SNR, 1403.0007

Sensitivity to galactic CC SN rate depends on C^{238}

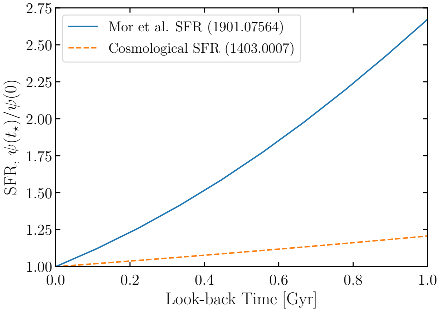


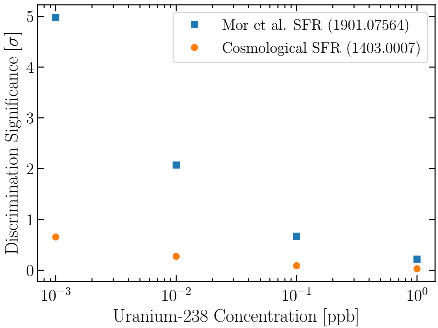


Epsomite [$Mg(SO_4)\cdot 7(H_2O)$]
Halite [NaCl]

Nchwaningite [$Mn_2^{2+}SiO_3(OH)_2\cdot(H_2O)$]
Olivine [$Mg_{1.6}Fe_{0.4}^{2+}(SiO_4)$]

Difficult to pick out time evolution of galactic CC SN rate





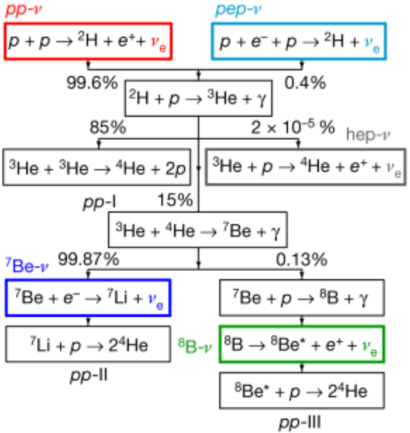
Coarse grained cumulative time bins

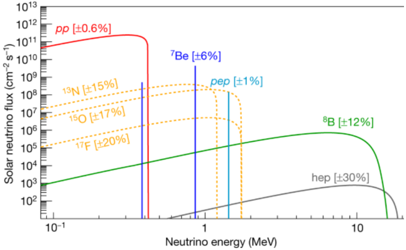
- 10 Epsomite paleo-detectors
- 100 g each, $\Delta t_{\rm age} \simeq 100$ Myr

Determine σ rejecting constant rate

Could only make discrimination at 3σ for $\mathcal{O}(1)$ increase in star formation rate with $C^{238} \lesssim 5$ ppt

Solar ν's produced in fusion chains from H to He





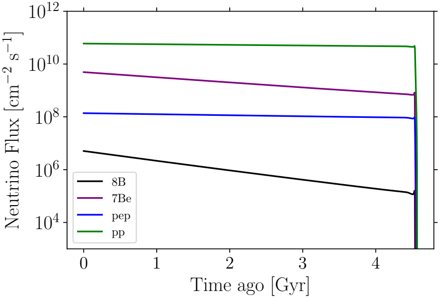
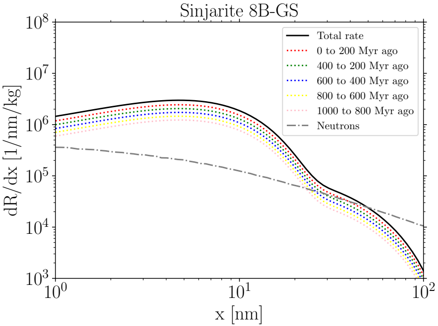
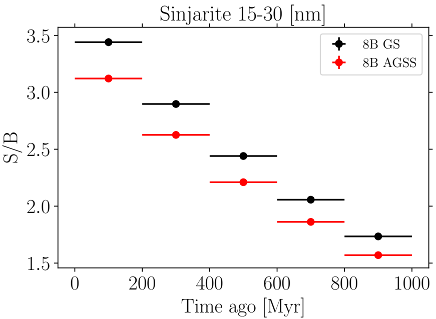


Figure: Today's flux at Borexino (Nature, 2018) and time dependence of GS metallicity model, 2102.01755

Could use large exposure to differentiate between scenarios





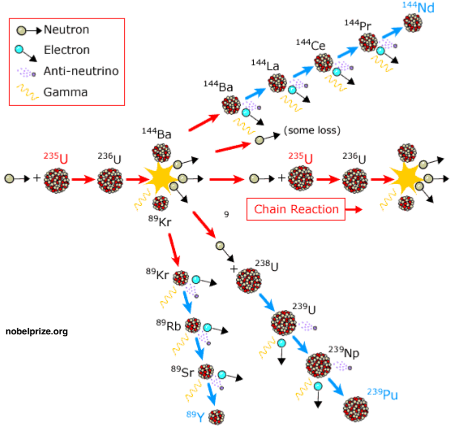
Could measure ^{8}B flux over time

- Higher $E_\nu \Rightarrow$ longer tracks
- Highly dependent on solar core temperature with flux $\propto T^{24}$
- Sensitive to metallicity model

100 g samples with 15 nm resolution

- Look in single bin $15 - 30$ nm
- Assume $\Delta_t \sim 10\%$, $\Delta_C = 10\%$
- $N_{\mathrm{tot}}^{\mathrm{GS}} \sim (1.63 \pm 0.05) \times 10^6$
  $N_{\mathrm{tot}}^{\mathrm{AGSS}} \sim (1.52 \pm 0.05) \times 10^6$

Reactor ν's produced in β decays of fission fragments



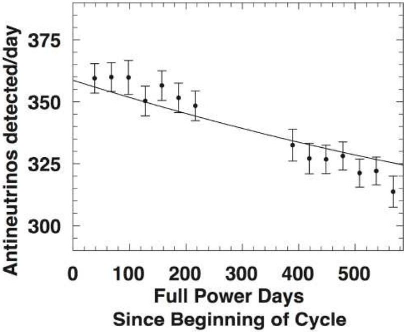


Figure: Processes yielding reactor ν's and time dependence over the course of reactor fuel cycle for $^{239}\mathrm{Pu}$ (1605.02047)

Nuclear non-proliferation safeguards

- Measure soft nuclear recoils
- Passive and robust detectors operable at room temperature

Semi-analytic range calculations and SRIM agree with data

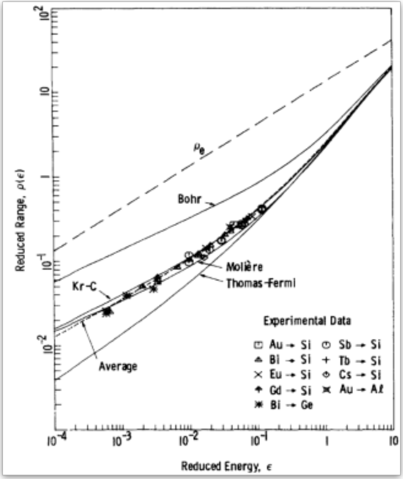


Figure: Wilson, Haggmark+ '76