Planetary transit through history

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Transit of a planet: What is it?

Kind of special eclipse

Transit of Mercury (1973)

Transit of a planet: Occurrences

13 transits of Mercury each century

Transits of Venus occur in pairs (eight years separate two events)
Transit of Mercury: 09/05/16

Innermost planet
First observations of transits

Kepler (1627):
- Detailed predictions of future positions of planets

Gassendi (1631):
- First observation of transit of Mercury

Horrocks and Crabtree (1639):
- First observation of transit of Mercury
Earth – Sun distance: Measurements

Halley (1677):

- Careful timing of transits used to determine Earth – Sun distance
Venus’ atmosphere

Lomonosov (1761):

- Bulge of light ("Lomonosov's arc") around Venus as Venus began to exit the Sun

Confirmed in 2012
First picture of transit of Venus

1882:
Last transit of Venus of our lifetime: 2012

NEXT: 11th Dec 2117!!