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The Smallest and Faintest Galaxies: Clues to the Nature of Dark Matter and Galaxy Formation

The smallest and faintest galaxies around the Milky Way are the most ancient, most metal-poor, and most dark-matter-dominated systems known. These extreme objects offer unique access to small scales where the stellar and dark matter content can be studied simultaneously and hold the promise of major breakthroughs in understanding the nature of dark matter, and a more complete picture of galaxy formation. Thus, their discovery and characterization are among the most important goals in the field. I will share our ongoing observational efforts to detect these faint systems around the Milky Way and beyond, and upcoming advances in the era of deep and wide imaging instrumentation.

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