SEPTEMBER 2017

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VLA J2130+12

By combining data from Chandra and several other telescopes, astronomers have identified the true nature of an unusual source in the Milky Way galaxy known as VLA J2130+12. This discovery implies that there could be a much larger number of black holes in the Galaxy that have previously been unaccounted for. This image contains X-rays from Chandra (purple) that have been overlaid on an optical image from Hubble, and a box identifies the location of the source. Astronomers think VLA J2130+12 is a binary system with a quiescent black hole with a few times the mass of the Sun.

X-ray: NASA/CXC/Univ. of Alberta/B.Tetarenko et al; Optical: NASA/STScI; Radio: NSF/AUI/NRAO/Curtin Univ./J. Miller-Jones