

# New Scientist

WEEKLY April 17-23, 2021

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*By Chiara Marletto*



### LONG-LOST SHORES

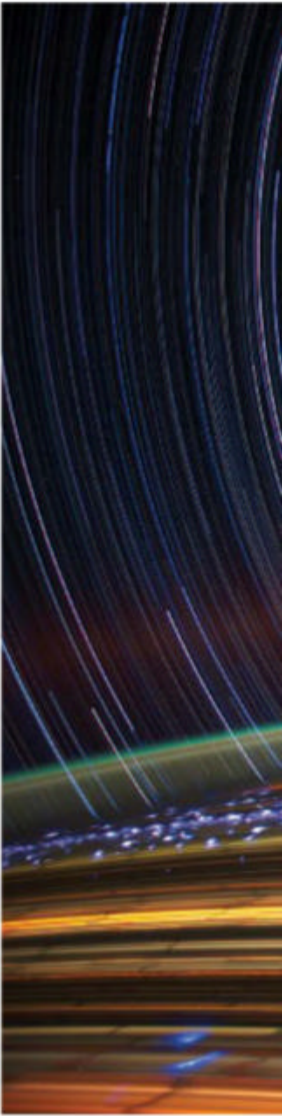
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## What lies below



### **Tournament Earth – Astronaut Photography Edition, NASA Earth Observatory**

THESE unearthly images show rare perspectives of the planet. Taken from the International Space Station, they were chosen for this year's Tournament Earth, a NASA space photography contest, which this time features images taken by astronauts.

The annual knockout competition lets the public vote for their favourite shot, pitting pairs of photos against one another in a succession of rounds until a winner is crowned. Out of the 32 photos shortlisted this year from those taken from the ISS over 20 years, just two are still in the running: *Lake Van, Turkey* (top left) by Kate Rubins and *Stars in Motion* (top right) by Don Pettit. The winner will be revealed this week.

Rubins's image shows the blue waters of Lake Van, the largest lake in Turkey. It has a salinity of 35 per cent, making it an inhospitable place for life to flourish. The colourful rings and stripes in Pettit's image may look like exotic space artefacts, but were created by compiling long-exposure shots of stars and city lights.

*Castellanus Cloud Tower* (bottom left), one of the semi-finalists, was shot by a crew member of ISS Expedition 48. At its centre is a huge cloud formation called a cumulus castellanus, which formed above Andros Island, part of the Bahamas archipelago.

The other semi-finalist, *Stargazing from the ISS* (bottom right), shows the night sky over the Pacific Ocean. The image, shot during ISS Expedition 44, also features the Milky Way and a flash of lightning (at lower right). ■

**Gege Li**