

MICROSCOPE



MIT/JOSE-LUIS OLIVARES

Super sun

■ Astronomers have witnessed a black hole violently shredding a massive star. The event, nicknamed “the Whippet”, briefly released about 400 billion times the sun’s energy and sent a shock wave racing outward at one-fifth the speed of light. Months later, scientists at Liverpool John Moores University, UK, spotted unexpectedly fast-moving helium, suggesting that something may have survived the destruction — either a dense stream of material flung out by the collapsing star’s core or a second star.