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Pareidolic Dark Matter (PaDaM)

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Dark matter is a sphinx (Oort 1932; Zwicky 1933; Rubin & Ford 1970; Tyutchev 1869). Despite ingenious hunting strategies, we continue to chase after this notoriously elusive creature within the dark zoo (Feng 2010; Fan et al. 2013). In the sky, there are X-ray “mice” (Gaensler et al. 2004), radio “snakes” (Uchida et al. 1992), even an optical “Crab” (Rosse 1844; Mitchell 1855). The latter may have been a “pineapple”, as a matter of fact (Dewhirst 1983). But such discussion is beyond the scope of our tract.

The Universe hosts astronomical animals aplenty (Dacke et al. 2013). However, a dark matter creature should be unique in its peculiarity. When finally corralled, we conjecture pareidolically that – under extremely finely tuned conditions – dark matter sub-substructures might resemble a “winged horned lion” with a “serpent” for a tail, whose contours become apparent roughly at q times the free streaming scale λ_{fs} (where q is real or imaginary (Green et al. 2005)). The color figure shows a generic example of pareidolia¹ right at the intersection of annihilation and diffuse emission (Cuesta et al. 2011). The image corresponds to a simulated *Fermi* LAT gamma-ray map obtained after exhaustive visualization. Observers could contemplate verifying the truthiness or falsity of this proposition (or not).



Incidentally, it seems stark, staringly clear that the dark matter particle cannot linger in obscurity for much longer. Now for those who have followed us so far, it should be deceptively obvious that this is an April Fools’ Day spoof. Enjoy and dear reader, please forgive us if we have wasted your time.

¹<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pareidolia>

We acknowledge Mark Hurn for kindly sending us an original offprint of “Early drawings of Messier 1: pineapple or crab?” by the late D.W. Dewhirst. For more astronomical pareidolia please visit the Hubble Heritage Creative Challenge at <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151117646584962.451794.365958474961&type=1&l=069cb8ba1e>.

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